

The
Cairngorm Club Journal



VOL. XVI.

1948-49.

No. 86.

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EDITED BY

WILLIAM A. EWEN.

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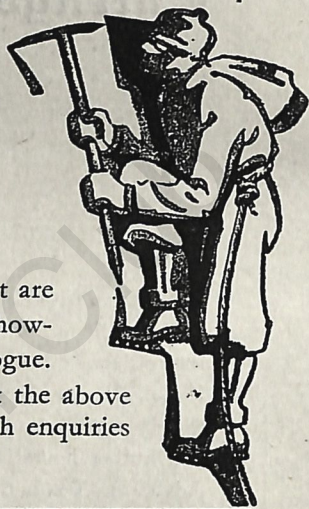
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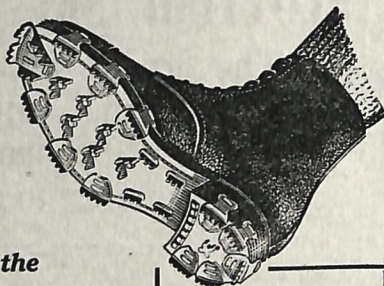
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CLACH GLAS AND BLAVEN

G. A. Roberts

SOME ARRAN CLIMBS AND RAMBLES.

E. C. W. RUDGE.

A YEAR or two ago five of us (six including the Scottie) paid a visit to Arran. We stayed at the Ingledene Hotel, Sannox, an ideal centre for climbers. The hotel is right on the seashore, commanding glorious views of the Clyde and the distant Highlands, while the mountains rise up immediately behind it. Glen Sannox, one of the loveliest glens in Scotland, opens out close to it and for sheer beauty few places can equal this. The little village contains only a handful of houses, and the wonderful setting of mountains and sea is a glorious reminder of the eternal beauty of the world. Furthermore, Mrs McKinnon understands perfectly the eternal hunger of climbers, and the food at the Ingledene is both excellent and plentiful.

We made a number of interesting expeditions and saw many lovely places. On the day we arrived we went up into Coire na Ciche and explored part of the precipice which rises from the corrie to the ridge of Cioch na h'Oighe, one of the two mountains which guard the entrance to Glen Sannox. The views were fine and we greatly enjoyed ourselves, although some of the rock was bad and there was a great deal of grass and heather on the ledges. The rope was used once or twice, chiefly as a safeguard against rotten rock and vegetation; the standard of climbing was not such as normally to require it.

On the second day we traversed the long, jagged ridge which forms one enclosing arm of the glen, on the side opposite to Cioch na h'Oighe. The first peak ascended was Suidhe Fheargas, an easy though fairly strenuous scramble, followed by the traverse of Ceum na Caillich, the "Witches' Step." This gave us two little climbs, the first being to the summit of Sgurr na Caillich and the second to the gap between it and Caisteal Abhail, the "Stronghold of the Ptarmigan." The descent to this gap led down a series of easy chimneys and short walls, finishing with a steep but not difficult slab

which can be awkward when wet. Caisteal Abhail is not far short of 3,000 feet high and is one of the highest mountains in the island. The whole ridge, from Sgùrr na Caillich onwards, is an interesting scramble; the rock is sound and there is plenty of entertainment for those in search of "problems." Several caves and tunnels provided amusing interludes and in one of these I lost my favourite pipe. The rock scenery is very impressive and the huge towers which abound everywhere have rather the appearance of vast, ruined castles and battlements. The weathering of the granite has broken them up into enormous blocks and flakes of "cyclopean" dimensions, and this type of formation is characteristic of all the Arran ridges.

Our next expedition was to Cir Mhor, a beautifully shaped peak standing like a miniature Matterhorn at the head of Glen Sannox. We climbed it by the Stone Shoot ridge, which starts with a climb on clean rock with some rather dangerous holds, followed by miscellaneous scrambling in the bed of a gully both wet and loose. Our arrival on the small, pointed summit was made with rather unexpected suddenness.

We felt we could not leave without paying a visit to the great mass of rock known as the Rosa Pinnacle. Some good scrambling on this included a descent by a very narrow, steep groove which I discovered and which appeared to be virgin territory judging from the complete absence of nail scratches. We then descended to the pass at the head of Glen Sannox and returned via the summit of Caisteal Abhail. The Sannox face of Cir Mhor is extremely impressive, being about 1,000 feet in height and showing some wonderful slabs and gullies, many unclimbed and a number unclimbable.

After this we spent a day or two walking, apart from some further exploration on Cioch na h'Oighe. The most interesting walk was along the whole ridge of the Goatfell group of hills, from Brodick back to Glen Sannox. It involved the ascent and descent of four separate peaks and many minor towers and pinnacles, the principal tops being Goatfell itself, North Goatfell, Mullach Buidhe and Cioch na h'Oighe. Goatfell is the highest mountain in Arran,

being 2,860 feet high. The view from the top is superb in fine weather; one can see a stupendous array of mountains and islands, including Ben Nevis, the hills of Mull, Jura and Islay, the Lake District, and the mountains of Mourne in Ireland. Close at hand rise the very dramatic little peaks of Arran itself, with the quiet, gently contoured western hills in the background. The gendarmes of the Stachach, Mullach Buidhe, and Cioch na h'Oighe all added interest to the scramble. It was a fine, clear day, with only one jarring note. A large passenger-carrying aeroplane, laden with trans-Atlantic ferry-pilots, had just crashed on North Goatfell and naval ratings were bringing down the twenty-two corpses, which looked very incongruous lying out on the mountainside, each covered with a white canvas sheet. The bits of 'plane had been driven by a strong gale the previous night all over the mountain, a piece of fuselage being found by us at least a mile from the scene of the wreck. Pieces of engine and broken instruments had been thrown hundreds of yards by the explosion which had followed the crash.

Our next climb was the Crack climb on A'Chir. This is reached by the wild, remote Coire Daingean and starts up a steep gully cleaving one of the series of enormous rock-towers of which A'Chir is composed. We thought it the best climb we did in Arran. The crack itself is in three sections and very narrow. It is rather wearing to the skin and to the clothes, since the rock is incredibly rough. It rained hard the whole time and the great gendarmes, wreathed in swirling cloud, looked like immense living monsters. We descended from the summit of A'Chir into Fionn Corrie, where we saw a number of stags in a large herd of deer, and returned over the Saddle to Glen Sannox. We got back to the hotel in one hour forty minutes from the summit of A'Chir, which surprised us, as it appeared to be a long way.

On the following day we climbed Cir Mhor by the Pinnacle Ridge. The views from this ridge were magnificent, all the more so since great puffs of cloud continually surged up from the glen beneath. The ridge, though steep, is very broken up, and the climbing can be made easy or

extremely difficult, at will. The rope was not used at all, since although we kept pretty well to the crest throughout, the pitches were all very short and more in the nature of a series of stiff problems than a continuous climb. With the exception of the bottom pitch, the rock was splendidly clean and firm throughout. We finished up by climbing into a narrow tunnel, emerging finally through the roof. The rest of the climb, to the summit of Cir Mhor, was a fairly stiff scramble on the fine, sound rock of the peak itself. From the cairn we got some lovely views, including an exceptionally beautiful one of Glen Iorsa and the western hills with little flecks of cloud hovering low down over Loch Tanna and the sea. We then again visited the Rosa Pinnacle.

Our next expedition was the traverse of the central group of hills, Beinn Nuis, Beinn Tarsuinn, and A'Chir. This was made in dense cloud throughout, and gave us some good practice in route finding. Once again we were impressed by the immense size of the rock-towers of which Beinn Tarsuinn and A'Chir are composed. One saw them isolated from the rest of the scenery by the mist, and could appreciate their great size better than in fine weather. It was especially awe-inspiring to look down from their tops into the cloud-filled void below, giving an impression of bottomless depth. The huge tower at the end of the Tarsuinn ridge seemed like the end of all things, and for a few minutes we were uncertain whether we were on the right line for the pass below, or not. The pass is named the Bealach an Fir Bogha, which means the Archers' Pass. It was probably a meeting-place for the hunting of deer in the days when these inhabitants of the mountains were stalked with bows and arrows instead of rifles.

The next day we walked up North Glen Sannox, which runs roughly parallel with Glen Sannox itself, and tackled Sgùrr na Caillich from its opposite side. North Glen Sannox is not so impressive as Glen Sannox, but the Garbh Corrie, from which Sgùrr na Caillich rises, is a grand, rugged place. I found what may be a new route up this north-west face of the Witches' Step (the Sassenach version of Ceum na



E. C. W. Rudge

ON THE PINNACLE RIDGE, CIR MHOR



E. C. W. Rudge

CAISTEAL ABHAIL

Caillich). It involved the ascent of a series of chimneys up to a grass platform, from which a narrow and very exposed, though not difficult traverse of a few yards brings one out about half-way up the ordinary route. The latter was followed by the rest of the party, who found the slab wet and quite difficult.

To stand on the summit of the peak was a feat requiring concentration, as it is extremely small and a series of squalls with heavy rain and hail continually attacked us. This was the last climb for some of the party, who left the following day.

The two of us who remained when the others had returned to England had several more expeditions, all enjoyable, before we too departed for home. I spent an afternoon alone on Cioch na h'Oighe, climbing on the precipice above Coire na Ciche. I reached the summit by the route known as the Fourth Terrace, and descended again to the corrie by the Fifth Terrace. The views were grand, but the climbing was poor and mostly on bad rock. The best rock was found at the tops of both the terraces; the situations were fine, however, and the views wonderful. The Fourth Terrace had one particularly uneasy section, when I found myself climbing an almost vertical wall with few holds of any kind, except loose tufts of heather. When these came away—as they frequently did—their abrupt descent into the corrie several hundred feet below disconcertingly attracted one's attention to the ease with which one could follow them.

