

The
Cairngorm Club Journal



VOL. XV.

1944-45.

No. 84.

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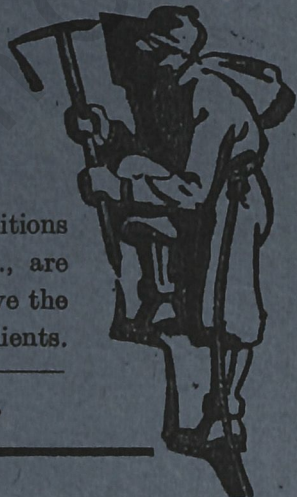
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EDITED BY

WILLIAM A. EWEN.

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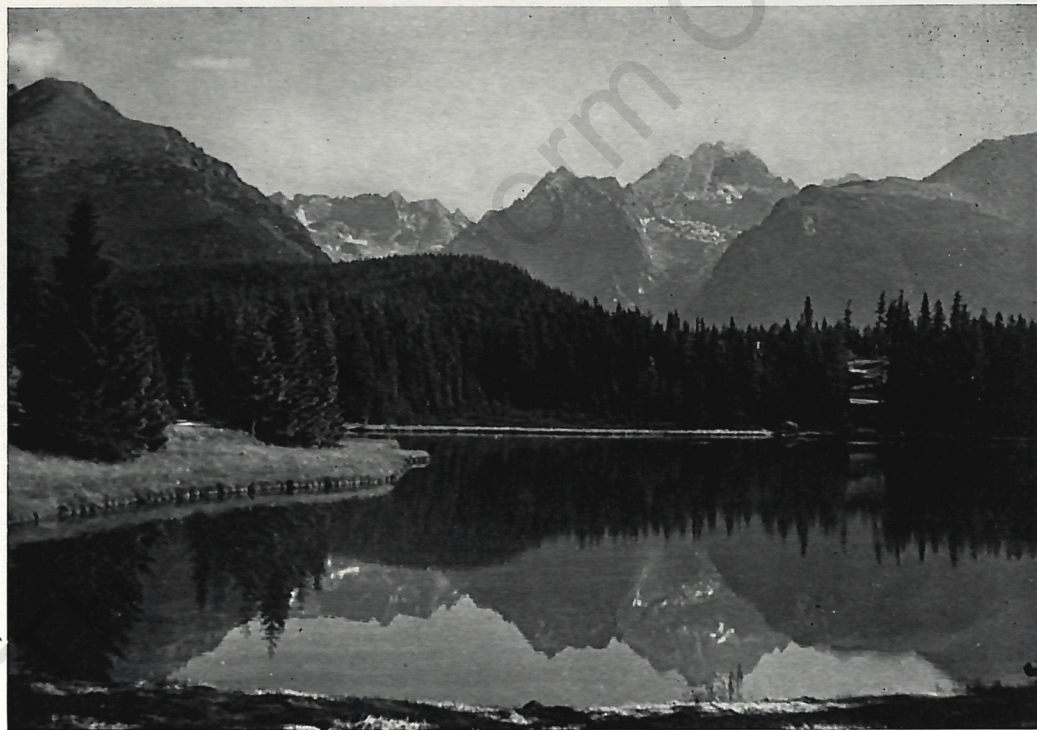
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STRBSKE PLESO, SLOVAKIA

W. Ramsden

THE HIGH TATRA IN 1938.

W. RAMSDEN.

IN July 1938, some ten weeks before the Munich settlement, I paid a brief visit to the Tatra Mountains in Czechoslovakia, and though I and the friends who were with me did but a little, very mild, mountaineering, it may be of interest to recall and record some of the happenings of those days when crisis followed crisis and when the very prospect of another Hitler speech set nearly the whole world trembling.

One of these recurrent crises developed during the latter half of May before the plans for the journey had been completed. This crisis, however, soon blew over and we continued with our arrangements, undeterred; nevertheless, many of our friends regarded us as lunatics about to leap into a volcano. The steamship "Prinses Juliana" sailed from Harwich at noon on Saturday, July 9, with our party aboard bound for Flushing, *en route* to Berlin. Of the long and tedious journey it will suffice to mention that the German frontier station of Bentheim was reached soon after 11.30 P.M. and that there two uniformed officials carefully inspected all our reading matter, which included the *Strand Magazine*, the *Wide World*, the *Windsor*, and some newspapers; they found nothing that was hurtful to the Nazi cause, but evidently were not quite satisfied because, as soon as we had left the compartment to visit the Currency Control they returned to have a further look and then finally decided that we and all our possessions were quite harmless.

The train drew into the Friedrichstrasse Station in Berlin shortly after 7 o'clock on Sunday morning. A taxi took us to the Hermes Hotel, a gloomy looking place reminiscent of Manchester, but conveniently near the railway station. Most of Sunday was spent in sightseeing, always an arduous and tiring pastime and one which was made no easier by lack of

sleep, by hot sunshine, and hard pavements. A short pause for strawberries and cream at a café in the Tiergarten gave us a restful interlude during the afternoon ; this was a bright and pleasant spot with tables set out among trees and flowers beside a lake. It had not, however, escaped the blight of Hitlerism ; on a placard near the entrance gate was written " Juden unerwünscht "—Jews not wanted—a sign of intolerance that left a nasty taste. Berlin was a grim, unfriendly place full of uniforms and swastika badges ; interesting, yes, but far from enjoyable. The next morning we caught the 6.45 A.M. train southwards to Breslau and travelled thence by connecting trains to Strba, which is the rail-head for Strbske Pleso, the best known of the High Tatra resorts and our chosen stopping-place for the next nine days.

The scenery along the railway was of little interest until the Czechoslovak frontier had been crossed, and by the time the finest scenery was available—along the upper reaches of the Vah Valley—it was almost too dark to see anything. There was certainly no shortage of food in the German dining-cars, though misunderstandings of language and customs brought some surprises. For breakfast in the Breslau train I ordered " zwei gekochte Eier " and expected two boiled eggs, instead of which the waiter brought me a glass tumbler containing a small quantity of yellow liquid, probably the contents of two eggs either raw or only very lightly " gekochte " ; I held my breath and let the whole lot slip down quickly and untasted—Ugh !

During meals the guard walked solemnly through the carriage, slightly raising his right arm after every six or seven paces and uttering a subdued " Heil Hitler ! " At Bohumin, the first station in Czechoslovakia, a *Hamburg Illustrated Weekly* belonging to one member of our party was confiscated by the Customs ; it contained, among other things, a series of photographs purporting to prove that dire economic distress was rampant in the Sudeten areas, a cartoon which represented Czechoslovakia as a troublesome porcupine, and an illustrated article on the Italian navy, which was described as the world's mightiest !

On arrival at Strba, at about 8.30 P.M., we found the bus



LIPTOVSKÉ TATRA

W. Ramsden

for Strbske Pleso waiting outside the station, and some thirty minutes later the last lap of the journey had ended at the Mory Hotel.

Strbske Pleso, from which the Mory is a little more than half a mile distant, stands on the shore of a small lake surrounded by spruce forest, 4,300 feet above sea level, with the main mass of the High Tatra $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles away to the north; it is what the guide books call a "climatic resort" and is made up of two or three fair-sized modern hotels, some guest houses, and a few small shops.

The High Tatra, or in Czech "Vysoke Tatry," are still so little known in Britain that a few facts and figures may not be amiss. They constitute the highest and most rugged portion of the great Carpathian mountain chain, and form part of the frontier between Czechoslovakia and Poland; they extend as a continuous, serrated, granite ridge roughly 12 miles in length measured as the crow flies, shattered and precipitous on both sides, and with many formidable branch ridges thrust out to north and south. There are no really easy passes over this mountain barrier, which at its lowest point is not much less than 7,000 feet above sea level, and at its highest—the Gerlach—8,737 feet.

The mountains rise steeply from the Liptov plain, which has itself an average height of 2,300 feet; the lower slopes are enveloped in spruce forest up to an altitude of approximately 4,700 feet, where the spruce gives way to an impenetrable entanglement of scrub-pine, which effectively prevents any straying from the beaten tracks. Above the tree line—that is above 6,000 feet or thereabouts—between the bare outstretched arms of the mountains, lie deep valleys carved out by primeval glaciers, studded with many small lakes and, in summer-time, carpeted with wild flowers; these high secluded valleys are indeed one of the great delights of the Tatra range.

The weather during the first three days of our stay at Strbske Pleso was disappointing and at times most depressing. On our first morning there the weather was dull, and most of us were content merely to potter about, but in the afternoon the sun came out and, thus encouraged, two of us walked up

to Popradske Pleso, a lake three miles away towards the mountains. For two miles the path to Popradske Pleso passes through tall spruce forest with an undergrowth of juniper and bilberry, but along the last mile the forest is more open and there are grand views of the surrounding heights.

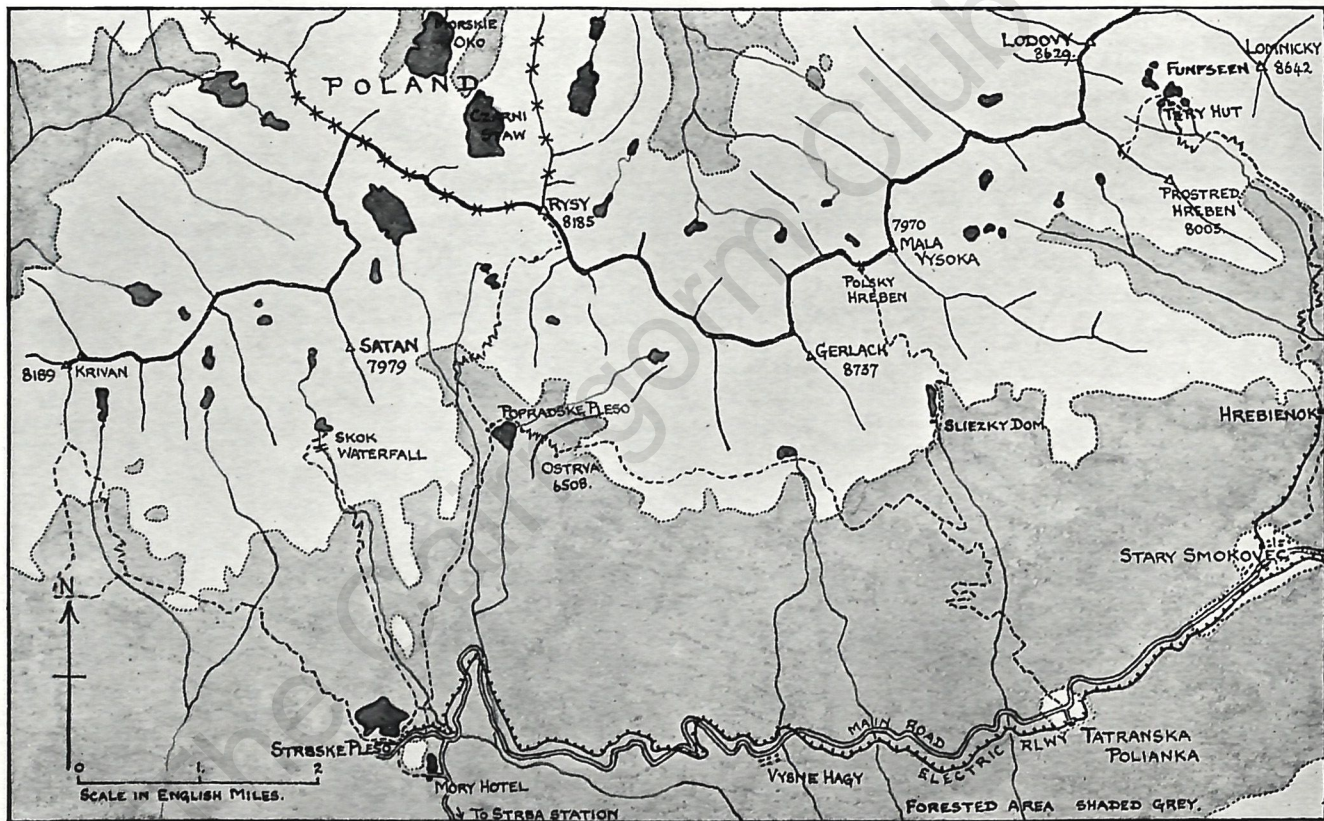
From Popradske Pleso a track leads up a very steep slope to a saddle called Ostrva (6,508 feet) from which there is an extensive view. We climbed up this track, an affair of countless zigzags, loose stones, and patches of slushy snow, and in the end our energy was unrewarded; a chilly wind was blowing across the col and the view was mostly obscured by clouds, so we returned to the lake and called at the near-by mountain hut for a drink. This hut, with many of the finest peaks of the Tatra close at hand, would make a much better base for climbers than Strbske Pleso; it is a large wooden building close to the lake shore with sleeping accommodation for 150 persons. To me it looked rather shabby and badly in need of minor repairs and a coat of fresh paint.

On our table at dinner this evening was a vase filled with wild flowers and with them a card bearing the inscription, "Greetings from Czechoslovakian children, Peter, Johnny, and Tania." Each evening after dinner the three children, who could all speak a little English, used to come over to our table for a chat before being sent off to bed.

Plump little Johnny, aged ten, was always bubbling over with conversation, but his mother fidgeted nervously and looked terribly anxious whenever he made some especially virulent remark about Hitler—"that terribble man." Obviously the shadow of the Gestapo was already falling across their country.

The next day, despite threatening weather, we set out to walk up the Mlynica valley to the Skok waterfall and lake, and perhaps farther. There is an easy way-marked track all the way to the lake which, incidentally, is little more than a small pool, lying in a broad stony corrie above a high rock terrace over which the Mlynica stream cascades.

When we reached the lake the surrounding mountains were completely shrouded in heavy rain clouds, and it was not worth our while to go farther. A species of monk's-hood



THE HIGH TATRA

(*aconitum*) was in flower beside some of the streamlets near the lake. This was an unexpected discovery. In the Alps it prefers far richer soils and has a special fondness for the vicinity of cow-sheds.

Meanwhile the weather went from bad to worse. Thursday morning was dismal, a heavy drizzle was falling and the whole countryside was wrapped in thick mist; indoors everything that one touched felt damp and clammy. After an early lunch I walked down through the dripping rain-soaked forest to Strba Station and from there along the high road to the village, but as both Strba and a neighbouring village were visited again a few days later in perfect weather, no more need be said at the moment and we will return to the hills without more ado.