Another climb on Cir Mhor, Garrick's climb, was a good deal pleasanter. This is a steep ridge running parallel with the Pinnacle Ridge, but it is much more continuous than the latter and is a better climb. The weather conditions were about the same as they had been when we climbed the Pinnacle Ridge. The finish of Garrick's is dramatic; the ridge runs out to a point and ends suddenly with an overhang. This is avoided by a short descent on the right, and one finds oneself at the point where the Pinnacle Ridge also ends.

This was our last climb, except for the traverse of A'Chir

from the head of Glen Sannox, in very difficult weather conditions, which made this comparatively simple traverse an affair of some difficulty. All the rocks were pouring water and the powerful, incessant squalls nearly tore us from our holds. It was quite the wettest and windiest of the many wet and windy days which we encountered on these hills. The clouds were very low and it was not until we were almost down to the level of Glen Rosa that we emerged from them, on our return.

Apart from mountaineering, we had some most attractive walks and tours of exploration in the island, and were everywhere strongly impressed by its great beauty. Places visited included the "Cock" by the very attractive coast path round the northernmost point of the island; the northern hills with their beautiful sea views and magnificent views of the mountains; Holy Island of the wild goats, Glen Easain Biorach (where I trod on a "viper"), and Glen Iorsa, which are two of the loveliest glens I have ever seen; the old croft road from Lochranza to Sannox; the western hills and Glen Catacol, with their lovely lochs, especially Loch Tanna; and many another remote corrie and hidden lochan in places where the foot of man seldom treads. The island is a paradise of beauty, in colour, form, and sound. The mountains, though not high, are exceedingly fine to look at, and everywhere are to be seen the huge towers and bastions of massive granite blocks and slabs which give these hills their strongly individualistic character. The glens are wild and lovely; the mountains are set well back on either side of them and can be seen in their full height. The sea is nearly always visible, and its close association with the hills makes the whole north of the island a place of rare loveliness and charm. The north-east coastline is a glory of pale green and brilliant red of seaweed-covered sandstone, while owing to the proximity of the Gulf Stream, tropical plants, including palms, grow—and flourish—in the gardens of Corrie and Sannox.

Arran may worthily be ranked with Skye for beauty, as one of the glories of Scotland—perhaps of the world.

STRATH ARDLE TO SPITTAL OF GLENSHEE.

E. B. REID.

DURING the winter months some interesting evenings had been spent in discussing the rights of way in the north-east of Scotland, at the request of the Scottish Rights of Way Society. The rights of way are all old bridle paths or drove roads between public or county council roads. D. G. Moir in his excellent booklet, *Scottish Hill Tracks*, defines a right of way as a route from one public place to another, which has been in use by the public for at least forty years up to some date within the last forty years. A public place may mean another public road, a market place, a village, a church or a churchyard. One of these rights of way is an offshoot of the Cairnwell road between Enochdhu in Strath Ardle and the Spittal of Glenshee. Most of these tracks have a traditional name by which they are still known, and this route is known as the Lairige Bhealaich, after the Lairige burn which runs from the Bhealaich water-shed to the Spittal.

On a fine August morning four of us set off from Braemar by bus to Kirkmichael. For some unknown reason this bus has a habit of not starting until fifteen minutes after the scheduled time and it so happened that, on the day in question, it was a large forty-seater machine. Although not filled to capacity, some difficulty was found in climbing the Cairnwell road to the summit, and, after the boiling water in the radiator had been dealt with, the journey continued and we arrived at Kirkmichael not much more than half an hour behind the scheduled time. From Kirkmichael our route led along the Pitlochry road to the post office and clachan of Enochdhu, which is about 800 feet above sea level. The right of way begins about 100 yards beyond the entrance lodge to Diranean House. At this point there is an old wooden post with a cross arm on which

the writing is now illegible. The start is along a good metalled road which runs almost parallel with the avenue. After passing through the home farm steading at Dirnanear, one arrives at Braegarrie, which had once been a smiling croft. Now the garden is full of nettles, but we found a luxurious growth of honeysuckle in full bloom at the front of the house. The croft is now little more than a sheepfold, and there were signs of recent clipping, including a lame ewe which had been left behind. At Braegarrie the road has ceased and the right of way track is not very easily followed for a bit. To those who are not familiar with the track it is recommended that, on emerging from Braegarrie, they should locate the eminence Elrig (1,900 feet) and head for its southern slopes. Otherwise it is easy to go off the line in the moorland, although there are three or four old posts still standing between Braegarrie and the pass summit (2,100 feet). After our party had left Braegarrie, we saw a herd of Highland cattle and one of these was making bellowing and threatening noises. It was agreed that this must be a bull and he was right on our proposed line of advance. As there were certain signs of panic from the only lady in the party, we decided to make a detour to the right. This took us into some rather marshy land, made interesting by a number of oyster catchers and calling curlews. Our line took us near to a clump of trees at the confluence of two burns, marked on the 1 inch O.S. Map, Sheet 49. We crossed the Allt Dubhagan by a footbridge which turned out to be about half a mile below the line of the right of way. We saw in the distance three workers busily engaged in the damp moorland. We found that they were digging ditches in the peat land to let the water run, or rather re-opening the old ditches which had got overgrown during the war. It was interesting to watch these men wielding the old peat cutting instrument, the flauchterspade, and the graips for removing the peaty soil when cut. After some conversation, we told the men where we were heading for and they pointed out to us a direction post, which we had not seen. The men were all as Highland as the peats they were cutting but did not know the names

of any of the surrounding hills. As we were parting one of them gave us the instruction, "See and no get lost any more." This was accepted cheerfully in the spirit in which it was given. We then proceeded to the post pointed out, and, with the eye, followed the line up the valley of the Allt Doire nan Eun, where the track continues for about 2 miles to the watershed. As the visibility seemed good, we decided to make a round of the heights on the west side of the pass, starting with Elrig, and continuing over Creag Bhreac to Ben Earb (2,619 feet), then by the ridge which leads to the summit of the pass and looks down to Spittal of Glenshee. The hill route was cheered by collecting averins, blaeberrys, and crowberries which were growing in profusion. The heather, too, was a most beautiful sight, and we were fortunate in finding white heather, both the ling and bell type. We found on the heights that while it was cloudy on the north-east, there was a magnificent panorama to south and west, not only the nearby hills of Ben Vrackie, Beinn a' Ghlo, and Glas Tulaichean, but also Ben Lawers and Schiehallion on the south-west and many others.

The line of descent from the summit of the pass to the Spittal of Glenshee is easily followed, although the path is, at times, elusive. The route finishes in a grassy track with one or two gates for the animals and reaches the Cairnwell road at a point just opposite the Spittal of Glenshee Hotel. There is no sign of a post here to indicate the start of the right of way.

In closing, I feel it is of interest to all who love our Scottish countryside to know that the Scottish Rights of Way Society is again becoming a vary active body. They are attending to the re-scheduling of all rights of way, and, in conjunction with local authorities arranging for the re-erection of signposts at all important starting points. These rights of way are well worth exploring and will provide many a happy day for the hill walker.

IMPRESSIONS OF AUSTRIA.

D. MARK NICOL.

EITHER nature forgot about Spring in 1947, or decided that there would be no time for both Spring and Summer in Austria. At any rate the final thaw did not start until the end of April, and on Whit Monday we were bathing in a loch more than 4,500 feet up in the Hochschwab plateau in northern Styria.

We had been given a long week-end, and on Saturday afternoon took to the road. We were experienced hitch-hikers, and anything from a " jeep " to a ten-ton truck was gratefully accepted, provided it was British. Civilian cars and lorries we preferred to ignore, as lack of spare parts and maintenance, and generally, great age, gave them a decidedly unsafe appearance.

We spent the night with a sub-unit at Bruck, and on Sunday morning, eleven strong, sallied forth in two fifteen-hundredweight trucks towards the hills. We left the main Vienna road at Kapfenberg, following a road made familiar by many previous climbing outings. Just before the little village of Aflenz we again turned off to the left. A description of this road beyond the point at which we left it is tempting. Past Aflenz the country opens out into rich green fields and thick pine woods on which the sun seemed always to be shining from the bluest of skies. The road, lined with stocky fruit-trees, reaches away into the distance—past white-washed or strong wooden houses, an occasional wayside shrine, white and carefully tended, and sometimes a rugged wooden crucifix standing clean against the blue sky, scoured by the weather, its very timbers—the cracked and rain-whitened figure, the warped cross and bending canopy—symbolic of endurance and strength. After a few miles, fields surrender to steep hill-slopes on which conifers thrive and the snow lies, and so the road comes to Seewiesen at the bottom of the Seeberg Pass. As it struggles through towering trees, zigzagging across the face of the hill, a

rough grey crag rises to the sky behind, like the crest of a petrified wave swept from the Seetal far below, and sinks beneath the pines as the track heaves itself over the summit of the pass. On the other side the road winds along the bank of a clear, snow-fed stream, before starting the ascent round smooth slopes, past a wooden ski-jumping platform into the little village of Mariazell. This village, popular as a winter sports centre, is best known for its magnificent Austrian baroque church.

To return, however, to the point at which we left the Mariazell road: we turned off at Thörl, a small village dominated by the gaunt ruin of a castle clinging precariously to a dark rock, the black holes that had been windows peering like eye-holes from a weather-worn skull. We left this rather awe-inspiring scene on a track which winds along a green pine valley for several miles until, having jolted across a barren waste of stones from which struggle tough beech trees, we arrived at Bodenbauer, almost 3,000 feet above the sea. This is a "Gasthof" situated beneath the battlemented cliffs of a buttress of the south-eastern part of the Hochschwab, and can be translated "The floor of the bird-cage." This translation is certainly apt, as the Inn is almost surrounded by seemingly vertical ribbed cliffs rising from a flat grass- and gravel-patched bottom. Whether it is as accurate, I don't know.

We gave the rations we had brought with us to the inn-keeper's wife, and soon had a meal consisting of tinned soup followed by tinned stew, tinned potatoes and tinned peas, and rounded off with tinned steam-pudding and untinned (hurrah!) custard. After a very good cup of coffee and a tinned cigarette we felt obliged to have a long walk.

We decided to climb Reudelstein, (4,745 feet), one of the lesser hills of the group, which rises on the north side of the valley. The lower slopes were thickly covered by pine trees through which we climbed for about an hour. While among these we had no view, but once we had broken through into a clear space, a breath-taking scene was presented to us. We saw the same sweeping rocks which had looked so impressive from below, but now they seemed even higher

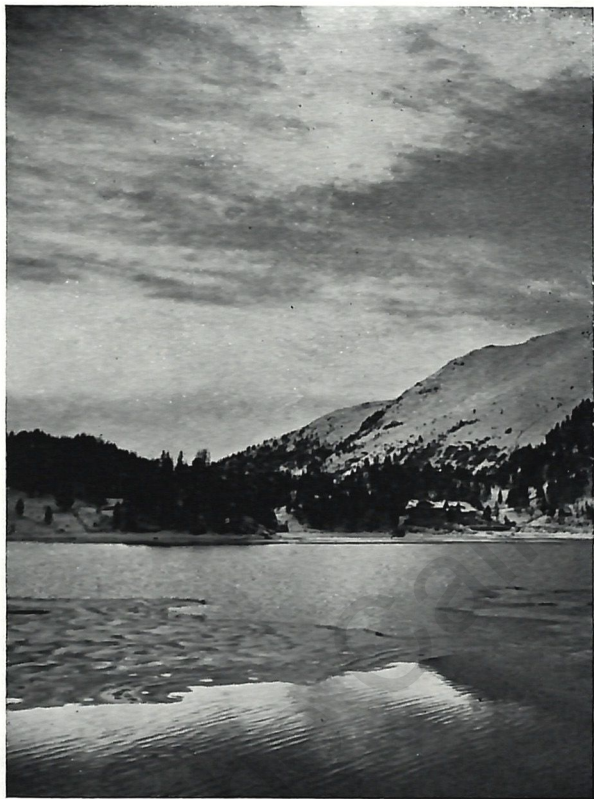
as they soared above us on the opposite side of a deep narrow valley completely devoid of life of any sort—nothing but silver-grey rock and trickling scree. We continued to the top of the hill where we sat down on the bony trunk of a long-dead tree, and watched, almost felt the veil of dusk being drawn nearly imperceptibly over the cliffs, deepening the black cracks in the ramparts of rock. The whole air was held rapt in that mystical cool twilight silence, perfect silence, which absorbs, as soon as made, any sound: the far-away click of a stone bounding down the cliff, or an occasional word. We sat for a long time gazing over a scene, and entranced by an atmosphere which the most eloquent poetry would fail to describe, keenly aware of the magnificent simplicity and majestic innocence of Nature, immense and spacious, itself knowing nothing of the complicated littleness and whirl of human civilisation.

The glow of a cigarette-end was a reminder that it would soon be too dark to find our way back comfortably, so we set out for the house. Groping through prickly branches and stumbling over unseen sticks and stones, tolerantly at first, but soon swearing under our breath at the unseen roots which seemed to want us to kick our toes through our boots, and cursing the twigs that scratched our faces, the high-souled sentiments we had just experienced were bashed out of us, and we realised that we were still very much on earth.

The warm tobacco haze, and the low room lit only by a big log-fire round which the others were sitting with frothy glasses, gave us a comfortable welcome. Perhaps "human civilisation" wasn't so bad after all, we thought.

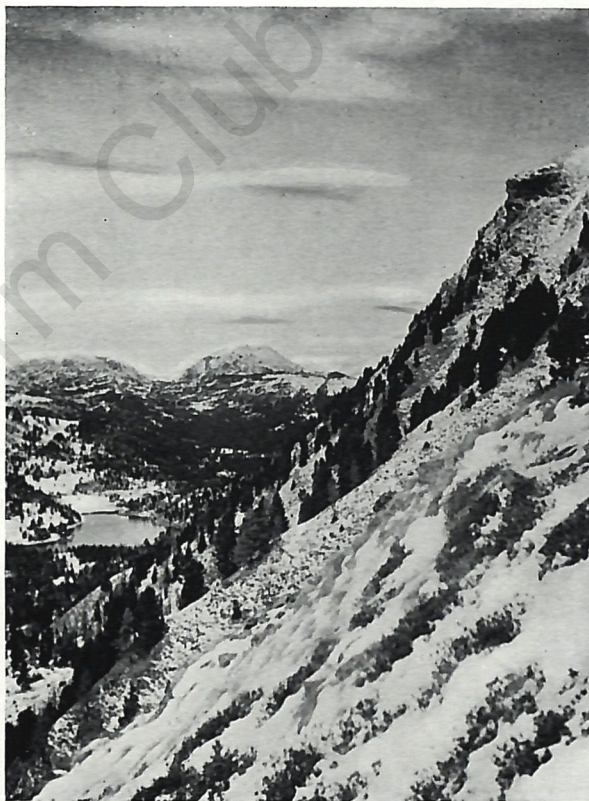
In the morning we were wakened by beams of sunlight streaming through the open windows. The cool morning air, the rustling silence, and the dew-drops glistening on the grass would not let us lie in bed long, and before the sun was very high we had all breakfasted.

We had decided the evening before to climb up out of the "bird-cage" on to the Sonnschienalm plateau, wend our way across to the Sonnschienenhütte, which we had used as a base on many previous week-ends, climb Ebenstein, and take some photographs. The Sonnschienalm is situated



D. Mark Nicol

TURRACHER SEE FROM LEAVE CENTRE



D. Mark Nicol

TURRACHER SEE FROM SCHOBERNEGEL

on the south-west edge of the main Hochschwab massif, an offshoot of the Niedere Tauern. Fascinating names and deep dark valleys, brilliant snow-patched tops and tumbling cliffs, barren scree on the north, and green slopes, sunny hollows and a few great-rooted spruce in the south give it an irresistible attraction.

So we set out for the day just before eight o'clock, with a few sandwiches, and were soon slanting up the wall at the head of the valley along a zigzag path. As the sun rose, the heat in the narrow cleft into which we had climbed became tremendous, and a good deal of sweat was shed, and all possible clothes were cast. Occasionally we sat down on a patch of dried-up grass, and oozed under the blazing sun, watching the widening view and the shimmering outline of the cliffs with the trees clinging to them, and feeling the heat of the ground warming us from underneath. Having reached the top and undergone this cooking on both sides for a few minutes, we pushed on again.

After a climb of 2,000 feet we were overlooking a rocky saucer-like depression about a quarter of a mile wide. Diametrically opposite each other in this hollow we saw two groups of huts with shingled roofs and rough rubble walls, each hut covering about as much ground as the Corrou Bothy, only much lower. During the summer, cowherds live here, and we were given many an excellent mug of fresh milk by these shy but friendly people. The two clusters of huts are called Sackwiesen and Hauslalm.

Our path took us past Hauslalm, over the north lip of the saucer and along the hill slope on the south bank of the Sackwiesensee which nestles, a dark pool, beneath the sunny walls of Seemauer. When we came in sight of the loch, we realized just how hot it was under the mid-day sun, and the decision to bathe and its realisation were almost simultaneous. The water was cold, but not breathtaking, and very refreshing. Unfortunately, and belying the appearance of the loch, there was a lot of evil-smelling vegetaceous mud on the bottom which we kicked up as we swam, and when we eventually climbed out to bask on the bank, each of us stank like a good midden. However, we moved round to

a part of the loch beneath the cliffs which had a stonier bed, and by swimming in a very gentle breast-stroke to avoid disturbing the bottom, managed to render ourselves reasonably fragrant. Three of us changed our minds about going to the Sonnschienhütte, and scrambled on the cliff instead. We did no hard climbing, but got some fine views over the loch to the Sonnschienalm, Griesmauer, and the hills to the east.

We got back to Bodenbauer just as the sun was disappearing behind the cliffs, and after a huge meal consisting of all the rations we had left, returned to Bruck, and so to Graz.

So the summer passed. When we were unable to climb our spare time was pleasantly occupied by fishing. In October, reports of snow in the Carinthian hills began to come in, and with them thoughts of ski-ing and local leave. In November, after a certain amount of form-filling and "handing-over," two of us managed to arrange ten days at Turracher Höhe, on the border of western Styria and north Carinthia.

We left Graz dry and snowless, but arrived in Klagenfurt the next morning to find snow falling and the ground deep in slush—not just what we had hoped for, but at least snow of sorts. Having breakfasted we climbed into a truck and set off again. The snow became dryer as we rose gradually along a narrow road which crept across a shivering white landscape under a snowing sky, a view which seemed all the colder because of the draught which whistled through chinks in the canvas canopy of the truck, and bit into our fingers and toes. But by the time we had reached Ebene Reichenau, where we had to change into a more powerful truck, a "peep," the sun was out and the snow glistened and shone. Eventually the "peep" arrived, heavily chained, and took us up the last five miles in its lowest gear, its nose pointing to the sky the whole way. Our arrival on the plateau was most exhilarating. On each side of the loch rose snow-covered slopes specked with trees, which thinned out as they climbed, leaving pure white summits shining dazzlingly against a deep blue sky. In front, to the north, a brilliantly white hill, Gross Königstuhl, rose from a carpet of distant pines into the cold crystal clear air.