In the late afternoon the sky and the mountain tops appeared above the mist, so, hopefully and after much studying of maps, an early start in the morning for Stary Smokovec and the Tery Hut was decided upon. In the morning the sun was shining brightly and it continued to shine throughout the day. Mrs H, a lady from Bucharest, joined us on this trip; it was a sign of the times that she—a Jewess—had first sounded one of the lady members of our party as to whether the presence of one of her race might be embarrassing!

Having plodded up the steep road from Smokovec to the Sport Hotel at Hrebienok, we made a brief stop there for drinks and continued through thick forest into the Mala Studena Dolina—the Small Studena Valley. "Studena," I believe, means "cold," but on this occasion the valley was so far from being cold that every garment that could decently be discarded was soon stowed into our rucksacks. Until, at last, the track emerged from the forest into open country, little could be seen of either the valley itself or of the magnificent crags that enclose it, the latter culminating in the Prostrad Hreben (8,005 feet) on the west side, and the Lomnický (8,642 feet) on the east. After leaving the forest the track, for a mile or so, remains almost level, running through tussocks of heath and bilberry with, here and there along the valley near the stream, clusters of slender, sweet-scented

anemones and yellow auriculas ; it then ascends steeply to the Tery Hut, which stands on the rim of a high corrie overlooking the Studena valley and the Liptov plain beyond. Near the hut are five little lakes—the Fünfseen—which were now frozen over. After lunching at the hut, four of us, including Mrs H, scrambled up to the ridge forming the west wall of the corrie and perched ourselves on a rock pinnacle some 1,400 feet above the Fünfseen and slightly under 8,000 feet above sea level, with a fearsome overhang immediately below us. It was too cold to sit up there for long, for, although it was midsummer, the mountain peaks around us were all gleaming white with freshly fallen snow and looking magnificent against a background of blue sky and billowing white clouds. In the evening, back at Smokovec, a real bank-holiday-like crowd was massed on the station platform, and when the Strbske Pleso train arrived everyone made a simultaneous plunge for it and somehow struggled aboard. Then, after a few moments' pause for breath, fully half the passengers—all those bound for Tatranska Lomnica, for instance—suddenly realised that they were in the wrong train, and forthwith proceeded to fight their way off again !

The next expedition was to the Krivan (8,189 feet), the westernmost of the High Tatra peaks. The weather was perfect. Following a late start we made rapid progress along an easy path plainly way-marked in red. Unfortunately our faith remained blindly fixed in red way-marks until it became quite obvious from the lie of the land that we were astray, and then, too late, the map was produced and carefully studied. Comparison with a map acquired locally showed that the way-marks indicated on my map, an excellent one of German origin, were out of date ! To regain the correct track we should have had to retrace our steps for nearly a mile, and rather than do this it seemed better to try a short cut straight up an outlying spur of the Krivan, the top of which was within easy reach. A pair of hobby falcons were circling round this hill-top, playing together in the air ; watching them made us forget about way-marks and all other annoyances. Once on top it was soon apparent that the short



ANEMONE (*narcissiflora* L.), HIGH TATRA

W. Ramsden

cut was going to be a long one. The spur along which the direct route to the Krivan now lay, was liberally coated with stones and boulders partially submerged in grass and had once, in addition to these, been covered with scrub-pine—*pinus montana*, or its equally vile variety *pinus mughus*—but this had been burnt and only the dried and bleached branches remained to form an appalling entanglement which nearly defeated us. The struggle through the pine-scrub wasted so much time that we had to turn back when still a thousand feet short of the Krivan summit.

On the way back—on the correct track this time—we met a cheery gentleman who spoke to us in Czech and tried hard to impart some interesting piece of information; he illustrated his remarks by drawing squiggles on the ground with his walking-stick, while we smiled and did our best to look intelligent. The general opinion was that he'd seen a snake! On Sunday morning at 4.20 A.M., after a breakfast of chocolate and oranges, we set out to climb the Rysy (8,185 feet), a mountain six miles away on the Polish frontier. As far as Popradske Pleso, which is roughly half-way between Strbske Pleso and the Rysy, the route to be followed was the same as that traversed by two of us the previous Tuesday afternoon. When we started the moon was shining above the dark forest in a cloudless sky, but within an hour the first shafts of sunlight were glinting on the mountain tops. At this early hour, when night is past and day has hardly yet begun, birds and animals are more confiding, and creatures which in the day-time hide themselves among the trees or skulk in the undergrowth come fearlessly into the open. In the forest we saw several fallow-deer, one of which was lying asleep in the undergrowth, and also a chamois climbing sure-footedly over rocks high above the trees; in the more open parts of the forest coal-tits, crested-tits, and willow-tits were darting to and fro among the trees, and nut-crackers—birds, slightly smaller than jackdaws, with dark-brown speckled plumage and long pointed beaks—hopped unconcernedly across the path ahead of us.

Yesterday someone at the hotel had seen a bear, so we all scanned the hill-sides most carefully, hoping that we might

also be lucky enough to catch a glimpse of one, but to-day none was to be seen.

Popradske Pleso was reached at 5.45 A.M., and by this time many people were walking along the track towards the Rysy; young lads and girls in shorts and heavy boots, gentlemen dressed as though they were walking to their offices in the city, and middle-aged women carrying umbrellas; few of those in the last two categories got very far up the mountain-side. The real climb began about a mile beyond Popradske Pleso where the track veered to the right and ascended steeply over rough stony ground to a little lake—the Zabié Pleso (6,300 feet). Among crags near the lake I found a small alpine plant—*Lloydia serotina*—which occurs in Great Britain only on the cliffs of the Devil's Kitchen in Snowdonia. By 7.30 A.M. we were in the refuge hut below the Vaha Pass, drinking weak tea flavoured with sugar and lemon. This hut has bunks for forty persons, and some of the occupants were just getting up when we arrived. While in the hut it was mentioned in general conversation that we were from Manchester and one Czech football enthusiast at once remarked, "Ah, yes, I know, Manchester City go down and Manchester United go up!"

The remainder of the climb was almost equally divided between a snowfield extending from the hut to the Vaha Pass—the col between the Rysy and the Velka Vysoka—and broken crags from there to the summit. We spent more than an hour on the summit enjoying the superb view and indulging in an orgy of photography.

By 10 o'clock heavy clouds were beginning to blow up from the east, and forty minutes later the blue sky had vanished and rain was falling in torrents. We hurried down to the shelter of the Popradske Pleso hut and stayed there for lunch. In the afternoon the weather improved and we meandered slowly back to the Mory Hotel. To my astonishment the head-waiter at the hotel asked me if any of us would like to have breakfast; half-past five in the afternoon is a strange hour for this meal, but as none of us had breakfasted in the morning we were still entitled to do so and seized the opportunity with gusto. During the evening a violent



VIEW FROM RYSY, CARPATHIANS

W. Ramsden

thunder-storm broke over Strbske Pleso; the hotel was struck by lightning and, as a result, the main fuse was blown and all the electric lights temporarily extinguished. On Monday the weather was unsettled and, apart from a visit to Stary Smokovec and Hrebienok and to the waterfalls near by, very little was accomplished.

Tuesday was our last day out on the hills. The plan agreed upon was to go by taxi to Tatranska Polianka and to walk from there by way of the Sliezky Dom hut to the Polsky Hreben, and then climb the Mala Vysoka if the weather permitted. The taxi, ordered for 4.0 A.M., turned up three-quarters of an hour later, after we had almost given up hope of its arrival. I sat in front with the driver and suffered in silence what I thought a most terrifying performance; I had forgotten that the rule of the road in Czechoslovakia is (or was until March 15, 1939) the same as in Britain and imagined that the driver was taking all the hair-pin bends on the wrong side!

From Tatranska Polianka an uphill trudge of four miles brought us to the Sliezky Dom—pronounced something like Shlishky Doom—and it is a further two miles from there to the Polsky Hreben (7,243 feet). The latter is not a mountain peak but the pass between the Mala Vysoka (7,970 feet) on the east and the chain of heights to the west which curve southwards and culminate in the Gerlach (8,737 feet), the highest summit in the Tatra.

The last portion of the ascent was steep and required care, but fixed ropes were in position along the most awkward places. Below this part, in the rocky valley between the Sliezky Dom and the crags, we saw two chamois standing at the top of a steep slope of old hard-frozen snow; we watched them skip and slither to the bottom of the slope, and then, after a short rest, quietly walk up some scree beside the snow, step on to the top of the snow-slope and recommence their little frolic; they were completely absorbed in this game, and seemed quite unaware of our presence.

There was thick mist on the Hreben, and having climbed a short distance up the Mala Vysoka I decided that mist and soft snow made further progress inadvisable. We returned

to the hut, where the party divided, some going down to Tatranska Polianka and returning by train to Strbske Pleso, and some walking back by way of Ostrva and Popradske Pleso.

The next morning I received news from home of Manchester and its rain ; rain that had washed out the third Test Match—England *v.* Australia—at Old Trafford, without a ball having been bowled ! This day, July 20, was our last at Strbske Pleso, and had been specially reserved for a visit to Strba and one or two other villages down on the plain.

The morning bus took us down to the station, and we walked the two miles from there to Strba village, keeping to field paths wherever possible. The approach to the village is marred by a monstrous Bata shoe advertisement and by a group of new red-brick houses built in the twentieth-century council-esque style which conflicts horribly with the traditional local architecture. Most of the houses are built of wood on a stone foundation, and roofed with dark wooden slats ; a few houses are of stone or brick washed over with white, grey, or pink-coloured plaster. Behind the houses stand wooden sheds used for storage purposes, or for housing cattle. Strba possesses also two churches, a few small shops, and a pub. At the latter we had lunch.

Vys Suňava, another village we visited, is one of those places where time stands still ; there it is always twenty-eight minutes past ten ; year in and year out the four clocks on the tower of the little white church show this time, because their figures and hands are merely paint. Until an elderly man, sauntering up the street, blew three or four resounding toots on a battered trumpet the place was almost deserted. At the trumpet-call, however, many cows instantly appeared from between the houses on either side of the street ; it was a milking-time signal !

The two miles of rough and dusty road between Strba and Vys Suňava crosses an open, rolling countryside with few fences and no hedges, and trees only near the villages. The gentle undulations of the land, the bright sunshine and the cloud shadows, the narrow bands of ripening corn—oats, rye,



ASPECTS OF STRBA, SLOVAKIA

W. Ramsden

and barley, alternating with strips of bright green flax and dark green potato plants—gave a rich variation of light and colour to the landscape. Wild gladioli, corn cockles, daisies, corn-flowers, campanulas, and vetches were growing in the cornfields. To the north, behind Strba, the peaks of the Tatra were almost lost in haze. As there was no convenient bus we had to walk all the way back to Strbske Pleso.

Our stay in the High Tatra was now over.

After dinner we said good-bye to our Czech friends, caught a bus to Strba Station, and travelled overnight to Prague. The homeward journey was broken in Prague for one day and a night, and in Dresden for an afternoon. In both places the time available was devoted mainly to sightseeing, souvenir buying, and to sheltering from heavy thunder showers. The long journey from Dresden to England was tiring and tedious and unenlivened by any events of special interest, save for our discovery, while crossing Holland, of a new profession—that of bird-scarer. In one of the Dutch cherry orchards a man was to be seen perched upon a specially constructed platform at the top of a tree, busily wielding a long stick with a rag tied to the far end, and with it scaring away any birds that ventured to assail the ripening fruit!

We landed in England in the late afternoon of Saturday, July 23. So ended a holiday in which interest and enjoyment had been ours in abundance, and I, and the friends who accompanied me, look forward to the time when, in happier days and perhaps in the not too distant future, it may again be possible to visit Czechoslovakia and the High Tatra.

WINTER ADVENTURE.

A. FRASER ROSS.

HERE is no defence of solitary wandering in the Cairngorms. It is merely the tale of an adventure whose recalling is solace for a climber turned by war to sailor in the tropics, reminding him of the joys of winter. Perhaps, too, it will interest fellow-lovers of those hills.

The adventure befell one January afternoon—1943 it was. A day for climbing! I was striding eagerly over the slopes of Allt a' Ghlaschoire towards the corrie in Lochnagar, that great amphitheatre of cliffs defending the mountain on its eastern side. Iron-hard snow glittered in sunlight and crunched firmly underfoot; the air was still and crystal clear, exhilarating; the sun so warm that even shirt and singlet had been relegated to the rucksack. Behind the pale blue of the shadowed snow-covered corrie hung a wisp of brilliant white cloud. I stopped to capture it on colour film. It was going to be a grand day for the camera, warm perhaps, but full of the loveliness of sunlit snow and ice.

Twenty minutes later I had reached the little frozen "Loch of the Goats." Only twenty minutes. And yet that tiny wisp of cloud was no longer innocent, but threatening, for it had settled on the summit and, most ominously, had begun to flow down the mountain. Not now bare shoulders to the sun, but warm shirt and sweaters and, yes, two wind-jackets, and helmeted head thrust against a fierce wind that was driving hissing, stinging powder-snow through every cranny of clothing. By the time I had pushed my way across the loch, stealthy mist had reached the foot of the precipices. No light for the photographer. I spent some time admiring green ice-falls and had just with resignation turned for home, when suddenly I caught my breath, Far above the earth, up in the grey cloud, blazed a brilliant white flame. A

frozen pinnacle of the Western Gully had reached out momentarily to the sun. Then its flame was quenched. But the challenge remained and up I went, kicking and hewing steps in the steep snow of the Black Spout. It mattered not that I was alone in this immense and terrible place. Every energy was absorbed in the immediate task of advancing up this doubtful breach in the mountain's defences and I utterly forgot the threat and gloom and disappointment of the cloud. The battle was the thing and mere physical conquest sufficient reward.

Higher and higher. Thinnings of the cloud began to reveal, and perhaps to exaggerate, the tremendous nature of the icy ramparts of this mountain. I was glad of the shelter and the slender moral comfort of the gully. And it was yielding! What more could be desired? Then, as I achieved the corrie's rim, there was added a further experience. I had reached the upper surface of the cloud. Higher billows of mist were still hiding the sun, but the wind had almost ceased. It was a strange scene, dimly lit, eerily quiet. I stood on ice-encrusted rocks at the edge of the precipice, for it was only here that the mountain was free of cloud, and looked southwards to see, not hills, but a blanket of cloud, flowing soundlessly and endlessly up and over Cuidhe Crom and pouring steadily down its eastern side—to vanish in thin air. Farther away were peaks of cotton wool flung up by the underlying masses of Mount Battock and Mount Keen. And this white sea, forming ceaselessly at one end, vanishing at the other, always moving onwards, yet always in the same position—it was being made plain before my eyes exactly why it should behave in this mysterious way. I was the awed and privileged spectator of secrets of wind and cloud.