The O.R.s' leave centre is set back the width of a narrow road from the edge of the little Turracher See, with the hillside rising directly behind. The long narrow dining-room occupies almost all the front of the building, its windows overlooking the lake. Our small but comfortable room also looked on to the water. The food was excellent, and there was, customarily, a small but well-stocked bar. It was a pleasant surprise to find that this luxurious board was going to cost us sixpence a day. (When the N.C.O. in charge told us this, my companion made some unpleasant and coolly-received remark about this being the place for Aberdonians.)

In the morning we walked round the lake to the equipment store near the officers' house. Here there were skis and all imaginable varieties of clothing to enable one to ski in comfort. We selected skis and the instructor fitted them for us, and showed us the place best suited to our limited ability. We spent a very pleasant day, although the snow, as the instructor had forecast, was pretty damp latterly.

Dinner was more than welcome, the sharp air having given us huge appetites. After the meal we sat in the dark-timbered dining-room looking over the lake. The lights of the house on the opposite side winked in dimpled streaks on the water, and the dark silhouette of the hills rose on the far side against a sky only a little less dark.

The other visitors were two A.T.S. who were very good skiers, two R.A.O.C. men from Vienna, and a Royal Ulster Rifleman who spent most of his time teaching the table-maid how to play table-tennis.

In the morning the R.A.O.C. men took us up the hill on the other side of the lake where they had been ski-ing the day before, but we had to return to the house for lunch, as the snow had deteriorated rapidly, and ski-ing was damp and unpleasant, and here and there a stone stuck out dangerously.

So the next day there was no ski-ing, and we walked down to the village of Turrach, which nestles in the valley on the north side of the Turracher Höhe. The village is nothing more than a cluster of houses and large wooden

huts, with a couple of inns, a church, and a water-powered saw-mill from which most of the inhabitants probably draw their living. Having seen such of the village as there was, we tracked down some music and singing to one of the inns. The local inhabitants could never have seen a British soldier before, for when we entered, the singers stopped their song and stared, the music staggered and faded, and we had a most unpleasant feeling that it was going to stop entirely, and leave us the centre of interest in a curious silence. To our great relief, however, the accordion player regained his strength, and the singing restarted. A girl approached us rather timidly, dressed, like all the other occupants of the room, in Styrian costume, and we ordered some beer. The party soon got under weigh again, the merriment increased as glasses were drained, and after we had sat half-an-hour, they started to dance. They swirled around with much stamping of boots and slapping of legs, the accordion puffed out its jerky Styrian tune, the less sober of the dancers swayed at times somewhat precariously, the less tipsy cast an occasional self-conscious grin in our direction, as if saying, "What do the Englanders think of this?"

When, about four o'clock, we discovered that we were becoming even merrier than the very merry atmosphere of the party justified, we decided that it was about time we were starting for home. In three and a half hours we were back in the house, marvellously tired.

The rest of our leave was spent on the surrounding hills, Rinseneck (7,566 feet) and Schoberriegel (7,488 feet), occupying the best part of a day each. We had fine views from both; the hills on the Yugoslav and Italian borders in the south were very impressive, their jagged tops rising from a sea of cloud to be blackly silhouetted against a golden sky, and in the north and north-west the Styrian and Salzburg hills appeared snowy and clear.

The last day it rained heavily, and in spite of the fact that, "It's heresy to deny that all weather's climbing weather," we did not go out. In the morning we handed in our skis and clothes, and, as we had to leave at 6 A.M. the following day, packed up our kit-bags, stowed away

our boots, shaved for the first time since our arrival, and realized that we were not going to like leaving this place.

In the afternoon we sat in the dining-room and read. From the well-varied stock of "Penguins" held by the hotel, I chose "The Adventures of the Young Soldier in Search of the Better World," and could not help feeling that here there were two who had found a very pleasant world for ten days; and it was very reluctantly that we returned to being "Red-Tape Worms" on the morrow.

HIELAN' HAVERS.

J. C. MILNE.

HAVERS!

As I gaed doon by dark Loch A'an,
I thocht I sa'—but havers man!
'Twas jist a wisp o' grey mist blawn!

As I cam roon yon corrie wa'
I thocht I heard—but havers na!
'Twas jist the on-ding o' the snaw!

As I gaed owre the Derry Glen,
'Twas aye I lookit but and ben,
For, havers man, ye nivver ken!

FERLA MOR.

HINE awa up yonner
Fin owre the corrie wa'
Muckle mists gang swirlin'—
Slaw, deid slaw,
Ferla Mor, the Grey Man,
Hear his fit fa'!

Havers, a' havers!
Like the kelpie in Loch A'an!
A' Hielan' havers!
Like the kist on Carn Ban,
Or the crock o' gold near Derry
Nae mortal nivver fan!

Meggins! On Macdhui
I hear a fit fa'!
Ferla Mor, the Grey Man!
Deil his queet thraw!
Gin I were owre Glen Lui
The Black Brig brak in twa!

FERLIES.

Gin I were you, my bonnie quine,
For yon Reid Hulls I widna pine,

Faur Ferla Mor, the lang Grey Man,
Bodach Lamh-dearg wi' bleed-reid han',

And Domhnall Mor and Cailleach Bheur,
And mony a fearsome ferlie mair,

Wid gar ye wish ye'd nivver yet
Owre yon Black Brig set feint a fit!

CAILLEACH BHEUR.

Meggins alive and Gweed be here!
Fut sorra cou'd be waur
Than trampin' owre yon hedder hulls
Nae kennin faur ye are
For muckle swirlin' Hielan' mists
That hap the hail o' Mar!

Meggins alive and Gweed be here!
Fut's yon I'm hearin' noo?
The Cailleach! Dyod, she's comin'
Owre little Sgoran Dubh!
I doot I ken she's comin'
By the swite upon ma broo!

Meggins alive and Gweed be here!
She's comin' close ahin!
The Bodach brak her besom!
Dyod, faur's ma second win' ?
O for doon Glen Geusachan,
And loupin owre the Linn!

Meggins alive and Gweed be here!
I hinna breath nae mair!
Deil tak' yon hielan' haver!
The black Deil kaim her hair!
She's gotten baith ma queetikins!
Yon aul' witch, Cailleach Bheur!

DEE.

THERE'S fyles fin I got foun'ert
 Wi' fut's ca'd Joggraphie,
 And fyles I wished, like elfin folk,
 I'd wings te flap and flee.

Noo by the gweed Lord Hairry
 Ae Fiersday it befell
 'Mang ither things twa little wings
 Cam sprootin' fae masel.

And awa oot owre by Culter
 And Banchory an' a'
 And past Aboyne and Dinnet
 I gaed flappin like a craw.

Ballater, Balmoral,
 And Braemar I left ahin,
 And in a tither meenit
 I wis wappin owre the Linn.

Syne up Glen Lui Water
 My wings they fair did flee
 Past Carn a Mhaim and Carn Toul
 Ah—there's the Wells o' Dee!

I wis lichtin on Braeriach
 Fin ma shooder got a shog!
 And, loshtie me, I wauken'd
 Wi' the wife at ma lug!

THE LAIRIG.

FIN God made Buchan flat and gweed,
 He'd nowt and corn in His heid.

And fin He gart yon Hiellan's growe,
 He'd hiellan' ongauns in His pow.

But fin He laid the Lairig doon,
 Dyod, fa kens fut wis in His croon!

WATER KELPIE.

CANNY doon	Swift and swuppert,
Te dark Loch A'an,	Quick and swack,
Siller bridle	Noo he's on
In his han'!	The kelpie's back!

“ Kelpie, kelpie,	Haud 'im siccar!
Come te me!	Haud 'im sair!
A ferlie here	Nae sic horse
For you te see! ”	In Aikey Fair!

“ Kelpie, kelpie,	Nae sic horse
Come awa!	In a' the lan'!
A bonnier plaik	Havers! Hielan'
Ye nivver sa'! ”	Havers, man!

Yonner, look!	Hielan' havers?
Och ay! Och hon!	Deil the bit!
Noo the siller	Look, the siller
Bridle's on!	Bridle yet,

Hingin' owre
 At Tomintoul!
 Hielan' havers?
 Bless ma sow!

LOCHNAGAR.

GOD bless Buchan braid and gweed!
 And God bless me, I've muckle need!
 For, man, I've connacht a' ma queet,
 And blister't baith ma fairmin' feet!
 O gin I wer awa fae here,
 And hirplin blithely up the Meer!
 Gin I wer aince, gin't please Thysel',
 A hantle nearer Bodychell,
 Lord, gie yon Hielan' Hulls a glower!
 And ca the haill clamjamfrie owre!
 Till yon twa taps on Lochnagar
 Tak' rowein doon the braes o' Mar!

WELSH JOURNEY.

W. LUMSDEN WALKER.

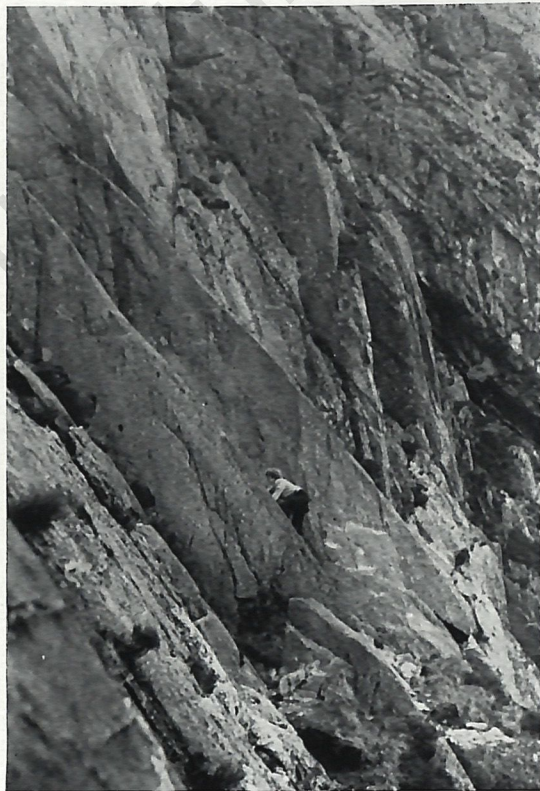
OF our journey to Wales, I need say little. Hendry arrived in Birmingham, direct from Glencoe, to schedule, and we caught a train at 6.35 A.M., an achievement of which we are both very proud! I have a dim memory of Hendry, enormous rucksack on his back, wedged inextricably in the doorway of a Birmingham workmen's tram at 6 A.M., quite unaffected by the wrath of those who had hoped to get on or off. I do recall that, thanks to my masterly organisation, the train was moving as we boarded it. With the swiftness common to all our cross-country trains in war-time, delayed by the inevitable change at Crewe, we reached Bangor and Wales at last.

Somehow the atmosphere of that day was first created by the bus which transported us to the hills—a bus belonging to the Bethesda Purple Motors. To our surprise, the Purple Motor landed us safely in Bethesda, and we set out to walk to our Youth Hostel at Idwal Cottage, some five miles along the road. A cold thin rain began to fall steadily. Yet another of our chilling trips had begun. We trudged steadily down the road. The April shower lived up to its name. The mist closed in on the hills on either side, and, from a slate quarry high above us on the hillside, we heard the singing of unseen Welsh quarrymen. Less aesthetically pleasing but more physically gratifying was the rumble of a lorry close behind us. Rapidly drooping under our packs, we looked mournfully over our shoulders and waved our thumbs in the appropriate gesture. The lorry stopped. It was, of course, full of coal-dust, and this happy chance, coupled with the fair wind and the rain, allowed us to look slightly less professional as we reached Idwal. It was long past noon and we did not seem to have eaten for years. We hurried to the Hostel, but alas, the disciplinarian Warden informed us that it was closed until 6 P.M. We could leave our packs in the shed. We thanked her feelingly, dropped



D. Thomas

CLOGWYN DU'R ARDDU



D. Thomas

IDWAL SLABS

our packs in what the pigs did not require of the shed and made tracks for a cafe along the road. Somewhat restored, we came out into the now pouring rain and decided that a short walk was all that was possible.

The Hostel is ideally situated for climbing. It is at the west end of Llyn Ogwen; to the east is Tryfan (3,010 feet) and to the south and west lie Glyder Fach (3,263 feet), Glyder Fawr (3,279 feet) and Y Garn (3,104 feet). The Hostel is almost due south of Bethesda, some five miles down the Nant Ffrancon Pass, a beautiful Pass lined by hills of 2,600 to 2,700 feet on its west side, the most southerly being Y Garn and Glyder Fawr, already noted. On the east side of the Pass lie Carnedd Llewellyn (3,484 feet) Carnedd Dafydd (3,426 feet), Craig Braich-ty-du (3,210 feet) and, farther east, Craig Yr Ysfa. This will be made clearer to the reader by a glance at the O.S. Map of Snowdonia. We had a week at our disposal and it was our intention to cover the main tops, hill walking, and to try to fit in some of the standard rock climbs as the maximum we could hope to achieve on a first, and short, visit.

We set out then, on this first evening up the stream beside the Hostel, leading up-hill to Llyn Idwal. This loch is fed by a stream coming out of the famed Devil's Kitchen at its south end, and near its east shore lie the famed Idwal Slabs on Glyder Fawr. There are few areas in Scotland so well routed as those in north Wales. The list of routes on the comparatively small mass of rock which comprises these slabs covers some 45 pages of the official guide. In the failing light and persistent rain they looked either dull on the easier routes, or unpleasant, and we returned to our Hostel.

The next morning we arose to find, as we had expected, that the rain was still falling ceaselessly. We returned to the Idwal Slabs. It remained cold and wet. Of the numerous routes on the slabs, there are three named Faith, Hope and Charity, graded difficult, and one of these we ascended. The log does not record which but I think it was Charity. The routes are all close together on a single slab of rock and parties may be found on almost all routes at the same time.

Rock climbing in Wales at holiday time (it was Easter) is a very communal sport, and I personally found this a rather unattractive feature. I have always regarded the solitude of the hills as one of their great attractions, but this is a purely personal complaint.

Leaving the slabs behind us, we descended along the shore of the lochan to its north end and into the Devil's Kitchen. Never has any corrie seemed to me more suitably named. Hendry and I gazed at it in great disfavour. We attempted a climb, but the mist was low and route finding found quite impossible. In deep gloom we descended to a cave in the rocks, ate our damp sandwiches, and forcibly expressed our opinion of the weather, the rocks, Wales, the Welsh, England, the English, and, once again, the weather. Our spirits somewhat improved by the stream of invective, we returned to the Hostel. From its door came forth the sound of hearty community singing.

We rose early next day and found, to our astonishment, that the rain had stopped. We ascended over the 3,000 feet col between Glyder Fach and Tryfan, descended to the Capel Curig-Llanberis road, which we followed to Pen-y-Pass. From here a track, known unromantically as the Pig Track, leads through beautiful country to the Glaslyn, a lovely lochan set in the horseshoe formed by Lliwedd, Snowdon, and Crib Goch. Standing at the lochan, one has the formidable and much-climbed cliffs of Lliwedd on the left and, in front, the cliffs of Snowdon, while Crib Goch, the summit of which gives a very interesting ridge walk, curves away to the right. We left the Pig Track at the Glaslyn and scrambled up the Snowdon cliffs, ascending a little south-east of the summit. Anti-climax came as from the beauty and solitude of the corrie below us we emerged into the horror of the summit Station Hotel (fortunately closed) and the railway line. By ascending a little and trying to forget the hotel in concentrating on the beauty of the view—from Anglesey and the sea on the west to the mountains we had left on the east—we found some solace. The ridge walk along Crib Goch further restored our spirits. This is an interesting ridge and some of the rocky pinnacles afforded

moderately good climbing. A very enjoyable day was happily ended by a neat piece of hitch-hiking to Capel Curig; tea, and finally an evening walk along the beautiful Llyn Ogwen back to the Hostel. Someone has asked, at tea, if we had climbed on Everest. We decided to take this as a compliment, hoping it meant that we looked the sort of people who should have climbed on Everest.

On the next day we were due to leave the Hostel and transfer our base to a cottage nearer Bethesda. Having, as a final fatigue, polished all the brassware in the Hostel, with but little result, we set out for Tryfan. We ascended the Milestone Buttress, on very moderate rock. The only difficulty was in accustoming ourselves to the noise. A Commando Unit was training and was mortaring on the lochside below us. From the top of Tryfan we went over the tops of Glyder Fach, Glyder Fawr, and Y Garn, descending into the pass near our cottage. Tryfan, much photographed, is one of the few hills which involves at least scrambling to reach the summit. There is a great deal of very good climbing on it and it would be well worth a long visit. It has the great advantage, almost unknown in Scotland, of being near a road; the rock-work is not preceded by any hard slogging up hillsides.

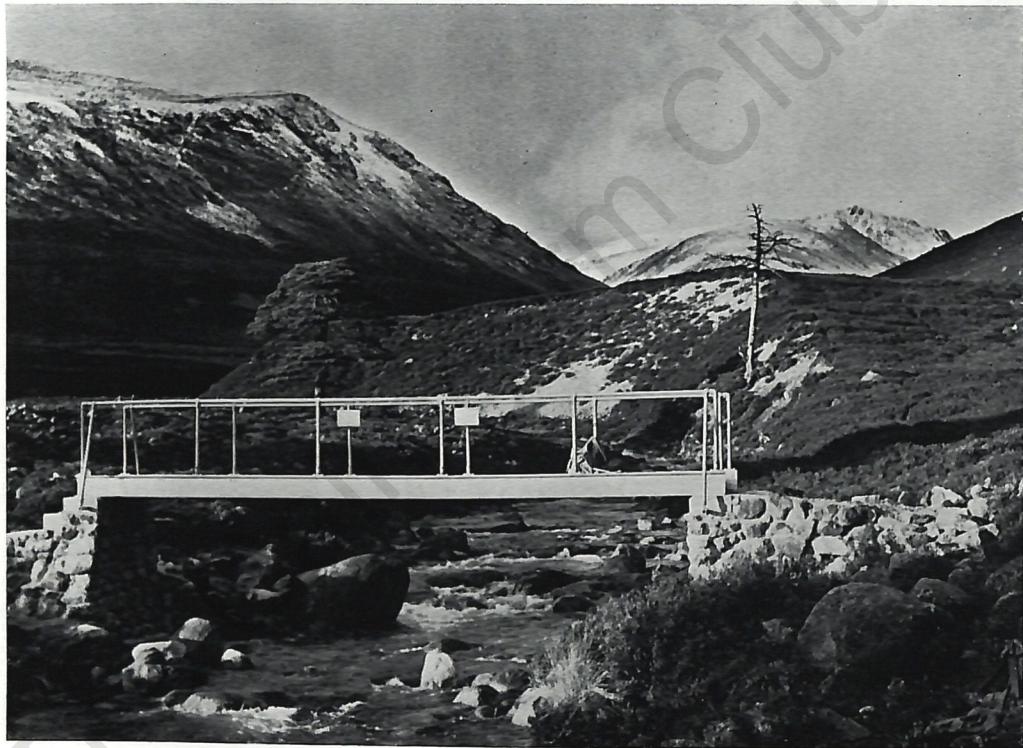
We shared our room in Miss Jones's cottage with another climber. Miss Jones, heavily booked, broke the news to us and asked whether we minded "the other gentleman?" Of course, we did not, but, to us, "the other gentleman" he remained from that time on. For our hospitality in that cottage we have the highest praise. We left at what we considered an early hour next morning and walked back along Llyn Ogwen. At the 11th milestone we left the road and struck roughly north to the Pen yr Helgi-du col and so into the east corrie of Craig yr Yfsa with the Amphitheatre Buttress. Here again, we found the usual overcrowding. A number of parties were climbing on the buttress and, as we ascended, we met another party of four coming down, one member of which, a young boy, was on a double rope. There seemed to be a great deal of rope about as we went through and for a time things became rather involved.