And then I turned northwards and cried out at the sudden glory. For there, piercing the gloom of the cloud, was the sunlit summit of Lochnagar—an airy peak, floating, divorced from the earth. "Beauty in the lap of terror?"—beauty rising above terror. With wind for guide I plunged into the sightless mist and climbed upwards, my heart pounding with exertion and excitement. Sure enough, out I came into bright sunshine. Light is life!—it was like being reborn.

The summit boulders were wonderful and lovely to behold, with fantastic encrustation of wind-built snow-flowers, cream-coloured in the sinking sun, violet in the shadows. A flock of sleeping trolls from a northern legend. Here in this land above the clouds everything was fabulous and legendary. But that did not prepare me for the vision and I was shattered by it. A strange appearance, a ghost : it was a spectre of the Brocken, haloed in rainbow hues : it was a glorious ghost. But ere I could compose my mind to the precision of thought required for a good picture, it had vanished. I was left alone in this strange land, watching familiar peaks break unfamiliarly through the clouds, alone in a remote and desolate and darkening world.



SOME NAME-PRONUNCIATIONS.

W. M. ALEXANDER.

THE following is a short working list of name-pronunciations for the Braemar and adjacent areas, with some incidental notes. A variety of factors are at work to-day tending to alter the sounds of names, or at least to create uncertainty and confusion. In any case the original and authentic sounds are no longer to be heard; and the most that can be expected is the maintenance of some sort of regard for the traditional pronunciations. The sounds represented here are, as nearly as memory serves, those which the writer was accustomed to hear in the district from good Gaelic speakers of the last generation. While these representations of spoken sounds are, it is hoped, clear enough for practical purposes, it need scarcely be added that from a strictly scientific point of view they are approximate only.

As we are all aware, the most important thing in uttering an unfamiliar name is to know on what syllable the stress accent falls. In this list the accented syllable is printed in heavier type. Meanings for names (in brackets) are only given in those cases where the meaning is beyond doubt. For convenience, the names have been grouped into a series of areas which are self-explanatory.

CRATHIE, GLENGAIRN, ETC.

Geallaig: **gyallik**; the hill on the north side of the Ballater-Crathie road; there are the big and little Geallaigs.

Glaschoille (green wood): the road from Gairn to Don; the sound is almost like **glass**-hill, or like Glassel, which is probably the same name.

Glen Fenzie: glen **fin**-ie.

Stronyarrick: strin-**yarrick**; the road from Crathie to Gairnshiel (sròn dearg, red nose or projection).

Culardoch: cool-**ardoch**.

- Bealach Dearg: **byallach djerrik**; the track from Invercauld to the Gairn (red pass).
 Glen Feardar: the stream is the Feardar: **fyarder**; in compound names the **f** drops out, hence giving Aberarder and Inverarder, the latter being usually called the Inver.
 Monaltrie: **mon-altrie**; old Monaltrie, the original location of the name, is a farm two miles west of Crathie church.

LOCHNAGAR.

- Inchnabobart: **innish-na-bobart**.
 Alltnagiubhsaich: **alt-na-yoosich** (burn of the fir-wood).
 Cuidhe Crom: **coo-ie crom** (bent snow-wreath).
 Meall Coire na Saobhaidhe: **myall-cor-na-sivvie**.
 Feindallacher: **fane-dallacher**.
 Garbh Allt: **garrawalt** (rough burn).
 Ballochbuie: **balloch-booie**.

BRAEMAR.

- Craig Choinnich: **craig hone-yich** (Kenneth's craig).
 Morrone: **mor-rone**; this sound is now the usual one; the Gaelic sound was the same as for Morven, approximately **mur-ving**.
 Càrn na Drochaide: **cairn drochet** (hill of the bridge).
 Gleann an t-slugain: now called the Sluggan; the name refers to the ravine (slugan) at the top of the glen.

GLENCLUNY, CAIRNWELL, ETC.

- Càrn an Tuirc: **cairn toork** (boar hill).
 Cairn na Glasha: **cairn glashie**.
 Fafernie: **fe-fernie**.
 Tom Buidhe: **tom booie** (yellow hillock).
 Caenlochan: **can-lochan**.
 Monega: **mon-aega**.
 Glas Maol: **glas meel** is the common sound now; the Gaelic was **glas-vyall** (green hill).
 Càrn Aosda: **cairn ösch**, with sound of German ö; the -da ending has no business there.
 Shanspittle Bridge: **shan-spittle**; the little ruined arch of the military road near the top of Glen Cluny, but now often meaning the modern road bridge farther down; the name indicates the "Old Spittal," which had once stood there.
 Càrn Geoidh: **cairn yo-ie** (goose hill).
 Glen Thaitneich: **glen tatnyich**.
 Beinn Iutharn: **ben yoo-arn**; there are two, the big and little.
 Lochan nan Eun: **lochan-nan-yane** (little loch of the birds).
 Glas Thulachan: **glas toolichan** (green tops).
 Càrn an Rìgh: **cairn an ree** (hill of the king).
 Càrn Bhac: **cairn vack**.

BYNACK, ATHOLL, ETC.

Bynack: by-nack.

Sgarsoch: the skarsoch; it had the def. article also in Gaelic.

Càrn Ealar: carn-eelar.

Beinn Dearg: ben djerrick (red hill); dearg, red, is pronounced with two syllables, as djerrick.

Càrn a' Chlamain: carn hlawing.

Beinn a' Ghlo: benna-glo is now a common sound; the map spelling Beinn a' Ghlo is not good; the old spelling Ben-y-Gloe cannot be called wrong, because it attempts to reproduce the palatal quality of the "n" in ben or beinn; the Gaelic was nearer to beinn-ghleo, or ben-glyo, with glyo as one syllable.

Garbh Buidhe: the garra boo-ie; a ravine at top of Tilt.

Falar: fe-lar (mare's burn).

STRATHSPEY.

Eidart River: etshart; the Gaelic had a front or palatal d, a sound not existing in English, but nearly like tsh.

Kingussie: kin-yoosie (end of the fir-wood).

Gaick: ga-yack.

Minigaig: minnigyak; the old drove road crossing from Kingussie to Blair.

Meall Tionail: myall tsheenil.

Càrn Bàn: carn ban, with a long a (white hill).

Sgòran Dubh: skorran doo (black crag).

Loch Eunach: loch ennich; but the e of the first syllable is long.

Cairngorm: càrn gorm; the collective name "Cairngorms" for the whole group of hills is purely English, having become used by visitors in the nineteenth century; the old Braemar people said they had no collective name for these hills; on the other hand the Strathspey people called them the Monadh Ruadh: monna-roo-a (red mount); this term, a good descriptive one when these hills are looked at from the west side, is now practically extinct, but I have met an old Strathspey man, as recently as 1942, to whom it was quite familiar.

GLEN DEE.

Càrn Cloich Mhuillin: carn clo-ich voolyin; the translated name, the Millstone Hill, is commonly used.

Beinn Bhrotain: ben vrotten.

Monadh Mòr: monna more (big mount).

Glen Geusachan: glen gyoosichen.

Cairn Toul: carn toul, like English "towel."

Coire Odhar, also spelt Corrou: cor ower; the second word rhymes with "power" (grey corry).

Garbh Choir: gar-horry; but Gaelic speakers said gar-hor (rough corry); the familiar word coire, a corry, which in western Gaelic is pronounced corry or corra, was in the Braemar dialect always a

- single syllable cor; where, as with this word, it is the second part of a compound name, the "c" becomes an "h" in sound.
- Coire Dee: the Gaelic sound was cor **yae**; the river-name Dee was pronounced, nominative **dshae**, genitive **yae**, both rhyming with "say."
- Braeriach: brae **ree-ach** (brindled slope).
- Coire Bhrochain: cor **vrohan** (gruel corry).
- Lairig Ghru: larig **groo**; the second word stands for the name of the stream on the north side, the Druie.
- Ben Macdhui: ben mac-**doo-ie**.
- Devil's Point: this name justifies itself, being a literal translation of the Gaelic original, Bod an Diabhail or an Deamhain, *i.e.*, of the devil, demon.
- Angel's Peak: this name is a pure invention, being attributed to Mr Alex. Copland, one of the founders of the Cairngorm Club; the local people had no such name; to them it was Sgòr an Lochain Uaine, the Crag of the Green Loch.

BEN AVON, ETC.

- Ben Avon, or Ben A'an: the latter is the better sound, being nearest the Gaelic, which was like ben **a-wing**.
- An Sloc: the Slock, or the Muckle Slock.
- Beinn a' Bhùird: now often called **benna-board**; the Gaelic was in two syllables, like ben-**bord**.
- Bruach Mhor: **brooach vore** (big brae).
- Dubh Gleann: the **dooglen** (dark glen).
- Coire nan Clach: cor na-**glach** (stony corry).
- Coire an Loch: corn **loch** (loch corry).
- Glen Quoich: the Gaelic sound was **co-ich**, in two syllables.
- Càrn Èas: the Gaelic sound was **carn-yess**.
- Beachan: **beh-an**, or **bae-ohan**; a name the map-makers overlooked; the Beachan means the whole upper part of Glen Quoich.
- Derry: always the Derry, with def. article also in Gaelic; the name refers to the piece of old pine forest near there (doire, a small wood).
- Càrn Crom: **carn crowm** (crooked hill).
- Càrn a' Mhaim: **carn-a-vime**, rhyming with "time."
- Sròn Riach: strone **ree-ach** (brindled slope).
- Sputan Dearg: spootan **djerrick** (red spout).
- Beinn Bhreac: ben **vreck**.
- Glas Allt: the **glass-alt** (green burn; it will be noticed that this burn has grassy sides, like the other Glassalt at Loch Muick).
- Beinn a' Chaorruinn: ben **hurrin**.
- Lairig Lui: the crossing to Abernethy is the Lui Lairig; some maps have laogh, for "calves," which is merely fanciful.
- Clais Fhearnaig: clash **hyarnich** (caterans' pass); between Lui and Quoich.
- Beinn Mheadhoin: ben **mae-in** (middle hill).
- Loch Etchachan: **etsch-echin**.

INVEREY.

Inverey: the Ey, the name of the stream, is pronounced not like English "eye," but like the diphthong used by Aberdeenshire farmers in words like "hay," "ley," etc.

Corriemulzie: corry **moolzie**; older speakers said corry **moolyie**.

Féith nan Sgòr: **fae-nan-skor** (moss burn of the crags); the hill mass between the Dee and Lui; the name had originally meant the burn on its top.

Delavorar: **del-a-vorar** (the lord's haugh); the extinct farm on the south side of the Dee above the Linn; farther up on the same side is the Dhubrach: **doobrach**; on the north side was Tomnamoine: **tom-na-mone** (moss hillock); beyond the White Bridge is Ruighnan-clach: **rooie-na-glach** (stony shieling).

Chest of Dee: a translation of the Gaelic name for it, the original word being *ciste*, a box, apparently from the box-like form of the rocks there.

[Place name spellings are those on the O.S. maps.]



BEN VORLICH AND STUC A' CHROIN.

WILLIAM MALCOLM.

A SPRING Sunday morning saw us setting out from Strathyre. The weather was mild and close in the valley so that walking was warm work and the pace was made very easy to prevent overtiring at the start. Above, the clouds were down to about the 1,400 feet level hiding all hill-tops, and at times a slight drizzle descended and warned us that we need not expect to keep our clothes dry that day.

About three-quarters of a mile before reaching Kings-house Inn we took to the hill-side and at a gradual slant towards the N.E. began to ascend the ridge. When opposite the inn we faced towards the ridge and attacked it in earnest. Very soon patches of snow were reached and the col between Meall nan Uamh and Meall nan Oighreac became visible right in front. We reached this a little south of the lowest point.

Looking backwards, Loch Voil was occasionally seen and also glimpses of the railway arches in front of Glen Ogle, but otherwise very little could be seen as the mist was low in all the valleys and at this time the rain, though slight, descended steadily. After descending a little into Glen Ample, to obtain a view across the valley we stopped to consider the situation.

At the start our intention had been not to fix the programme for the day till we reached this col and obtained a view of the hills on the other side of Glen Ample, as neither of us had been in this direction before. Unfortunately the mist was so low that nothing could be seen of the nature of the summits on the other side of the valley. Under these circumstances we decided to make first for Ben Vorlich, the remainder of the programme being left open.

The problem now was how to reach Ben Vorlich. After consulting the map, we decided to follow the stream which

came down between Creagan nan Gabhar and Creag Dhubh till the corrie was reached and then make for the col between the former hill and Ben Vorlich and straight up the ridge to the summit.

Looking across the valley we could see Glen Ample Lodge and two streams descending close by while a shallow valley, probably containing another stream, could be seen between them. A little difficulty was experienced in deciding for which stream we had to make.

On the one-inch map three streams are shown within a quarter of a mile of Glen Ample Lodge, the third being the one we ought to follow. The half-inch map, however, showed only two streams near the Lodge, the second being the right one. It was finally decided that the small stream shown on the one-inch map was invisible to us, and careful compass readings seemed to verify this, so a descent was made towards the second visible stream to the right of the Lodge.

The river Ample was soon reached and crossed and, keeping to the north bank of the stream, whose volume assured us that we were on the right track, we began to ascend the hill-side. A foot-bridge crosses this stream near its junction with the Ample and a fine waterfall is passed a short distance up the hill-side. This fall had been a prominent object to us while descending into Glen Ample.

The going at first was rather rough and steep, but as we rose higher became much easier and snow was soon reached in large patches. Occasionally the mist drifted aside sufficiently to give glimpses of Creag Dhubh whose snow-covered rocks looked very forbidding.

As the corrie opened out we gradually kept away to the left and by easy inclines reached the Vorlich-Creagan nan Gabhar col. Here we decided to put on warm clothing and to take first lunch, which was taken standing. Occasionally Loch Earn could now be seen, but otherwise there was little to see but snow and mist.

After lunch the ridge was attacked and proved to be a comparatively easy snow-slope. All view was soon shut out and we rose gradually till a deer fence came in sight. This fence, though about six feet high, was in places completely

covered with the snow on the summit ridge. This snow ridge was carefully followed till the cairn (3,224 feet) became visible. The ridge was not very wide and sloped steeply down on either side, and as a high wind was blowing we took the precaution of keeping to windward of the fence wherever it projected from the snow.