However, we successfully disentangled ourselves and completed the ascent. Once on top we continued peak bagging, over Craig yr Yfsa to Carnedd Llewellyn, Pen yr Oleu-wen, and Carnedd Dafydd. Our programme completed in magnificent weather, our minds sated by the continual beauty of the view and our bodies wearied by this series of Munroes, we descended to supper. One incident in the day caused slight confusion. Hendry suddenly said, "Oh, look, a kite!" Despite Hendry's efforts over many years, I am still no ornithologist. In vain I searched the skies for the brightly coloured, diamond shaped object I expected. Nothing but a bird was to be seen! I think it was at this point that Hendry finally decided that bird-watching—at least on the hills—was not within my powers.

We had now completed three very strenuous days, and the next day being Easter, we spent a quiet morning busily doing nothing. After lunch, we set out unenthusiastically to the west side of the glen and Elidr Fawr (3,029 feet). Progress was rather spasmodic but eventually we reached the top of Elidr Fawr and crossing Foel Goch (2,726 feet) continued on to Y Garn and so down to the road in beautiful evening sunshine. Here we revived and walked along a country road, singing patriotic Scottish songs rather aggressively in the peace of this Welsh evening. No hostility, however, was shown and we returned safely to the cottage and Miss Jones's excellent supper.

The next day was our last and we had to be in Bangor that evening. The weather, as if to reconcile us to leaving, had broken. Rain threatened and the wind was cold. We made for the nameless Cwm on the north-west face of Glyder Fach and ascended the Cneifon Ridge, of moderate standard, descended the pinnacle ridge and spent the rest of our time in the quite difficult climb called the *Monolith Crack*. Like many Welsh routes, it is a route on an isolated piece of rock and gets you nowhere. This finished our day and our week. We returned, packed our belongings, walked to Bethesda and, for the last time, caught the Purple Motor back to Bangor.

There is delightful climbing in north Wales. There



LUIBEG BRIDGE

G. A. Taylor

is wonderful hill walking on hills resembling rather those of south-west Scotland than the Cairngorms. They have more definite tops and sounder rock. The rock-work usually starts at, or near, a road, and this is a great joy. Against this is the disappointment, at least at holiday times, of having to share all climbs with so many other parties. Indeed, I have seen a queue for a route on Idwal Slabs. The popular rock faces are routed on every square foot and almost to an inch. But undeniably there is excellent climbing and both Hendry and I hope to go back. A final note to anyone who may wish to visit this country. For the rock work, there is a series of excellent guides, published by the Climbers' Club, in four volumes, covering Cwm Idwal, Tryfan, Glyder Fach, and Lliwedd. The 1 inch O.S. map of Snowdonia is excellent and compares with the beautiful map of the Cairngorms.

LUIBEG BRIDGE.

The lettering on the two tablets is as follows:—

LUIBEG BRIDGE

IN APPRECIATION OF THE SERVICES OF

JAMES A. PARKER

TO MOUNTAINEERING IN SCOTLAND.

Erected by

THE CAIRNGORM CLUB.

August 1948.

←Speyside.

Deeside.→

	Miles.		Miles.
Lairig Ghru		Derry Lodge	2
summit (2,733 feet)	6 $\frac{1}{4}$	Linn of Dee	6
Coylum Bridge	14	Inverey	8
Aviemore	16	Braemar	12 $\frac{1}{2}$

THE LUIBEG FOOTBRIDGE.

G. A. TAYLOR.

It is no new departure for the Club to embrace bridge building among its many other activities. The names of at least one generation of climbers help to swell the membership roll since the Club undertook the not inconsiderable task of erecting a footbridge over the Allt na Bienne Moire, a formidable obstacle on the north approach to the Lairig Ghru. It is pleasing to record that this bridge has carried lightly its weight of years and is still as serviceable now as when, on August 3, 1912, Miss Clark "gracefully cut the ribbon . . . and declared the bridge open." After a lapse of some twelve years, it appears that the Club had again felt the irresistible urge to build and, not inappropriately, to build as high as possible. As a result, we have two fine mountain indicators, one on Lochnagar and the other on Ben Macdhuì. A similar feeling surged up again last year when, at the Annual General Meeting, the members heartily approved a proposal to build a bridge replacing the dilapidated structure over the Luibeg Burn. It was a particularly happy thought that this bridge on the south approach to the Lairig Ghru should be associated with the name of James A. Parker, Past Hon. President of the Club of which he was for long a distinguished member. We can at least be confident that, if Parker could have assented to any tribute to himself, "the builder of bridges" would have greatly appreciated the form decided on. Need I recall that Parker undertook the design and supervised the construction of the indicators and of the Allt na Bienne footbridge, now so closely identified with us that it is popularly known as the Cairngorm Club Footbridge? Approval of our proposal was kindly given by the Fife Estates and an appeal for contributions was launched in April 1947. The fund now stands at £253, more than ample to cover the cost of the bridge and its future maintainance. Apart from subscriptions from members, donations were made by The Life Preservers' Society,

Scottish Youth Hostels Association, Etchachan Club, the Presidents of the Moray Mountaineering Club and of the Grampian Club, and by members of the Scottish Mountaineering Club and Ladies' Scottish Climbing Club.

After the usual slightly irritating delays seemingly inseparable from our present day complex and planned society, consent was graciously given by the Aberdeen County Council and the Ministry of Works to our proposal to spend our own money. One might add here (without in any way criticising official regulations which must be inflexible) that it does feel a trifle amusing to fill up forms under the Town and Country Planning Act and the Restriction of Ribbon Development Act for permission to erect a structure 2 miles beyond the last, and that a very isolated, outpost of Deeside habitation.

Before dealing with the erection, I shall give a brief description of our new bridge and explain certain points in the design. The clear span is 23 feet 6 inches, width between handrails 3 feet, and height above normal water level 6 feet 6 inches. The latter dimension was decided on as the minimum safe figure, evidence on the point being available from Welsh, Mutch, and others who had actually observed the level of the burn in heavy spate. Our first inclination was to erect a steel bridge rather similar to Parker's larger structure at Rothiemurchus but, as even non-technical readers must know often to their personal inconvenience, steel is and will be for some time in very short supply and is strictly controlled. It appeared probable therefore that, if we had to apply for a steel licence, we might not obtain permission to build the bridge at all and that, even if permission were forthcoming, delivery of steel could be so protracted that none of the promoters of the scheme might be alive to see the work through. I began to consider seriously the use of aluminium alloy which is gradually being applied to structural purposes though it has long been familiar in the smaller sections used in aeroplane fuselages and transport vehicle parts. Recently much larger sections are being extruded and we must be well in the forefront in the application of these. (The first all-aluminium

traffic bridge in the country, with a span of 90 feet, was, at this time, under construction at Sunderland and has since been completed.) The material has disadvantages, notably in price, the lowest for the heaviest sections being, weight for weight, at least six times that of steel though it must be remembered that an aluminium article is only about one third of the weight of the same article in steel. Further, it is much softer than steel and therefore much more easily damaged or defaced, *e.g.*, by climbing boots. As against these and some other technical drawbacks the attraction of quick supply without a permit was rather powerful. Equally important, it was clearly visualised from the outset that it would not be at all easy to transport heavy material from Derry Lodge over the rough path to the bridge, many ingenious and impracticable schemes being advanced to overcome the snags. Obviously aluminium would very materially reduce the difficulty when it is remembered that an aluminium beam 26 feet long weighs about 204 lb. as against 610 lb. for the steel section which we considered. Finally, it is hoped that aluminium, which corrodes much more slowly (and more pleasantly) than steel, will not require painting in the pure air of the Cairngorms and consequently a heavy and troublesome item in maintenance costs will be eliminated. It was decided then to use an alloy, Noral 51 ST, manufactured by the Northern Aluminium Co., Banbury, Oxfordshire and having a strength about two-thirds that of steel. All main and cross beams, bracing, standards, and handrails are made of this material. The only ferrous parts are the galvanised parapet clamps and cadmium plated bolts and nuts. The footway is formed of $2\frac{1}{2}$ inch thick reinforced concrete slabs precast by John Fyfe, Ltd., through the good offices of Andrew Mutch. The abutments are built of boulders only too readily gathered on the site and backed with cement concrete, 22 cwts. of cement being dragged up for this purpose. Sand, though not of a good plastering quality, was plentiful on the site as the name of the locality "The Sands" would indicate. Most of the cutting, drilling, and fitting of the aluminium was done personally by the writer, the remainder being carried out by Messrs Wm.



THE CARTIE

G. A. Taylor



LUIBEG BRIDGE UNDER CONSTRUCTION

G. A. Taylor

Tawse, Ltd., who very generously offered to undertake the work at Luibeg at cost price, members of the firm having had professional and personal contacts with Parker. Actually, on completion of the work, they refused to accept any payment.

As it was not possible to obtain ponies which might, in any case, have been unsuitable for the loads and as mechanical transport such as a jeep or tractor was, except in emergency, ruled out on the score of cost and possible expensive trouble on the rough and narrow path, it was decided that haulage should be done by volunteers. Earliest and chief of these was R. Still, a Club member, who rather miraculously persuaded two of his class-fellows, G. Sim and J. Semple, to accompany him for the first week when I was able to pay only a fleeting visit. Unfortunately, it proved impossible to produce any more volunteers that week. I wonder whether this was entirely due to the holiday season or whether others foresaw more clearly than we did the type of work involved. Still and I made an improvised handcart from a pair of old car wheels and a wooden crate and also fitted a handbarrow with two large pneumatic wheels, these applicances being duly sent up with Tawse's lorry, which took up to Luibeg on Monday, July 26, the three workmen and all the materials and tools. On that day, ghastly difficulties were experienced in hauling up the first load to the site and a message was very nearly sent for a jeep; but, after fitting a new pole to the "cartie" and doing some road repairing, the three volunteers performed prodigies of endurance, hauling up two bags of cement at a time until sixteen were up by Thursday morning. This was done in the blistering heat of the finest week of our "summer," with a plague of midges and clegs unsurpassed in the notorious annals of Derry. Hardly a drop of rain fell the whole week and, the burn being low, the abutments were rapidly completed under ideal conditions. On Wednesday, Mr Selbie, the foreman, announced that, after the day's work, a main beam would be carried up in the evening. Though various ways of doing this had been discussed, it was eventually decided that the three workmen and three volunteers should carry it on three cross poles. As obviously the weight could never be evenly distributed,

the load on each man, applied in a most uncomfortable manner, can be imagined. I was told that the first beam, taken up in the evening, did not cause quite the expected distress but that the second one, carried the following morning, was too awful for words. Such matutinal trouble is not entirely unknown to mountaineers! On Saturday, July 31, Ewen and I arrived at Luibeg, the other three having returned to town. There remained at Luibeg all the concrete slabs, weighing 120 lb. each, except two which the President and Lorimer had hauled up very nearly to the bridge during the day. This we reckoned to be a particularly stout effort for two as the handbarrow which had been rejected by the others as quite useless on account of its limited clearance had been used, the President having failed to spot the "cartie." On Sunday, Ewen and I were constrained to emulate this feat and nearly killed ourselves hauling up the second pair. We sympathised with Sim who proposed lettering his initials with blood on a slab. The rest of that day we spent road-building. In the evening Still returned but Sim had found on arrival in Aberdeen a telegram instructing him to report to a job two days earlier. He was replaced by A. Frith, a Forestry officer home on leave from Sierra Leone, who came up though he had to journey to London on Tuesday morning. He worked until he had just time to walk to Braemar to catch a bus. The four of us made short work of the slabs, hauling up three at a time until all were at the bridge by Tuesday morning. It may seem nearly incredible that on Monday evening, on our third run of the day, we hauled up, including the weight of the handcart and slabs, $\frac{1}{4}$ ton from Luibeg nearly to the bridge in half an hour exactly, carried the slabs to the bridge and were back with the cart at Luibeg one hour and seven minutes after leaving. Next morning our load took much longer! Very speedily thereafter, the superstructure was erected and the workmen returned to town on Friday, August 6, twelve days after commencing. We owe them a debt of gratitude for the way in which they worked, day and evening, Saturday and Sunday, to get the job finished and for their willingness to help us with the haulage

and we like to feel that, despite some forebodings, they enjoyed their stay at Luibeg. Needless to say, the rest of us enjoyed our sojourn under canvas, in spite of the hard work, which did not prevent us from paying one or two visits to the hills under the ideal conditions favouring our stay. In addition to the people already mentioned in the account, we have also to express our thanks to Mr Maitland Gray, who donated 25 cwt. of cement; to Mr Scott, the keeper at Derry, who gave us every facility and help; and to various public bodies who can remain anonymous as the enlistment of their services may not necessarily have been disclosed at the highest levels. I am personally grateful to William Malcolm for his co-operation and to the President for his constant interest and encouragement.

* * * * *

On Sunday, November 7, 1948, the day of the official opening, over seventy people converged on Derry Lodge in two buses, a number of private cars and on foot. In addition to Aberdeen members and friends and Braemar guests, several came from Speyside. Magnificent weather favoured the occasion, snow-clad Ben Macdhui, glistening in the sun, forming a striking background to the ceremony at the bridge. The President, in a short speech, recalled the history of the scheme, thanked the Princess for giving approval and estate officials for their co-operation and introduced the two subsequent speakers. The engineer thanked Messrs William Tawse, Ltd., and the various voluntary helpers and gave a brief description of the bridge. R. T. Sellar paid an eloquent tribute to his old friend, James A. Parker, and the President then called on Mrs E. Birnie Reid to cut the ribbon of Club colours closing the bridge and to unveil the commemorative tablet. Following the ceremony the company was entertained with cake and wine by Hugh D. Welsh and the President.

ADVICE TO A YOUNG CLIMBER: HOW TO BEHAVE AT A CLUB OUTING.

A. E. ANTON.

You are going on a snow-climbing excursion to Lochnagar, and for days beforehand you've been in a state of tense excitement. Anything and everything connected with your chosen sport becomes invested with a halo of romance: your heart leaps at the mention of an ice-axe and the word "piton" sends you into a flurry of tremulous anticipation. You devour every published article about the rock-face, you glean every scrap of information from back numbers of the *Journal*, and you know by heart Bell's comments on each new variation on the Spectre Route B. The tension mounts and the day approaches.

The Saturday before the outing is a day of feverish activity. Boots are dubbined, ropes are coiled, and lengths of window cord surreptitiously cut off the bow window in the lounge to provide abseil slings. Any cord won't do: it must be window cord. So with your ice-axe sling: on no account must the young climber purchase one of those ring and screw-stop affairs. Lamp-wick is the only permissible ice-axe sling. Then you will arrange about your food: this is a vital matter, as only certain foods can be eaten at high altitudes, a point to be strongly impressed on the cook. You need things like chocolate biscuits, raisins, condensed milk, and so on—energy foods that are easily assimilable if not so easily obtainable. Your flask should be filled with "Mummery's Blood"—equal parts of bovril and navy rum, drunk piping hot—an elixir which warms the heart, lightens the step, and makes the impossible possible.

If the bus is timed to leave at 6.30 give it ten minutes grace and rush up just as the party has decided to leave without you, so that everyone will know you've come. This is just the opportunity you've been waiting for to curse the maid for sleeping in: do so in the roundest terms as you

enter the bus—it never fails to impress. Climb into the bus in your tricounis—there can be no better test of coachmanship—and remember to carry a case as well as your bergen to make a thoroughly good job of cluttering up the passage. Be as boisterous as you please, for everyone is full of the joys of life at this time on a Sunday. Talk vaguely about the climbs you have done, call every well-known climber by his christian name, but be very, very mysterious about what you intend to do: nothing is further from your mind than that you should *climb* anything, but there are some topographical details which might be cleared up in the Spectre Route B. In all this it's most important to create the right impression. Your appearance should be a trifle swashbuckling and an open neck in mid-winter helps. Wear a waist-loop and karabiner, and have a few pitons chinking at your waist. Carry a selection of photos, preferably where others have caught you on that breathtaking traverse from Issac's Ledge on Hallelujah Staircase, and speak modestly of your second coming off at the crux of Agag's—after all there was a lot of snow that day! But if anyone else dares talk about his climb on Damnation Prospect, make sure he agrees it's overrated and that the piton on the fifth pitch is sacrilege. Your tone of voice can express your horror at such desecration of mountains with ironmongery. Talk about nothing but climbing and snub remorselessly anyone who dares to change the topic. It is permissible, however, to appear knowledgeable about the weather. Remark that the clouds are rising, for if you can't see them in the dark then neither can anyone else. If you're wrong about the weather no one will remember what you said, but if you were right you can always remind people of your unerring prognostications on the way back.

When you arrive at MacIntosh's bothy greet the natives like long lost friends. Don't let their surprise perturb you. Stroke their spaniels and laugh loudly at those screamingly funny remarks you make. Remember that it is on these occasions that you will attract notice. Then there comes the difficult question as to the best way to approach the mountain. One alternative is to race on ahead—there's

very little room in the Cairngorms and someone might get there before you; the other is to keep well in the rear—you have much more important things to do than hill walk and your precious energies must be conserved. At all halts go a hundred yards to bury a bread-crumbs and let everyone see you do it: if others are lazy in this matter your expression can indicate that *some* people have no mountain manners.

When you get to the foot of your climb, don't on any account stop to rope up. Rush up the snow slopes and start tackling the first ice-pitch—let others suggest that perhaps the rope would be better there. If another party is on ahead, don't choose another climb but see what you can do to demoralise them. Wonder why they are going so slowly, criticise their technique, and be maddeningly patient as you wait for them to complete a difficult pitch. If, inexplicably, you should not be leading yourself, keep your leader cheerful by asking every second minute how he's getting on. Choose the moment of some awkward movement to shout, "Howl when you come off!" and make sure you race up the pitch in a third of the time he took, with the implied criticism that it's not so difficult as he seemed to find it, but make exclamations of wonderment at any pitch where you've been forced to dally. All these little things help. If it starts to snow be as inane as possible, "Well, we came here for severities!" When it's obvious the climb will never go, when you're frozen to an icicle and you've been dreaming for the last hour or so of a warm fireside and a hot toddy, remember your position as the enthusiast of the party. Even if you're dead keen to get back remember the traditions of the club—the top at all costs—and your conduct must at least appear to be in keeping with it. Of course, one useful line is a companion's disability—"Tomkins, poor fellow, can't go on with that foot of his"—or perhaps it is the cornice that on closer inspection seemed unsurmountable—but on no account has the climb itself defeated you.

If the climb is a success, don't on any account rush for the summit cairn—*your* climb is over and the summit is merely for misguided munrobaggers. When people ask

about the route, take an interest in the view. Attribute your success to vita-glucose or the new nailing on your boots—quite the most remarkable discovery since the atom bomb. Praise your companions' climbing ability to the skies and bask in the reflected glory. Should anyone try to be difficult and ask you the name of the peak you're staring at, don't let your imagination let you down. Your guess is as good as theirs and what does it matter anyway. The same applies to fauna, flora, geology, and the like: take an interest in all these things. Remember that the club was founded not merely to encourage the sport of climbing mountains but to achieve much higher ends, to "procure and impart scientific information concerning mountains." The stress seems to be on the imparting side of the activity.