While halted in the shelter of the cairn, suddenly the mist blew aside and Loch Earn came in view down below, and on looking round the whole ridge of Stuc a' Chroin became visible for the first time that day; but only for a moment and then nothing but white mist again. But the atmosphere seemed to be growing lighter, and again and again glimpses were obtained of Loch Earn with the sun shining on it, and the next time Stuc a' Chroin was visible my camera was ready and obtained a snap. Our hopes of the mist clearing now became high and we were not to be disappointed. Twenty minutes after reaching the cairn, Stuc a' Chroin was quite clear and the hills visible beyond Loch Earn as far as the base of Lawers.

The summits of Ben Lawers, Ben More, and Stobinian remained in the clouds all day, and often the Ben More group seemed to be having a very black time, but otherwise, and especially to the south, the atmosphere was beautifully clear. From Ben Vorlich the grandest sight was undoubtedly the fine ridge and snow-filled gullies of Stuc a' Chroin.

Now that the hills were clear we decided to follow the ridge to the latter hill and from our point of vantage on Ben Vorlich we carefully considered the work that lay before us.

We could see that there was only one point that might give trouble and that consisted of a steep-looking buttress that rose about 200 to 300 feet to the final summit ridge of the hill. We left the decision as to how best to attack this till a nearer view was obtained.

We now started down the ridge towards Stuc a' Chroin, taking advantage of any snow-slope that might be glissaded. A fence follows this ridge all the way between the summits and would serve as a guide in thick weather.

Arrived at the foot of the steep part we decided that it was not beyond our powers and a rest was taken before we started the climb. The rock proved to be very rotten and

unsafe and most of the ascent was made on snow. This proved to consist of about six inches of soft snow lying on ice and, hence, was very treacherous, and it was soon thought advisable to put on the rope. A slow advance was then made, steps being cut in the ice, but as this was often only of slight thickness and lying on rock, great care had to be taken to prevent a slip. A halt was made half-way up and a rest obtained on a convenient outcrop of rock, while a photo was taken of Ben Vorlich. The remainder of the slope was then safely tackled and the summit ridge reached sooner than we had anticipated. A quarter of a mile walk along the ridge brought us to the cairn (3,189 feet).

Looking back, the view of Ben Vorlich was very fine. The ridge of Stuc a' Chroin also presented a grand sight, the snow being corniced all along the top and descending in a long sweep of pure white to the corrie below. The view to the south and west included the Kilpatrick and Campsie Hills, Stirling Castle, the Wallace Monument, the Ochil Hills, Dunblane, Ben Lomond, etc. The valleys of the Kelty and Dubh Choirein looked very desolate. Beinn Each also presented a fine-looking peak and it was decided to follow the ridge and climb this hill also.

After taking a second lunch on the summit the ridge was followed towards the latter peak. The walking between the two peaks proved to be rather wet, the snow seeming to delight in giving way and letting one's legs down into icy streams below. The rocky lump (2,389 feet) between the two peaks was avoided by keeping close below its east face and striking the ridge again on the other side. The final 200 feet to the summit of Ben Each was steep but presented no difficulties and we were soon enjoying a well-earned rest on the top (2,660 feet). A final look round and then a descent was made in a S.W. direction towards the stream which flows into Loch Lubnaig. This stream was crossed about three-quarters of a mile from the loch and a short cut taken over the shoulder of Meall Mor, the road being joined about a mile south of the head of the loch. A final two and a half mile tramp along the road and the hotel was reached about 7.15 P.M., in time to do justice to a well-earned dinner.

COIRE NA CREICHE.

The image displays five staves of musical notation for the song 'Coire na Creiche'. Each staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a time signature of 3/4. The melody is written in a simple, folk-like style using quarter and eighth notes. The first staff contains the first line of music, the second and third staves continue the melody, the fourth staff shows a slight change in rhythm with a dotted quarter note, and the fifth staff concludes the piece with a double bar line.

Notation by ALICE S. R. MACLENNAN.

“ My last climbing day in Skye was a fitting end to a glorious spell among the Cuillin. My companion of the Lota Corrie adventure and I had spent a long day in a pageant of colour in Coire na Creiche, exploring among the rocks of Coire Tairneilear and among the Fairy Pools in Allt Coir’ a’ Mhadaidh. Our day was over, and we were lying in the warm sunshine, among the softly coloured heather and russet grass, gazing up towards the lovely peaks bathed in golden light, the shadows of clouds drifting over them taking on strange shapes and forms. No sound was heard but the soft lisp of water, the whispering of little wandering winds

COIRE NA CREICHE.

Oh, Bruach na Frithe looms high o'er the corrie
All russet and gold in the westering glow.
The Pools of the Fairies are blue in the sunlight ;
The red of the rowan is mirrored below.

Coire na Creiche.

The peaks are aflame in the fire of the sunset ;
The shadows are grey in the corries below.
The song of the waters is hushed into silence ;
The call of the raven comes softly and low.

Coire na Creiche.

The grey gauze of evening is dimming the glories
Of storm-shattered crests in the slender moon's light.
The peace that enfolds us with comfort and healing
Comes soft on the star-studded velvet of night,

Coire na Creiche.

Oh, Coire na Creiche of the mystical beauties,
Where songs of the fairies come softly and low ;
And peaks creep together to hold whispered converse
And tell of the secrets Man never can know,

Coire na Creiche.

HUGH D. WELSH.

among the grass and heather, and the soft call of a raven. There was a wonder and an unearthly glory about that evening light, with the sky radiant with the magic of sapphire, gold, rose and emerald, and the slender crescent of new moon silver against the glory. I was lost in contemplation and was so played upon by the magic beauty of the treasures around me that chords had been touched and the vibrations had been taking form. And so came to life an air we called 'Coire na Creiche.'"

(C.C.J., Vol. XV, p. 159.)

THE LIFE PRESERVERS' SOCIETY.

II. Glen Tanar to Ballogie by the Fir Mounth Path.

JAMES A. PARKER.

THE party assembled at Aberdeen on a perfect spring morning in 1934 and got away, shortly after 9 o'clock, in most comfortable cars. Our immediate destination, by way of Aboyne, was the Braeloine Bridge in Glen Tanar, from which we would cross the hills by the Fir Mounth path to Glencat and Ballogie, where we would rejoin the cars.

I was in the leading car—a rather luxurious one—and owing to the comfort of a back corner seat and to the monotony of the threadbare discussion about the West Kirk that was started by two of my companions, I fell sound asleep shortly after leaving Aberdeen.

I must have slept soundly for some considerable time and was suddenly awakened by someone shouting "CONFOUND IT, WE ARE ON THE WRONG ROAD, AND THAT IS ALFORD IN FRONT AND NOT ABOYNE!" And, sure enough, it was Alford and I was at once blamed for the mistake, as I was in the leading car and, as pilot, should have kept the driver right. It was my duty to do so and it was no excuse to plead that I had been mesmerised by the West Kirk discussion. Anyway, here we were within a mile of Alford and the weather had changed for the worst—in fact, almost for the very worst. Instead of the bright sunny morning that we had had at Aberdeen it was now a cold, raw morning with rain and a strong south-east wind. The problem now was whether to drive south across country to Aboyne or tell the drivers to take the cars to Lumphanan and wait there for us while we walked across country to that village. As the weather was not good enough for the Fir Mounth path we decided to walk to Lumphanan and started at once.

We left the main road at a point about one mile east of Alford, turned south and, after walking for about a quarter of a mile, noticed the gloomy-looking Balfuig Castle on our right. It seemed to be an object worthy of our inspection and it might give us shelter from the storm, so we made for it with all speed. The castle turned out to be used as a hostel for hens, living and dead. We examined the interior of the castle and the hens in great detail, thereby putting off the moment when we would require to face the storm.

But we could not spend the whole day there and we reluctantly left the hens' hostel, faced due south, and at once encountered the first barbed-wire fence. After crossing it we soon reached a decayed mansion-house, called Little Endovie, beyond which rose the forbidding slopes of a hill called the Strone. To reach it we had to cross several of the barbed-wire abominations which seemed to be a speciality of the local farmers. While surmounting the Strone our party showed signs of disintegration, as visibility was bad, some going to the right, which was wrong, and others to the left, which was just as bad, quite irrespective of the compass bearing. By good staff work, that is by sheer luck, we all met again on the farther side of the hill, where it at once became evident that no one had any clear idea as to where we actually were. Or perhaps it would be more accurate to say that everyone knew exactly where *he* was ; but that no two opinions were the same ! In the valley on our right there was a good road which looked as if it might lead to an inn, called Muggarthaugh, and we made for it (the road, *not* the inn) at once, or at least as fast as the intervening barbed-wire fences would permit. Overcoming these without any damage, we reached the road, which we were told was a bit of the old drove road leading from Fochabers to Brechin.

Two cowardly suggestions were now made. The first was that we should take shelter at the inn and send an S O S to the cars at Lumphanan telling them to come to the inn and pick us up there. The second, failing acceptance of the first, was that we should abandon the cross-country barbed-wire business and simply take the good road from Muggarthaugh to Lumphanan by Craigievar and Crossroads. Both of these

two suggestions were at once turned down with the contempt that they deserved and the party, before Muggarthaugh would have been reached, turned left by the road leading to Little Lynturk. The total distance covered to date was three statute miles plus eight barbed-wire fences, an average of 2.67 per route mile.

Before actually reaching Little Lynturk we decided that we had had enough of roads, so we left the road and made south across fields to a wood on the north side of a hill, 909 feet high, which might give us some slight shelter from the storm. Being uphill, it meant several rests ; but time saw us through and on passing the summit of the hill we saw a dreary scene to the south. In front there was a range of bleak snow-clad hills, the upper slopes of which were hidden by driving mist. But in the immediate foreground there was a desolate farm steading which we made for at once, as it promised shelter. To reach it we had, of course, to cross many barbed-wire fences of most intricate design, and finally found our way blocked by a ploughed field sodden with melting snow. It was very soft indeed, but several of the party boldly stepped across and into the softest part. The farm was appropriately called Claymill and thoroughly merited that name. We were kindly invited into the kitchen and in it, in the local dialect, "ate our pieces." We were a bit hungry as we had by now walked $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles, which showed that we had been going hard. The kitchen was warm and clean—at least the floor had been clean until we brought into it a large part of the ploughed field. We tarried in the farm for a long time and would have willingly waited longer ; but we had to get on, as time was passing.

We still had the chance of turning right and joining the good Craigievar road ; but no, as our braver members insisted that an equally good road led from Tillyfour almost direct to Lumphanan, and it would perhaps give us further valuable experience in crossing barbed-wire fences. So we made for Tillyfour and its "direct road." The barbed-wire fences were there right enough, and plenty of them ; but the road, when reached, was found to be mostly impracticable on account of soft snow and pools of water, and we had to take

to the fields and the fences. We were now at a height of about 800 feet and almost up to the snow-line on the western slopes of the hill called (if you can pronounce it) Benaquhallie.

However, after several miles of roughish work we reached the back entrance to Tullochvenus and shortly afterwards the Tarland road. Our troubles now seemed to be over, as all that we had to do was to turn to the right and pick up the straight road leading south over the hills, past Glenshalg, to Lumphanan, which we did. Unfortunately, this straight old road was a complete fraud. The only decent bit was uphill, and when we reached the summit the road was filled right across from side to side with snow-slush a foot in depth, as was proved by some of the party. The downhill part was in a shocking condition, badly broken up with ruts and overrun in many places with water and mud. It was most uncomfortable and apparently never-ending. Trudging down it and feeling that we would never reach Lumphanan, we suddenly turned a corner and there, just in front, were the two motor-cars waiting for us. We tumbled into them, snuggled into comfortable corner seats, shouted "Torphins" to the drivers, and I almost instantly fell sound asleep!

And I was almost as suddenly awakened by someone shaking me and shouting in my ear "WAKE UP, OLD MAN, WE ARE AT THE BRAELOINE BRIDGE," and, sure enough, we were and the whole affair had been a mighty bad barbed-wire dream. It was a perfect morning and not yet 10 o'clock. We left the cars, crossed the Braeloine Bridge and hit the Fir Mounth path. This we followed for slightly over a mile, to where it dipped down to cross the Burn of Skinna, and from there we struck up the hills which we crossed to the north of the Hill of Duchery, and then picked up the path leading down Glen Cat to Ballogie, where we found the two cars waiting for us. Thence to Torphins for tea, and home to Aberdeen. It had been a delightful walk with no barbed-wire fences to cross!

The above "dream" is an accurate description of a walk from Alford to Lumphanan made by the L.P.S. on another occasion.

A WAR-TIME WEEK-END.

E. BIRNIE REID.

ON a Friday morning in mid-September a party of three, one of them the newly joined Peter Millar, set off by the Deeside train. The visibility in town at 8 A.M. was not more than a hundred yards, but the wind appeared to be from the east and we were hopeful that, by the time Upper Deeside was reached, the sun would have penetrated. This, however, was not to be, and, after a short halt at Ballater, we set off, but were fortunate in getting a conveyance to Spital of Glenmuick, with the company of two Rover Scouts on their way back to Fifeshire. On arriving there, nothing could be seen of the hills on either side, and the barometer appeared to have fallen since early morning. Our objective was Glen Clova, and, thanks to the assistance of the Postmistress at Milton of Clova, accommodation had been fixed for that night in a shepherd's cottage. The distance to be traversed was not far, and there was a debate whether to follow the road by Loch Muick to the Black Burn, then ascending to the watershed north of Sandy Hillock and descending to Bachnagairn, or the alternative of getting on the heights right away until the descent of Capel Mount by the Capel Burn. We chose the latter route, at the right of way post half a mile on from the Spital. We saw nothing on the heights. The visibility varied from about thirty yards to a hundred yards and the mist was sometimes ordinary, but at other times of a very Scotch and wetting variety. By the time we got to the foot of the Capel Burn it was raining heavily and we decided to turn back and shelter at the shepherd's cottage at Moulzie. The time taken from Spital of Glenmuick was two and a quarter hours, and, after a minor set-back caused by the unexpected appearance of two big black dogs, a shed was found where we had lunch. After about an hour the rain lifted and we continued beyond



UPPER GLEN CLOVA. FROM JOCK'S ROAD

R. L. Mitchell

Braedownie, where it came on heavier than ever, and the only shelter was under a haystack or under some boulders.

When we reached our lodging in the shepherd's cottage we were wet, but our kindly host and hostess soon had a fire and a hot meal going. Then we were introduced to the members of the establishment, including the children, the dogs, the cat, the pig (Isey), and the cow (Molly), not to mention the ducks and hens. Our host had hoped to be on the hills all day gathering the sheep prior to the coming sales, but the weather made this impracticable, as the cloud was down to practically 1,000 feet above sea level. Later in the evening our hostess allowed us to assist in the preparation of a delicious dish of "stovies," the ingredients for which were peas, potatoes, and fat. She would have added onions, but had yielded to her husband's objection, so that we did not enter the debate. Naturally there was a good deal of discussion on the weather, and our host gave the opinion that the only hope of a good day to-morrow would be a thunder-storm to clear the air. This did not seem likely. The pessimism about the weather was increased by our seeing a heron in flight heading slowly down the river towards Kirriemuir. Locally it is considered a good sign if the flight is the other way. However, in the early hours of the morning the whole household was awakened by a roaring of thunder and a flashing of lightning, with a torrential downpour of rain which seemed to last for more than an hour and completely drowned the sound of the perpetually running water outside our bedroom window. Next day at half-past seven there were distinct signs of clearing, although it was still raining, and our host set off with his dogs for the hills. We had a leisurely breakfast, starting with a large plateful of well-made porridge and the old-fashioned bowl of creamy milk.

As we got to the confluence at Braedownie the weather seemed to be improving at every moment, so we started on the right of way outside Acharn and Glendoll Lodge. The right of way is clearly marked at the point of leaving the avenue, and by the map one can see that no crossing should be made of the White Water. With the wood-cutting operations now in force, it is not easy to find the path, and, with the best of

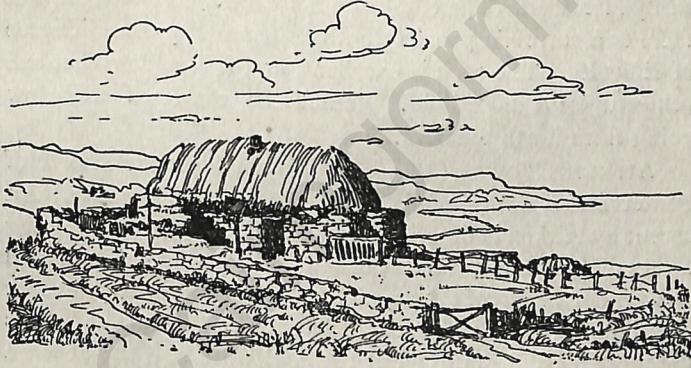
intentions, we found that we were approaching Glendoll Lodge instead of following the right of way, which runs nearer the river. We had, however, a friendly wave from some of the inhabitants of the Lodge, and continued on our way.

The pathway westward along Glen Doll is very pleasant walking, with a magnificent view up Glen Fee, famous for its Alpine plants, and, after the heavy rain of the night before, the river was well-named the White Water, as were the numerous tributaries which were now waterfalls pouring into the valley. At the top of the Glen, about an altitude of 2,500 feet, the path turns left for the use of stalkers, and at this point there is a notice-board indicating the direction of Braemar. From this point for the next two or three miles the path is not easily seen, but there are a reasonable number of cairns marking the line, provided the weather is not too thick. In thick weather one would have to depend a good deal on the compass for getting through the three miles on the plateau. When one thinks of the traffic that there has been over this path, or "Jock's Road," in the old days, one realises how a path soon disappears unless it is in regular use. In fact, in parts one might get the impression that Jock was nothing more than a rabbit nowadays.

After passing Tom Buidhe on the left we came to the fence on the county boundary between Knaps of Fafernne and Tolmount. Here again we lost the path leading into Glen Callater. After a short rest at the head waters in Glen Callater and a meal, the party agreed, as the weather was now good (although the wind was blowing fairly strongly from the north-west) to go and see Loch Kander, then climb out by the steep though easy western end of the corrie on to the shoulder of Càrn an Tuirc. From there we made a more or less straight line over rather rough country to the top of Creag nan Gabhar, and continued down the gradual slope which landed us at Auchallater. The time from Braedownie to Braemar was nearly nine hours, but, of course, it would have been a good deal shorter if we had not tackled Corrie Kander. We were glad to reach our lodgings about half-past seven, and to find that we were not too late for a meal. Fortunately that night coincided with the finish of double summer time,

and, after the unaccustomed length of day from Glen Clova, we were all very glad of the extra hour's rest.

The last day, Sunday, was filled in by a pleasant walk down the river back to Invercauld Bridge. Thence we followed the shooting road on the old right of way to Loch Builg and Tomintoul till we reached Culardoch, finishing at Inver in time for tea, before catching the bus back to Aberdeen.



SOUTER HEAD.

ON the Kincardineshire coast at Souter Head,* about two miles south of the Bay of Nigg, some excellent rock climbing may be had any summer evening or Saturday afternoon. Although Souter Head has been mentioned in previous numbers of the *Journal*, any description of climbs is usually brief and vague. In the following notes an attempt has been made to describe the main climbs in such a way that their position can be easily identified. The climbs do not exceed 60 to 70 feet, but there is a surprising variety both as regards type and degree of difficulty. The rock is excellent, and it is seldom that one comes upon a loose hold. The climbs are described below going from north to south.

AITKEN'S TOWER (A).—This is a small pinnacle north of Souter Head, surrounded by water except at low tide. An ascent by Aitken is described in Vol. XIII, p. 274. By doing a very difficult hand traverse round the south side he managed to ascend the front of the pinnacle. A brief survey last summer in a bathing costume persuaded us that the south side was the most feasible route,† but the cold wind and the absence of a rope prevented a serious attempt at climbing it. Perhaps someone who has had the benefit of an army training in amphibious operations may manage the ascent at high tide.

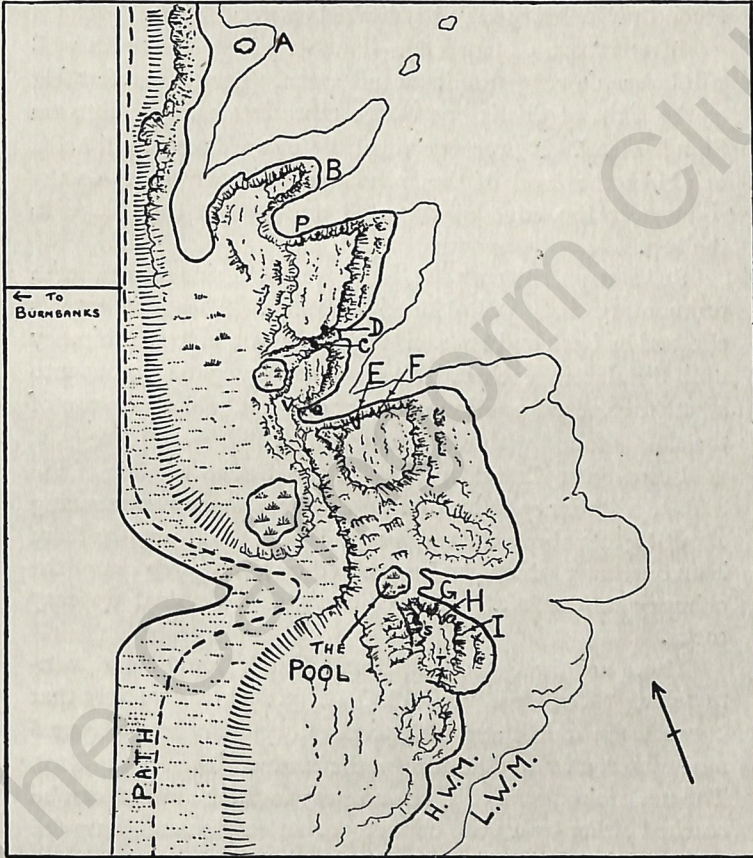
GRASSY PINNACLE (B).—This is the first promontory in the accompanying diagram and is much frequented by sea-gulls. The approach is along a neck of rock to a pitch of 14 feet which is not quite so easy as it looks. A descent can be made from the neck on either side and the pinnacle traversed at sea level without difficulty.‡

* Reached by crossing bridge over railway at Burnbanks and proceeding east through a field.

† Other comments appear later in the article.

‡ There is a possible route (*V.D.*) on the seaward corner of the N. face.

THROUGH ROUTE CHIMNEY (C).—The south side of the second promontory is approached along the edge of a small pool by means of a fine handhold about 7 feet from the ground. Here will be seen a hole in the rock giving access



SKETCH MAP OF SOUTER HEAD

to a V-shaped chimney. Anyone of more than average girth will find this hole difficult to negotiate, and even a reasonably slim person will discover that there is only one position in which his body will pass through. The walls of the chimney are rough with few good holds and the descent is made by

keeping the body wedged in to the narrow part. Although the chimney is short, the ascent is slow and laborious, and anyone who goes down and up without losing any buttons may consider himself lucky.

A few feet out from the chimney the south wall of the second promontory may be climbed on good holds.

MILESTONE CLIMB (D).—Farther* along the south wall will be seen a very prominent milestone. The route a few feet to the right of this is one of the more interesting climbs on Souter Head. It proceeds vertically upwards on small holds to above the level of the milestone and then bears to the right over the edge of the wall and up an easy slope to the top.

SLAB-TOP CHIMNEY (E).—On the north side of the fourth promontory is a well-defined chimney. The first part is climbed by back and knee with the body well in to the chimney until the slab is reached. It is now necessary to step out into a rather exposed position and a good handhold at the top of the slab is found with a feeling of relief.

LONG STEP CHIMNEY (F).—A few feet to the left of the Slab-top Chimney is another and narrower one commencing about 15 feet above the rocks at the foot. Half-way up there is an overhang which can be avoided by a long step out of the chimney to the left.* The climb is then finished up easy rocks.

There are three pools at Souter Head, but the one mentioned as "The Pool" in Vol. XIII, p. 184, is probably that between the fourth and fifth promontory. There are several moderate routes up the rocks on the landward side of the Pool. The neck joining the fifth promontory to the mainland can be reached either by a wide chimney or an easy scramble up the rocks on the right of it.

BIRD'S NEST CRACK (G).—This rises at a moderate angle on the north wall of the fifth promontory a few feet to the left of the Pool. On feeling for a handhold near the top, a climber was startled by a frantic chirping and found he had nearly taken hold of a nest of very young fledglings.

* There is an alternative route on the steep slabs on the right of the overhang.

OVERHANG CRACK (H).—A few feet to the left of the above, a vertical crack rises above a small overhanging slab. After surmounting this overhang with difficulty the climber obtains a firm lodgment in the foot of the crack. For the next few feet there is a great dearth of handholds till the crack slants to the right, when it becomes easier. From the top of the crack a short easy scramble leads to the summit. This climb should be thoroughly investigated with a rope from above before an attempt is made to lead it.

CHIMNEY AND WALL CLIMB (I).—Farther to the left, near the front of the promontory, is a short chimney which looks feasible. A traverse to the left above this takes one to a vertical wall 10 feet high leading to the summit. The wall may be avoided by continuing the traverse round a corner on to easy rocks.

R. R. MACDONALD.

R. O. SCOTT.

AITKEN'S TOWER (A).—W. T. Hendry, G. Lumsden (Etchachan Club), and Dr Cruickshank traversed round the north side of the pinnacle on barnacle-covered rock and completed the climb on the seaward side, a scramble of some 25 feet. The ascent, starting by a traverse on the south face, was found to be harder than the previous one. The landward face (*A.P.*) was also climbed, in stocking-soles, and was found very hard, especially at the start.

PARALLEL CRACKS (P).—David Thomas, of Wrexham, first climbed this route solo, in boots. Rubbers are to be preferred. Two parallel cracks on smooth slabby rock set at a steep angle will be found on the face opposite Grassy Pinnacle, providing an exposed climb of about 50 feet.

PUFFIN PERCH (Q).—This lies in the next bay to the south, on the face opposite to the Slab-top Chimney but not so far out. Starting up a slanting crack from the water's edge, a very narrow ledge is reached in about 30 feet. The ledge is traversed to the left for 10 feet, when it peters out. The climb then goes straight up. Dry day climb.

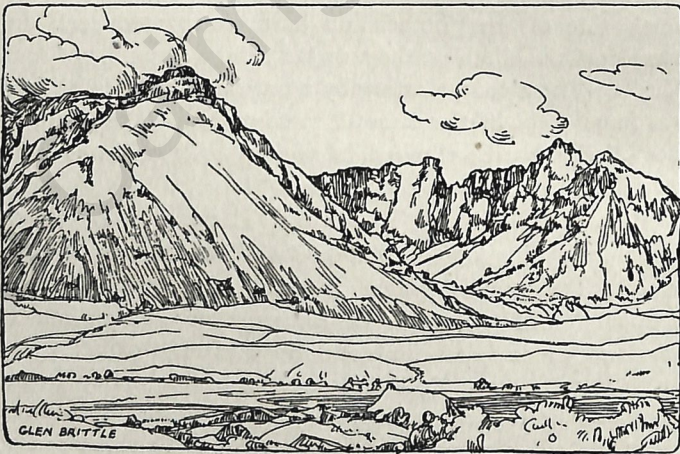
VARIATION EXIT (V).—An interesting variant to the usual route out of this bay will be found at the back of the

bay to the left of the previous climb. It is a short climb on small holds, steep and interesting. Rubbers.

(S) There is a climb on the left wall of the wide chimney leading to the neck joining the fifth promontory to the mainland. A sickle-shaped crack, overhanging in mid-section, leads to the neck. Footholds are exiguous or absent and the climb is hard on the arms—in fact, the hardest climb at Souter Head.

(T) On the south side of this same promontory a good climb starts from a shallow recess, out over the outhang above, and then up a small crack. About 40 feet. This may be done in boots, but as a general rule the face climbs will be found more enjoyable in rubbers.

W. T. H.



A FIRST VISIT TO SKYE.

H. D. WHITEHOUSE.

A HOLIDAY in Skye ! Oh yes, we shall certainly go to Skye—after the war. Why not now ? Impossible ! Why impossible ? Well, then, is your journey really necessary ? No, but we live only once, so let's go, anyhow ! In the end, all was fixed up and we left in the early autumn. Boarding the night train at Crewe, we travelled in luxury to Inverness and thence to Kyle of Lochalsh.

A flock of sheep was chased off the ferry-boat and we went to take their place for the short journey across the Sound of Sleat, passing the ruins of Castle Maol which brought memories of the vikings and of their princess who once lived there ; 5 P.M. saw us at Sligachan after a rather bumpy bus ride and all the Cuillin Hills were clear to their tops and looked fine against the blue sky. We were told that Skye was having the best spell of weather for several years. Things were looking good.

Next day dawned inconceivably clear ; the sun shone and the sky was blue, so we set out in a party of three for Sgùrr nan Gillean—with the rope. Shall we ever forget that rope ? Climbing rope being unobtainable anywhere, something to take its place had been obtained, and when this something was unpacked at Sligachan it turned out to be a cart rope of no mean strength, weighing at least 15 lb. ! The young naval member of the party was consulted and recommended the removal of one strand, which would leave strength enough to hold the entire party at once. We took the rope up Sgùrr nan Gillean and that was its last outing. The leader found such a weight round his waist that he was unable to move upwards, and, as the heavy rope dragged across loose scree, pounds and pounds of debris fell on those following.

Knight's Peak was ascended first, then Sgùrr nan Gillean,

and what a view! We looked over the channel between Benbecula and N. Uist and there, over ninety miles away, suspended between sea and sky, was St Kilda with its huge cliffs falling to the Atlantic. We wondered if we would ever set foot there. Mountains in every direction—An Teallach looking wonderfully enticing. Well, perhaps some day! But the near-by Black Cuillin, too, looked superb. Truly are they called black. I doubt if any of us had seen so many mountains ever before at one time. The young member of the party found a fine eagle's flight feather near to the summit ridge and this caused us to keep an eye on the sky, although until then we had hardly seen any birds at all.

A leisured scramble down the eastern ridge brought us nearer to the glen. This ridge is part of the so-called Tourist Route. The rope preceded us down each cliff and it whistled wonderfully as it sailed through the air. We wondered if we would whistle like that if we dropped over! At dinner we were delighted and most surprised to find the President, H. D. Welsh, in the dining-room, and to hear that he had just had a most enjoyable day on Bruach na Frithe and the Bhasteir Corrie. Next day was not so good, mist on the tops, rain in the offing, barometer falling. Somebody said, "You've had one good day, any way."

On a day of uncertain weather we made for Bruach na Frithe by way of the Fionn Corrie in a certain amount of mist which cleared wonderfully five minutes after our arrival on the summit ridge. We saw pinnacles and rock faces outlined against the mist which moved from ridge to ridge revealing something new and wonderful every minute. As the sun filtered through the mist we looked, in vain, for a Brocken spectre. Instead, the views opened out—Loch Hourn and Loch Carron were bathed in sunshine, Rum was having a little rain, and the Outer Isles were clear from Barra to the Butt of Lewis. In the middle distance MacLeod's Tables looked fine and the smooth surface of Loch Bracadale reflected the rocks on its shore like a mirror.

Scrambles on Sgùrr a' Fhionn Choire and on the neighbouring pinnacles amused us for a while, but we were not amused when the young member of the party attempted to



CORUISK

H. D. Whitehouse

climb down the impossible. Sgùrr a' Bhasteir was visited and this point affords a fine view of Sgùrr nan Gillean and the Pinnacle Ridge as well as of the Bhasteir Corrie. The cave climb on the Bhasteir Tooth looked too wet and forbidding, festooned as it was with bits of rope left there by previous parties. We climbed to the top of Am Bhasteir instead, whence we looked down to the summit of the Tooth, 70 feet below us.

Another day in this war-time holiday flashes vividly across my memory. It was a day of sunshine and bright cloud, and as we ascended the Bealach a' Mhaim path towards Glen Brittle the midges feasted on our shirtless backs. We passed the Fair Corrie and entered the huge hollow in the side of the Cuillin, Coire na Creiche or Corrie of the Spoil. We looked in awe at Sgùrr an Fheadain with its prominent Waterpipe Gully, one of Britain's most famous rock climbs. We ascended towards the right into Tairneilear and then to the ridge joining Sgùrr Thuilm to Sgùrr a' Mhadaidh, which was our first objective.

From the ridge the ascent to the summit of Sgùrr a' Mhadaidh looked fearsome with its shattered crest and we followed the nail scratches to the right into Coire na Dorus and climbed up an easy scree gully. We wondered if this gully is An Dorus, where the MacLeods escaped from their enemies after the battle in the glen below. As we lunched on the summit of Sgùrr a' Mhadaidh we were fortunate to spy the young member of our party just as he arrived beside the cairn on Bruach na Frithe with a lady friend whom he was escorting on her first Cuillin climb. We found the ridge route to our next objective, Sgùrr a' Ghreadaidh, quite easy, although somewhat sensational in places. When we surveyed the Black Cuillin from this vantage point, 3,190 feet above the sea, we felt that we were truly in the heart of these magnificent hills.

Coruisk, the birthplace of the waters, was just below us and, on the other side, Coire na Dorus. One wonders how these knife-edged ridges are able to stand against the Atlantic gales which rush against them in days of winter storm. We looked across to Sgùrr Dearg with what appeared to be a huge slug perched beside its summit, and this we found to be the

highest part of the Inaccessible Pinnacle, for the Pinnacle is hidden behind the summit of the hill from this point, only the topmost stone being visible. Sgùrr na Banachdich did not look far but the ridge between, along which we had to pass, is like the edge of a knife and in parts notched and very broken, and it took us well over an hour to pass between the two peaks. Surely this must be one of the finest parts of the Cuillin Ridge, for there is no way down to right or left; there is hardly a flat spot to stand on anywhere and the hands are continuously employed. In parts we were reminded of the Crib Goch, famous as part of the Snowdon Horseshoe walk in distant Wales. The views were superb—when we had time to look at them—for one step in the wrong direction to the left would have put us into Coruisk and one to the right into Coire na Dorus. To let go, in many places, would, I am sure, have made a quick and quite painless entry into the next world. As we approached the rounded summit of Sgùrr na Banachdich it was quite a relief to be able to walk again using only our two feet. We felt a wave of respect and awe towards those who have completed the main Cuillin ridge in a day.

Memories of other days pass through one's mind—a day of flying showers and stinging hail on the grassy top of Glamaig. Yet all the time the mainland was to be seen bathed in sunshine and dappled with cloud shadow. From here Raasay and Scalpay are seen entirely surrounded by water, for the fact that they are islands is not apparent from the lower ground. One day, when crossing from Sligachan towards Glen Brittle, by the Bealach a' Mhaim path, an eagle appeared flying in a leisured manner towards the east. As this great bird made his way towards the Sound of Raasay he passed close to us and his flight feathers could be seen to bend upwards with each beat of his powerful wings. We marvelled at a brilliant sunrise, at the deep blue of the sea-lochs, at the colours of land, sea, and sky, and we said, "May it not be long before we are here again."

RAMBLING IN THE PENTLANDS.

ROBERT SMITH.

To most readers of this *Journal*, the Pentland Hills may seem very small fry, but in these days of restricted transport facilities, one has just got to be content with the hills in the immediate vicinity. I have been fortunate enough to be within easy reach of the Pentlands for the past two years, and I have spent many happy days rambling among them.

The Pentlands can be divided roughly into three parts, of which the best known is that consisting of Caerketton, Allermuir, and Capelaw Hills. These are clearly visible from Edinburgh, and the climbs from Hillend Park over Caerketton and Allermuir, or through the village of Swanston to Allermuir, are both favourites with those few citizens of Edinburgh who enjoy the hills. Strange as it may seem, I have met dozens of local people who have never been on the Pentlands ; in fact a great many have never even climbed Arthur's Seat, although it is right in the city itself. From the tram terminus at Fairmilehead to the summit of Allermuir is a nice steady climb of 1,100 feet, with a splendid view from the top to reward those who are energetic enough to make the ascent. On a clear day I have seen hills as far distant as the Sidlaws, and the hills to the west of Loch Lomond, from the top of Allermuir. The first time I climbed this hill, on a spring evening, I realised the reason for Edinburgh's nickname of "Auld Reekie," as there was a pall of smoke hanging over the whole city. Since then I have often seen the same thick cloud, pierced only by Arthur's Seat, the Castle, and Granton gasometer ! This gasometer ranks as one of the main landmarks of Edinburgh, standing out sharply against the waters of the Forth. It is a pleasant scramble from Allermuir, down through Bonaly Park to Colinton, provided one steers clear of the neatly fenced path, which is almost invariably muddy,

irrespective of weather conditions. The walk from Fairmile-head to Colinton is one of my favourites, of an evening, either in summer or winter, for, after being cooped up all day in the city, I feel that such a walk is enjoyable even in the teeth of a biting wind.

The main ridge of the Pentlands, which runs south-west, consists of Castlelaw, Turnhouse, Carnethy, Scald Law, and the two Kips; of these Castlelaw is separated from the rest by the end of Glencorse reservoir. My favourite starting-point for this ridge is Flotterston, near the site of the battle between the Covenanters and Charles II's men. The north-east slope of Turnhouse is probably the steepest part of the whole range, but it is nothing to worry anyone who is accustomed to the hills. Nevertheless, a number of the people I have persuaded to accompany me found it very hard going, but they all managed to make the top. Viewed from the slopes of Turnhouse, Glencorse reservoir looks like a Highland loch, complete with its wooded islet, and it is hard to credit that it is a purely artificial reservoir. Actually Crane Loch, which is only a few hundred yards across, is the only natural loch in the Pentlands, but the various reservoirs all bear a strong resemblance to natural sheets of water, especially when viewed from a distance. From Turnhouse along the ridge to Carnethy is an easy walk, up the winding pathway to the immense cairn at the top. I have not been able to discover the origin of this cairn, which must contain at least two hundred tons of stones, but they appear to have been placed there by human hands, as the rock is different from that of the hill. Carnethy is the most imposing of the Pentlands, and affords a very good viewpoint in all directions. In the north-west, across Loganlee reservoir and the Black Hill, the spans of the Forth Bridge look like some toy erection in the background; in the opposite direction the Moorfoots and the Lammermuirs stretch away to the horizon, with the rest of the Pentlands to the south and south-west.

From the top of Carnethy I run down the steep slope to the path across to Loganlee, then up the equally steep slope, through very coarse heather, to the highest peak of the Pentlands, Scald Law. Like so many of the Southern Up-

lands, Scald Law has no clearly defined summit, but I presume that the Ordnance Survey cairn marks the highest point, 1,898 feet above sea level. Viewed from a certain angle, East Kip, which is my next hill, looks like a perfect cone, but it is an illusion. One side of the hill consists of a narrow ridge, running right up to the summit, where there is scarcely room to sit down. From East Kip to West Kip is only a short walk, and there ends the main ridge of the Pentlands.

The path across the moor from Nine Mile Burn to Balerno divides West Kip from the southern portion of the Pentlands, which stretch away nearly to Carnwath. Towards the southern end, the hills are not so high, and the country is boggy and uninteresting. I usually continue my ramble across Green Law and Spittal Hill to the North Esk reservoir, where I stop for lunch. After three or four hours on the hills, I always find that sandwiches, washed down with good hill water, make a very appetising meal, and yet the same sandwiches would be scorned if served in the city. After my lunch I stretch out on the hillside, smoking and thinking what the city dwellers are missing—the fresh air, sunlight, and restful surroundings. After musing there in the warm afternoon sun, I set off across the moor to Balerno, some nine miles distant. With a few stops on the way, the afternoon soon slips past, and I find myself regretting that I did not go farther afield, to encompass East and West Cairn Hills, even though I have vivid memories of being drenched there in a thunderstorm. At Balerno I reach civilisation once more—on a summer evening the first sign of it on entering the village is the tail-end of a long bus queue, a very familiar sight in these days. As it is only another four miles to the tram terminus, I always stride gaily past the queue, and catch the tram back to the confinement, dirt, and smoke of the city.

In Memoriam.

WALTER A. REID, LL.D.

DR REID, who was one of the most popular of the older members of the Club, died on January 14, 1944. He joined the Club in 1895, was Vice-President from November 1924 to November 1927, and was on the Committee for a subsequent period of two years. He was also a member of the Scottish Mountaineering Club, which he joined in 1908.

While Dr Reid was not what one might call an expert mountaineer, he had an intense love for the hills and mountains, and, when the necessity arose, was a neat rock climber. But he was essentially a hill walker and, even when well up in years, could perform long expeditions without undue fatigue. For example, when he was seventy-five years of age he walked from Invercauld to Inchrory over the summit of Ben Avon, at night, to see the sunrise. And, five years later, on his eightieth birthday, attained a height of 3,250 feet on Cairn Taggart, from Loch Callater (see "Braemar Octotoddle," pp. 22-24). Reid was a regular attender at the New Year Meets of the Club, and attended many of the others.

He contributed four articles to the *Journal*, and of these the two principal are an excellent account of the Summer Meet of the Club at Dalwhinnie in 1914 (viii. 69), and an amusing and interesting account (xi. 304) of an ascent of the Jungfrau that he made in 1926 with the assistance of one guide and the Jungfrau Railway. The latter took him up to the Jungfrau Joch, where he put up for the night at the large hotel, which he stated had some 200 bedrooms and spacious reception rooms. Leaving the hotel early next morning Reid and his guide took about 3½ hours to climb the 2,350 feet ascent to the summit of the Jungfrau (13,670 feet), apparently without having experienced any special difficulties. Reid also contributed two articles to the *S.M.C. Journal*.

Reid had several seasons abroad. In 1911, with the writer, he visited the Brenta Group in the Dolomites, where our principal ascent was that of the Cima Tosa (10,420 feet). It was my first rock climb with him and I was very much struck by the neat way in which he climbed an exceedingly steep rock face, as second man on the rope. In 1921 we had a short season in the Central Pyrenees, mostly in the Luchon district, and made five ascents, of which the Pic d'Aneto (11,170 feet) and the Pic d'Albe (10,761 feet) were the principal ones. In 1912 and 1913 he was at Zermatt and, in the latter year, with Henry Alexander, climbed the Matterhorn (14,780 feet). He had also visited the Canadian Rockies.

Reid was one of the founders of the Life Preservers' Society, was one of its most enthusiastic members, and rarely missed any of the outings (see pp. 123-128 and 276-279).

Dr Reid was an Accountant by profession and was one of the most prominent citizens of Aberdeen. He will long be remembered as having been a most generous benefactor to many of the Aberdeen hospitals and institutions; particularly to Robert Gordon's College, which was his old school, and of which he was for many years Chairman of the Governors; the Rowett Institute; and Newhills Convalescent Home. His passing was mourned by many.

J. A. PARKER.

JAMES CONNER, J.P.

JAMES CONNER, J.P., and late Sheriff-Clerk of Aberdeenshire, died in a nursing home in Aberdeen on February 26, 1944, after a short illness, and with his passing the Club has lost one of its oldest and most enthusiastic members. Mr Conner became a member in 1890 and, until his retiral from public service in 1930, never lost a chance, if he could avoid it, of attending the excursions into the hills he loved so well. Of light build, he was always in perfect condition for walking or climbing and could outstrip many of the younger members in speed and endurance.

In October 1918, along with another member of the Club,

he made his first and memorable crossing of the Lairig Ghru. The walk was made from Rothiemurchus to Braemar during one of the worst gales of wind and rain experienced in that part of the country for many years. A faithful account of this hazardous journey appears in the Club's *Journal* of January 1919 and makes exciting reading. Like all true lovers of the sport, he had his appetite whetted by this experience and thereafter made the same journey annually for many years. In 1928, during similar weather, he took ill on his arrival at Braemar after making the Pass and was for many days confined to bed, but even this did not deter him later from revisiting that part of the Cairngorms for which his heart felt such affection. He did not, of course, confine his activities to this part only but made excursions with the Club over a wide area, and it was during these times that his knowledge of the countryside, his kindly advice, and his unflinching cheerfulness made him respected, admired, and loved by all who had the pleasure of his company. No one could say more fervently or with greater sincerity than he—"I to the hills will lift mine eyes."

G. G. N.

A. M. M. WILLIAMSON.

THE sudden death of Archie Williamson at a comparatively early age came as a painful shock to his many friends. He has for some time past been one of the leading junior counsel at the Scottish Bar and he enjoyed an enormous and very varied practice. He has appeared in many celebrated cases, one of the most recent of which was the notorious Crematorium prosecution from his native city.

Of late years the demands on his time made by his ever-increasing practice at the Bar prevented Archie from doing much climbing, but up till about ten years ago he was an enthusiastic and active mountaineer and there were few Scottish hills which he did not know well.

He was particularly devoted to Skye and for many years never missed a climbing holiday at either Sligachan or Glen

Brittle. He was familiar with all the better-known Cuillin climbs and pioneered several which at the time were not so well known. He contributed three articles to Volume X of the *Journal*, two of them relating to climbing in Skye. On one occasion his party climbed the Inaccessible Pinnacle by all the known routes and invented some variations. Their ascents of the Pinnacle for the day numbered twenty-two. Although not a record holder he was one of the many climbers who have traversed the entire Cuillin ridge in a day.

Archie was an ideal companion on a mountaineering holiday. His tremendous zest for living, his shrewd knowledge of human nature, and his pawky Aberdeen wit, with his incessant flow of anecdote, kept any climbing party of which he was a member in the best of spirits. He also had a very sound knowledge of mountain craft and was a competent and careful leader on many a rock climb on the Scottish hills he loved so well.

W. ROSS McLEAN, Comdr., R.N.V.R.

W. McQUEEN SMITH.

THE Club has lost in recent months some notable personalities who were interested not merely in mountaineering but also in other sports and activities. One of these was the late Mr W. McQueen Smith, who had long occupied a well-marked place in the legal life of his native city. He started practice forty-five years ago and had been a member of the Society of Advocates since 1914. Besides mountaineering, he was well known in connection with many other sports. He was a keen bowler, and in his earlier days he was both a cricketer and a football enthusiast. But it was as a golfer that he was probably best known. For thirty-two years he was Secretary and Treasurer of the Balnagask Club. He organised the Links Golf Championships and he was President of the North-East District Golfers' Union. He was a Freemason of long standing. But probably the interest that lay nearest to his heart was his close connection with the North Parish Church of which he had been an Elder and Church Treasurer for

thirty years. In all these activities Mr McQueen Smith will be much missed, not merely for the good work he did but also for his singularly sincere and upright personal character.

G. D.

ALEXANDER ESSLEMONT.

ANOTHER member of the Club who will be missed by many is the late Mr Alexander Esslemont, a member of the well-known Aberdeen family of that name, one of whom—his uncle—was Lord Provost of the city and Member of Parliament for East Aberdeenshire, and another—his cousin—was a Magistrate and Member of Parliament for the South Division of the city. Mr Esslemont was educated at the Aberdeen Grammar School, where he was a class-fellow of the late Lord Meston. All his life he was closely identified with the ecclesiastical life of the city. He was Session Clerk of his own Church and for the long period of fifty-seven years he had been a teacher in, as well as Superintendent of, its Sunday School. For some time also he was a member of the Presbytery and a prominent member of the Aberdeen Elders' Union. At his death, after a well-spent life marked by genuine though unobtrusive piety, he had reached the ripe age of eighty years.

G. D.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS.

1. *Fifty-fifth A.G.M. held in the Caledonian Oddfellows' Halls, Aberdeen, on Tuesday, November 30, 1943.*

MR H. D. WELSH presided over a good turn-out of members.

The President reviewed the Club's activities for the past year, which had been on a very restricted scale owing to war conditions.

Statement of the Club's Accounts for the year to October 31, 1943, submitted and approved, showing balances at credit of:—

1. Revenue	-	-	-	-	-	£18 10 6
2. Life Membership Funds	-	-	-	-	-	72 16 6
3. General Works' Fund	-	-	-	-	-	49 14 9

The Membership of the Club at October 31, 1943, was:—

1. Ordinary Members	-	-	-	-	-	221
2. Junior Members	-	-	-	-	-	5
3. Associate Members	-	-	-	-	-	1
4. Surviving Life Members	-	-	-	-	-	19
						<hr/>
						246

Decided that, as far as war-time circumstances would permit, Meets and Excursions should be arranged during 1944.

Decided to communicate with the Military Authorities regarding empty tins, etc., left on the hills by Troops, and to ask that steps be taken to prevent this in future, and that the present accumulation in various areas of the Cairngorms be collected and removed.

Decided to approach the Duke of Fife's Trustees regarding the possibility of obtaining a Lease of Derry Lodge after the war. A Sub-Committee, consisting of the President, Mr Garden, and Col. H. J. Butchart, appointed to deal with this matter, and, if necessary, an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Club to be called to consider ways and means of financing the project if the Trustees' terms were not completely prohibitive.

Votes of thanks to President and Office-bearers for their services terminated the meeting.

2. *Fifty-sixth A.G.M. held in the Business Women's Club,
Aberdeen, on Friday, December 1, 1944.*

Mr H. D. Welsh presided over a good turn-out of members.

The President reviewed the Club's activities during the past year, and made sympathetic reference to the deaths of the following members of the Club:—

Dr Walter A. Reid (1895).
James Conner (1890).
Dr A. Graham Ritchie (1925).
D. Neilson Collie (1931).
James Pyper (1914).
J. D. W. Stewart (1902).
L. McQueen Douglas (1921).
W. McQueen Smith (1899).
A. M. M. Williamson (1920).
D. C. Thom, killed in action (1939).

Note.—Since the meeting, intimation of the death of Alexander Esslemont (1893) has been received.

Statement of the Club's Accounts for year to October 31, 1944, submitted and approved, showing balances at credit of:—

1. Revenue	-	-	-	-	-	£63	1	10
2. Life Membership Funds	-	-	-	-	-	73	8	3
3. General Works' Fund	-	-	-	-	-	50	19	2

The Membership of the Club at October 31, 1944, was:—

1. Ordinary Members	-	-	-	-	-	214
2. Junior Members	-	-	-	-	-	8
3. Associate Members	-	-	-	-	-	1
4. Life Members (surviving)	-	-	-	-	-	19

Decided that on account of hotel accommodation not being available, a New Year Meet would not be possible, but that, so far as war-time circumstances would permit, Meets and Excursions on the same lines as last year should be arranged.

Derry Lodge.—The correspondence with the Agents for the Duke of Fife's Trustees was submitted, which indicated that they might be willing to consider a Lease of the Lodge to the Club, but that nothing could be done until the premises had been de-requisitioned by the Military Authorities. The Meeting was again of opinion that, if a Lease could be arranged, it would be a great asset for the Club, and the Sub-Committee was continued, and instructed to pursue the matter whenever the Trustees were in a position to put forward their terms and conditions.

Litter Left by Troops.—The correspondence with the Military Authorities was submitted. Several members stated that, as a result of the Club's intervention in the matter, most of the empty tins, etc., had now been collected and removed from the various areas complained about.

Votes of thanks to the President and Office-bearers for their services terminated the Meeting.

The following have been admitted Members of the Club :—

1943—D. Allison, Dr Marjorie Bain, Miss Dorothy Bain, John Boyes, Wing-Commander Lord Malcolm A. Douglas Hamilton, D. J. R. McPherson, James McNair. Miss A. A. Adams and H. G. Alexander (Junior Members).

1944—Sir Frederick Whyte, K.C.S.I., Lieut. John Lunn. Miss Juliet Watson, Miss A. E. Esslemont, Ian A. M. Hustwick, and D. M. McLellan (Junior Members).

MEMBERS ON SERVICE.

Alexander E. Anton, Mrs M. McArthur, Ian A. M. Hustwick, Dr F. C. Garrow, A. Leslie Hay, Wing-Commander Lord Malcolm Douglas Hamilton, John Lunn, C. W. Williamson, R. B. Williamson.

This third list brings the total of members on whole-time service to fifty, of whom five have been killed in action or died on active service. To all on service the Club extends its sincere good wishes.

The Club notes with satisfaction that H.M. the King has been pleased to confer the C.B.E. on our ex-President, Col. David P. Levack, in recognition of gallant and distinguished service in the field. Colonel Levack was repatriated last year after four years' imprisonment in Germany. He was taken at St Valery when serving with the 51st Division, of which he was then A.D.M.S.

Lieut. R. P. Yunnie, who has been serving in the Mediterranean campaigns, has been awarded the M.C. for activities as a member of the 8th Army Special Service Squadron. Congratulations, Yunnie. The Club expects to hear, in due course, more about these activities.

MEETS AND EXCURSIONS, 1944.

Indoor Meets were held in the Oddfellows' Halls, Belmont Street, on January 7, February 9, and March 15, at all of which there were good attendances. At the first, Alan C. Browne, F.R.G.S., gave a talk on climbing on Mount Tasman, New Zealand, illustrated by slides beautifully hand-coloured. At the February gathering, H. G. Butchart showed films of ski-ing in Scotland, and gave a short history of the development of this sport. Deeside in the 1850's was the subject presented by the President at the last meeting. This was illustrated by slides of sketches appearing in an old book on the scenery of the Dee, and appropriate quotations were given from the text.

Four Saturday afternoon excursions were arranged to places within easy reach of Aberdeen. The first, on May 6, to the Blue Hill and vicinity, attracted over a dozen members, and was very profitable. Rock-climbing practice at Souter Head on May 20 and June 10 was poorly attended, especially in June, on which occasion the four members attending eschewed the rocks and tackled Tullos Hill and Blue Hill instead.

Beauty Hill, New Machar, was the goal on July 8, over a dozen members cycling from Bridge of Don, and returning by Scotston Moor and Old Aberdeen. Good weather added to the enjoyment of all these excursions.

The all-night excursion during June 24-25 from Ballater to Braemar was very popular, fourteen members and friends taking part. At Spittal of Muick the party divided; nine, led by E. B. Reid, traversed Broad Cairn, Cairn Bannock, Fafernie, and Càrn an t-Sagairt Mòr. The remaining five, led by the President, went by the Glas Allt to the summit rocks of Lochnagar, and thence by The Stuic to Càrn an t-Sagairt Mòr. Both parties descended by Glen Callater to Braemar for breakfast. Weather conditions deteriorated in the late evening, and the dark hours were anything but pleasant. The larger party had comparatively comfortable quarters in the shepherds' bothy * on Broad Cairn, but the Lochnagar contingent suffered from inadequacy of shelter from both rain and wind and mist. However, a clear sunrise and a bright warm morning revived the spirits of everyone.

H. D. W.

THE FIR MOUNT ROAD.

Recently I visited this road for the first time, walking from Aboyne by Glen Tanar to the top of Craigmahandle and then over the Hill of Duchery and back to Aboyne by the Fungle.

A little difficulty was experienced in finding the track, where it branches from the well-marked path and crosses the Burn of Skinna, shown on the one-inch scale Ordnance Survey Map, Sheet No. 44.

A good look-out was kept for the branch track as soon as compass readings indicated that we were in its vicinity, but it appears to be overgrown at this point. However, an upright stone bearing numerals, on the left of the path, attracted attention. I think the numerals were 863. Is this a height? On the map the junction is shown practically on the 900 feet contour. There were signs that originally there may have been a "1" in front of the "8," making the number 1863 (possibly a date?).

Working on the assumption that the stone marked the junction of the tracks, the burn was crossed near here and the bank ascended on the south side. Craigmahandle, being hidden, a compass course was then followed, through long heather, towards the trees, but within about fifty yards a well-defined grass-covered track was found.

There was no difficulty in following the track from this point, though it is advisable to check by compass and map at one or two points in the trees, where there are signs of other possible routes.

* In the autumn of 1944 this bothy suffered from the elements and is no longer a haven.

We trust that, before using bothies on Glenmuick, Balmoral, Invercauld, and Mar, members will have the courtesy to apply for permission from the appropriate authority.

Maybe someone better acquainted with the ground can explain the numbered stone and say whether it is intended to mark the junction of the tracks, or whether the path should have been followed beyond this point before crossing the Skinna.

W. M.

KILNSEY TO SETTLE.

"Early March is not spring in England, but it is the end of winter," said a broadcaster recently.

It really seemed, however, as I put my head out of the window this morning, that spring had arrived. The still warm air felt full of life. I hastily dressed and went forth to meet my friend Gaston Bull, as had been arranged. Together we journeyed to Kilnsey, in upper Wharfedale, and arranged our sacks, preparatory to mounting the green track which skirts the famous Crag. This is known as Mastiles Lane and was made by the monks of Fountain's Abbey, whose estates were thus of enormous extent, to take sheep to Malham Fair.

We found it pleasant going on the soft turf enclosed by walls on either hand. What a labour of love this dry stone-walling must have been! Millions of stones skilfully and cunningly arranged.

At the highest point of the pass, Mastiles Gate (1384), we were on a breezy upland plateau, with extensive grassy fells around and about, limestone scars and clowders possessing names such as Proctor High Mark and Parson's Pulpit. In the valley below, the sun had been warm, but here were only glints of sunshine, though the clouds withheld their threat of rain.

This land is rich in bird life, and the curlew and plover were both heard and seen. By a marshy bit we put up what I think was a snipe.

At the right spot we diverged from the lane to reach the solitary farm of Lee Gate, where a metalled road descends abruptly to Gordale Bridge. From this point it is only a short walk along the meadows to the gloomy Gordale Scar. To-day, only a trickle of water came down between the overhanging walls of this roofless cavern.

The air was chill and we did not stay long; instead, we found shelter in a small wooded ravine under Cawden, the guardian hill of Malham. In this little village, so well described by W. Riley, the Yorkshire writer, an excellent tea was enjoyed at the "Buck," also a chat with the virile seventy-five-year-old landlord.

After tea, in lovely sunshine and in a white (limestone) world, we ascended the Cove road. In a mile or so we opened a gate and kept up a grassy track which reaches a height of 1,600 feet. Just previously a backward glance had revealed the blue waters of Malham Tarn. Now there was a glorious prospect westwards, worthy of the Lakes, or indeed Scotland.

The view was a revelation to me, as I had only come this way in storm and sleet twenty years previously. I now regard this pass as one of the finest hill crossings in Yorkshire.

The path goes down beside limestone crags, with the cairn of Ryeloaf (1794) conspicuous up on the left, and we soon arrived at the lonely and romantically placed Stockdale Farm. When the snows of winter fall, this solitary mansion must be isolated indeed. The Stockdale Beck is on a line of the Craven Fault, and in addition on the watershed of England. It drains into the Ribble and Irish Sea, while the streams to the east are carried into the North Sea.

As we paused at the farm, a faint pinkish light illumined the rocks behind. Then, resuming our descent, the bold and fantastic Attermire Scars stood up black and menacing against the setting sun.

Darkness began to fall, and the mists curled up around the hills as we made our way steeply down to Settle.

The day was not yet done; there was light refreshment and a smoke in the bar of the Golden Lion Hotel as we reviewed the day's proceedings. Finally, the Glasgow express conveyed us swiftly into Leeds, where the sirens were just sounding for an alert.

J. K. CRAWFORD.

ACCESS TO MOUNTAINS.

A member of Fort William Town Council has suggested a close time for Ben Nevis (during the winter months) and a fine of £5 for climbing the mountain on the Sabbath.

The series of tragic accidents on Ben Nevis explains the Council's present anxiety, but the situation seems scarcely so desperate as to call for a ban on climbing the mountain. It is not clear whether the tourist path would be included in the ban, but climbing was probably intended to include hill-walking. The path would normally present neither difficulty nor danger, even in winter, although in certain conditions some elementary knowledge of snow-craft would be desirable. Its general gradient, however, is such that motor vehicles have reached the summit by it, as also did a native of Fort William—pushing a wheelbarrow! Certain aspects of the mountain do present difficulties of a high order, and adequate allowance must be made here for Scottish climatic conditions, which play a very great part in determining the degree of difficulty. On Ben Nevis, in winter, the climbing may approach an Alpine standard and where length combines with difficulty reasonably good conditions are necessary for safety. This applies even in summer, at all events in the case of some of the harder rock climbs.

Perhaps the worst feature of the proposal was the attempt to discriminate between experienced climbers and "inexperienced strangers." Who would decide competence, who would define "inexperienced stranger"? It is an easy assumption to make, after an accident has occurred, that the victims were inexpert or imprudent, or both, but there are other possible causes. The most expert are not entirely immune from accident, which, indeed, sometimes overtakes even the Olympians in unexpected ways and in unlikely places. If the Scottish mountains were to attract irresponsible incompetents, it is unlikely that legislation would

remedy matters, for those who are not restrained by the obvious danger of high places are not to be deterred by the lesser restrictions of the law. Nor, probably, would any consideration of the inconvenience and possible danger to which members of a rescue party might be put weigh very heavily with them. Generally such members are none too well equipped for the task, notably so in the case of the police, who have to be informed of accidents and who are required to take part in any search. Whether the knowledge that the victim of an accident was an experienced climber and not an inexperienced stranger would make any difference to the sentiments of the rescuers, may be doubted.

The Council turned down the suggestions since it did not lie in their power to introduce a by-law to the necessary effect. There are, of course, more effective ways of discouraging rash adventurers than by imposing a ban of this nature on their activities. Climbers, and especially young climbers, are warned in a recent issue of the *Journal of the Fell and Rock Climbing Club* that accidents are expensive things to have. A member of that Club, an expert, after an accident in the Lake district, was faced with a bill for £200. With this warning he forges a sharper weapon than the member of Fort William Town Council!

As for the Sabbath ban, there would appear to be a solution here also other than the imposition of a fine—a possible attraction to adventurous youth who might find amusement in dodging the guardians of the sanctuary. On May 9, 1889, the Rev. John M'Neill held a religious service on the roof of the old Observatory on Ben Nevis, which sermon on the Mount was attended by over forty people. Perhaps any development of this idea must await the establishment of the Ben Nevis Railway so ardently desired by a former Provost of Fort William.

THE BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL.

On February 5, 1944, there was held at the Alpine Club the Inaugural Conference of the B.M.C. (passing, at that date, under the more cumbersome title, The Standing Advisory Committee on Mountaineering). Mr G. W. Young addressed the meeting and explained the need for, and objects of, such a body. The B.M.C. hopes to speak in the name of all British climbers on power schemes, deforestation, and other matters affecting the appearance of mountain country, to give authoritative advice to newcomers, and to maintain contact with educational and other youth organisations. Scottish Clubs are not widely represented on the Council. The C.C. received from S.A.C.O.M. a communication headed Circular No. 2, which, without Circular No. 1, was unintelligible. No action was taken.

THE LAST OF THE BOTHIES.

Continued trespass on the estate, housebreaking, and theft has led the responsible authority to order the burning of Slugan Bothy, where some of the property stolen was found. The Slugan was a useful forward

base for the Beinn a' Bhùird-Ben Avon group, especially in the short days of winter, and its disappearance will be regretted by many. The writer remembers its discomforts, and, by contrast, comforts during three days of blizzard in December 1931, when climbing was impossible; nevertheless that sojourn at the bothy is as memorable as any more successful venture. Slugan has suffered the fate that, on more than one occasion, threatened the Corrou—*for similar reasons.*

In an article to *The Listener* of November 23, 1944, Miss Janet Adam Smith suggests that a hostel be built on the site of the Corrou, brushing aside the prognostics of the pessimists who foresee swarms of trippers, the ruin of the peace of the hills, and so forth. We view the idea with some misgiving. The jodelling tripper is a nuisance to all within earshot, the boulder-trundler something of a danger to climbers, but the hatchet-carrier is the real menace. The hatchet does away with the necessity of carrying firewood to such distant bases as the Corrou; there is always some part of door, wall, or floor that can be dispensed with and yet leave the structure standing. We have seen it used on the Corrou and we fear it would be so used again on any hostel that might be built there. Were there a resident warden, *and a charge made for the use of the place*, the structure might survive. But where should we look for one anchorite enough to solicit such a post?

CLUB LIBRARY.

NEW books in the Club Library at 18 Golden Square include Journals of kindred clubs, "Shelter Stone Visitors' Book, 1939-1944," Vol. VI, and Professor T. Graham Brown's "Brenva." Members who have read "Running Water" (A. E. W. Mason) will recall the references therein to the Brenva Route to Mont Blanc. Inspired by this account, Professor T. Graham Brown set himself the task and pleasure of exploring the south face of the mountain, on which he has now made three new routes—Route de la Sentinelle with F. S. Smythe in 1927, Route Major with F. S. Smythe in 1928, and the Via della Pera with Alexander Graven in 1933. The historical treatment, the wealth of detail, and the communication of the author's enthusiasm to the reader make this one of the best mountain books of recent times. There is a collection, at the end of the book, of excellent photographs illustrating the Brenva face.

CLIMBING JOURNALS.

THE re-opening of Skye to the climber has to many of our members been an item of news more important than most and it has been heralded by articles in several of the recent mountaineering journals. Their appearance has been welcome, as there always seems to be more interest in those articles which deal with areas accessible to the reader, compared with accounts of expeditions of a similar standard elsewhere. "Sligachan and some Early Visitors," by G. D. Valentine, and "The Spring Cuillin," by J. D. B. Watson, are to be found in the *S.M.C. Journal*, Nos. 134 and 135, whilst *The Alpine Journal*, No. 269, has an article on Skye by Peter Bicknell. When read to the Alpine Club, this article, which gives some account of Norman Collie's influence in Skye, was illustrated by his slides, now the property of the Alpine Club, but unfortunately only two of them are reproduced. *The Alpine Journal*, No. 267, has H. MacRobert's account of "Ski Mountaineering in Scotland," a title which emphasises the fact that one generally has to be prepared to climb high to get good snow. The supremacy of the Cairngorm plateaux as Scotland's best ski-ing ground is recognised in this article, whilst "A Cairngorm Holiday," by T. Aron (*Cambridge Mountaineering*, 1944), describes an Easter ski-ing holiday in this district. In the same journal R. H. Goody gives a few hints on summer visits, advising, for instance, the replenishment of the larder from the ptarmigan at the Pools of Dee by means of a catapult, a scheme which we cannot commend!

"Our Eagles and their Prey," by G. D. Valentine (*S.M.C. Journal*, No. 134), brings the realisation that the zoology and perhaps also the botany of our local hills has been somewhat neglected of late—rather surprisingly, as space in the journals is not so scarce as it was when new ascents were plentiful and tended to crowd out all else. Opportunity is, however, being taken to publish "guide book" articles on some of the lesser areas, as, for instance, "The Moorfoot Hills" (R. M. Gall Inglis), "Some Glen Almond Climbs" (M. B. Nettleton and J. H. B. Bell), "Coast and Hill Paths around the Firth of Clyde" (B. H. Humble)—all *S.M.C. Journal*, No. 134; "Ben A'an" (J. B. Nimlin), "New Climbs in Arran" (G. C. Curtis and G. H. Townend), in *S.M.C. Journal*, No. 135, which also includes "Recent Rock Climbs on Ben Nevis," by B. P. Kellett.

A detailed account of an area across the border is "Three Cliffs in Llanberis," by J. E. Q. Barford, in *Climbers' Club Journal*, 1944, which also debunks the rigid classification of climbs in "Hardly VII G Minus," by E. H. L. Wigram. In the same journal, too, is an article of possible local application, "Winter Camping in British Mountains," by J. M. Béchervaise.

The Journal of the Fell and Rock Climbing Club (No. 38) is, as ever, good reading, whether it be "Birkness Day," by E. Banner Mendus, an account of a new climb obviously written for reading, "The Little Melody," by F. H. F. Simpson, which might be classified as philosophy of climbing, or Arnold Lunn's "Discovery of Mountain Beauty." The same author gives selections from his forthcoming anthology on Switzerland in English prose and poetry in the *Climbers' Club Journal*, 1944, and writes on "The Wordsworths and Switzerland," in *Alpine Journal*, No. 268.

"James David Forbes," by E. H. Stevens (*Alpine Journal*, No. 269), is an account of a Scots scientist who pioneered many of the routes in the Alps and whose books are not as widely read as they might be—they are to be found in the Club Library! Geoffrey Winthrop Young writes (*Alpine Journal*, No. 267) not of one pioneer but of the "Mountain Prophets"—Leslie Stephen, A. W. Moore, Whympy, Freshfield, Coolidge, Dent, Conway, Slingsby, Collie, Mummery, Haskett-Smith—who influenced his own creed either by their writings—all were authors—or by personal contact. How many of our members have read even one book by each of them? Should an acquaintance with the literature of the hills be part of the Club qualification?

The three *Alpine Journals* under review include numerous other articles dealing generally with, or with parts of, the Alps, the Rockies, the Himalaya—in fact, to quote two of the titles, "From Norway to New Zealand," "With Memories of the Alps and the Congo." But it is impossible even to detail the individual titles and articles.

J. F. A. Burt's article on "The Scottish Mountains in Art" (*S.M.C. Journal*, No. 135) leads naturally to the photographs in the current batch of journals. There are many whose purpose is to illustrate a particular climb or even a particular pitch therein. These are of practical value and cannot be judged on artistic merit. If, however, a general aspect is portrayed, then the photograph should have some æsthetic quality, and this is lacking in very many of the illustrations being considered. The reviewer dislikes, too, the practice in one of the journals of printing without margins, as the trimming resulting from binding tends to upset the proportions of a picture and would in one instance, considered here, mutilate the legend. J. S. T. Gibson's "Bergschrund below President's Pass in the Rockies" has pleasing snow gradation (*Alpine Journal*, No. 269) and there is something indefinable in the quality of Collie's two photographs in the same journal. In the *S.M.C. Journal*, where reproduction still approaches pre-war standard, W. W. Weir's low key study of Loch Coruisk in No. 135 is particularly pleasing.

R. L. M.

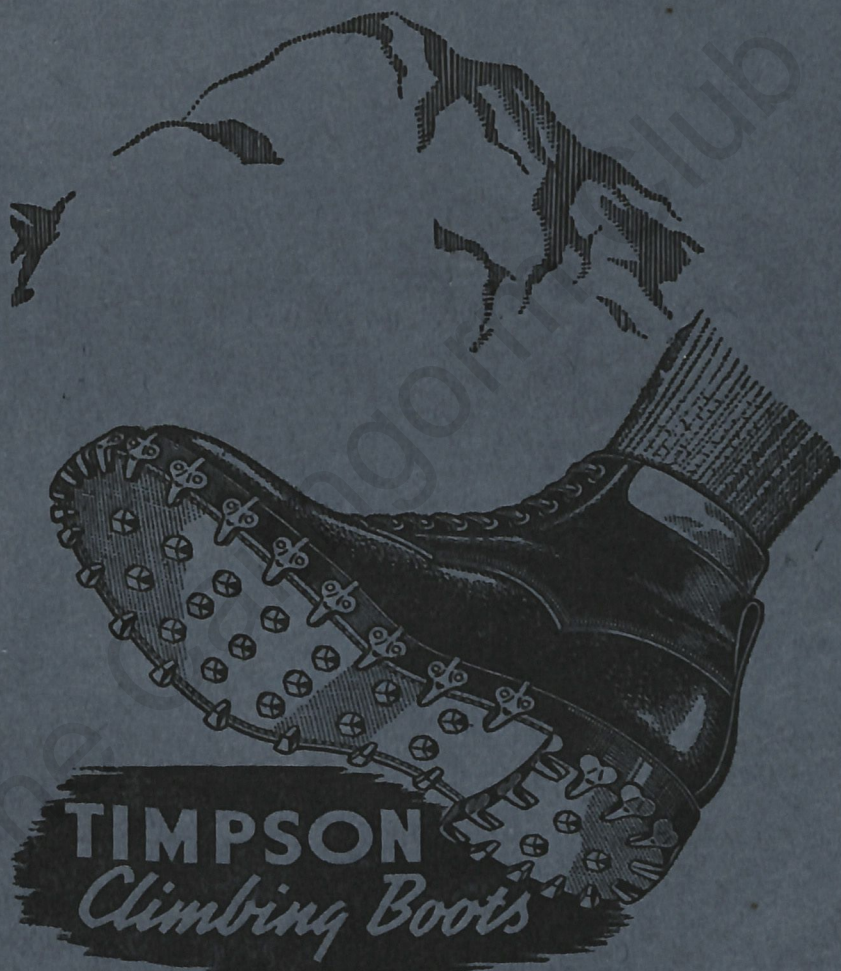
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