Make sure you're *not* late for the bus on the way back. Quite apart from the walk down Glen Muick being rather tiresome, it will show that you're not one of these inconsiderate people who prefer a few minutes on the hills to a few minutes in that cosy little hotel bar. On the return journey enter into the spirit of the occasion, join in the unrestrained hilarity, and on no account be serious.

By this time it will be apparent that the young mountaineer must watch every step he takes with consummate care. Slipping up on a point of etiquette is far more dangerous than slipping down at the crux of the Church Door. Remember these little points: be as late as you please in the morning, but always, always make it a religion not to be late for dinner.

PLACE-NAMES WEST OF BRAEMAR.

W. M. ALEXANDER.

THE following is a survey of the place-names occurring in the Dee valley between Braemar and the White Bridge, a stretch of some 10 miles. It is made out in the form of an itinerary, going up one side of the valley and down the other, leaving the side glens out of account. All the names shown on the 6-inch Ordnance maps are included, together with such names as have been gathered locally at various times. A number of the latter are here printed, I rather think, for the first time. The meanings given are those which are reasonably certain, or were formerly clearly known to the old Gaelic speakers of the district. The Gaelic sounds are represented approximately. The stressed syllable is printed in capitals, *e.g.*, BRAEMAR; ch is as in "loch"; y as in "yet"; ae is the vowel in "day." Strictly, the sounds would require more exact representation than this; but the finer points about them are here overlooked.

On emerging from Braemar village, the road overlooks the Dee, which there turns northwards. The pool in the river below the turn is the Polla (POLLA); a part of it was called the Polla Caol, or Narrow Polla. The first house at the bend of the road thereafter had the name of Allagirk (ALLAGIRK; perhaps, meadow of the hens, referring to the haugh below it). A short distance farther on is the Mill of Coull (Moolin HOOL; perhaps, back mill). The next place is Dalgowan (Dalgowan; smith's haugh). A mile farther on is the noticeable bend in the road with a fine view to the west. This is the Car, the Car Prop being the cairn on the eminence above it; the word is probably *car*, a bend, referring to the turn of the road. Alternatively, taking the high level path from Braemar to the Car Prop, you have had Morrone on the left. Morrone is a distorted name. The Gaelic was Mor-bheinn, big hill, the same name as Morven. The present form came, it would seem, from a fanciful interpretation, Mòr Shròn, big nose, which was

given currency in the earlier O.S. maps. On the face of Morrone is Coire na Muic (Cornamook; corrie of the pigs) At the west side of it is the Prince's Cairn, a modern name.

A burn crossing the road beyond the Car is Alltachlair (AlltaHLAR; burn of the plank-bridge). Places on the arable land thereabouts are, or were, Arderg (ar-DSHERRIG; red height); Tomdhu (TamDOO; black hillock); Balintuim (BallinDOOM; town of the hillock). The last is beside the bridge of Corriemulzie. Corriemulzie (Corriemoolye) is a name which has not been satisfactorily explained. Presumably it had referred to the corrie up on Morrone where the burn rises; but that corrie, where there is a peat moss, is called Coire nam Freumh (Corna-vRAEIV; corrie of the tree roots). Beyond Corriemulzie bridge there is a knoll, partly wooded, on the right; this is Tom Liath (TamLEE; grey knoll). On the left, amongst the trees, stood what was called New Mar Lodge, before the present Mar Lodge was built. Farther up, on the left, is the farm of Braegarie (BraegARRIE); and continuing up in that direction is the short way into Glen Ey. This way goes through Glac Anthon, with Tom Anthon the small height just beside it. (Glack-yowNTen, Tom-yowNTen; Anthony's Pass, Anthony's hillock.) These names come from a tale about a man called Anton, who murdered a smith at Corriemulzie, and who met a deserved fate at Tom Anthon. The road now descends to the bridge, a little beyond which, on the left, is the Gallows Tree, now dead and artificially supported. The tale is that a victim there prophesied that the tree would be standing after the last Farquharson had lost his land. This prophesy has long been regarded as fulfilled, there being no more Farquharson lairds, of male line of descent, on upper Deeside. It is to this tree that the tradition attaches, and not, as stated in some guide-books, to an old tree beside Inverey Castle. The road hereabouts was called Mildorroch (MildORROCH; the dark mile), having been through thick trees for nearly a mile. We now come to Inverey village. The east part of it is Muckle Inverey, which is separated from Little Inverey by the Ey water. On the right are the remains of Inverey

Castle, and on the fields a little west of there, the site of a former chapel. The wooded hill on the left is Creag an Fhithich (Craig NYEETH; raven's craig).

Beyond the Ey bridge, at the first turn of the road, is a well, with a stone inscribed Tobar N. Mhoire, *i.e.*, St Mary's Well. On the right is, or was, Bealaney (BellanEI; perhaps, mouth or crossing of Ey). At the next turn of the road, on the left, is a small hillock, Cnoc nam Muilt (Knokna-MOOLTSH; hill of the wethers). Behind it is a small pool, Pol Eachainn (Pol ECHIN; Hector's pool). Near the last house in Little Inverey a small peaty stream crosses the road. This is Féith Dhubh (Fae GOO; black burn). The road presently passes close to the Dee. Here the moor on the left is Sliabh Fhearchair (SLEE-OO ERRACHER; Farquhar's moor). It takes its name from Farquhar Cam, *i.e.*, Crooked Farquhar, progenitor of the Deeside Farquharsons, who was drowned in the river here. The hill on the left is Creag a' Chait (Craig HATSH; cat's craig), and the part of it facing the Linn of Dee is Creag Bad an Eas (Craig pit-NYESS; craig of the bluff of the Linn). The Linn of Dee itself was in Gaelic usually called Eas Dé (Ess DSHAE; waterfall of Dee). The Lowland word, Linn, appears to have been an importation.

Continuing along the south side of the river, we come in about a mile and a half to the site of the farm of Dalvorar. (DALVORAR; lord's haugh). There are remains of the two Dalvorars, the Little and Big. The stream off the hill here, called Dalvorar burn on O.S., is properly Allt Leth; some say Leth-Allt. (Allt-LYAE, LYAE-allt; the words mean Half-Burn, whatever the significance.) The tops above it are Carn Dearg (Carn DSHERRIG; red cairn), Carn na Moine (Carn na MONE; cairn of the peat-moss); and, farther back, Carn Liath (Carn LEEA; grey cairn). Some 3 miles from the Linn of Dee we reach the Dhubrach, marked only by some traces of buildings. (Doobrach; O.S. writes Dubh-bhruaich, *i.e.*, black brae, which is probably the meaning). This place, which faces the junction of Dee and Geldie, is associated with the well-known story of the murder of Sergeant Davies. The Geldie meets the Dee

at the White Bridge, a translation of Drochaid Geal (Drohit GYAL; same meaning). A short way up the Dee is the Chest of Dee, Ciste Dhé (Keest Yae; so called perhaps from the box-like shape of the rocks there). Starting down the north side of the Dee, the first trace of houses, on the left, is Tonnagaoithe (Tonna-*gooie*; windy back-end). The road then rises to some knolls where there are remains of another croft, Tomnamoine (TomNAMONE; hillock of the moss). As will be seen by looking at them, these places have been long extinct. Traditionally, they were the most westerly crofts on Deeside; and any remains of old houses to be found farther up the Dee or Geldie represent only summer sheilings or stalkers' bothies. The whole of the large hill mass on the left here, which stretches over to the Luibeg, is called Feith nan Sgor; (Fae nan SKOR; moss-burn of the crags). The considerable burn up there which has given its name to the hill, itself takes its name from the crags at its western end, which overlook the upper Dee. Near Tomnamoine this burn tumbles down the rocky hillside into the Dee. It is there called Allt nam Easain, or Allt Leum Easain (AltnamESSAN, Alt-lyem-ESSAN; burn of the waterfalls, or jumping the waterfalls). East of it is a rocky face called Creag Phadruig (Crek FARIG; Patrick's craig). Farther back is the east top of Féith nan Sgor, overlooking the Linn of Dee. This top has some dubious names on the maps. Thus the latest O.S. map has Carn an 'Ic Duibhe, which would mean Cairn of Macduff. The name for it which I have heard is Carn an t-Uidhear (Carn TOOYER; perhaps for cairn of the traveller, stranger).

We now cross the Lui bridge. The gamekeeper's house a little to the east of it used to be spoken of as the Muileann Shaibh (Moolin HA-ee; saw mill). This was commemorative, not of the saw mill which has operated there in recent years, but of one which had been there more than a century ago. Approaching Mar Lodge, the house on the right is Clabokie (Cle-BOXIE; goblin's den). The hill on the left, a conspicuous hill from the Braemar side, is Creag Bhailg (Creg VALLIK; the last word ordinarily means a bag or

sack, but its significance here is not clear). The extensive wood on the face of Creag Bhailg, now cut, is called Doire Bhraghad on O.S.; but the old people used to decline to accept this name.

The present Mar Lodge was built about forty years ago; it occupies the site of an older lodge which previously stood there. The flat land where it stands is Dalmore (DALMORE; big haugh). Before the Fife family came, in the later 18th century, Dalmore was owned by lairds of the name of Mackenzie; and hence several Mackenzies living about Braemar have had the nickname of "the laird" down to recent times. There was said to have been a Shenval, *i.e.*, old town, of Dalmore somewhere nearer the river than the present lodge. At the east end of Dalmore are some wooded hillocks called collectively the Craggan (diminutive of Creag). Between there and the Quoich is a wet place, a small loch in winter. This is Lochan a' Chreagain, the Craggan Loch. At the roadside beside it will be found a well, which has a picturesque name. It is Fuaran 'ic Choinnich nan Gruaig (Foo-aran ihk HONYICH nan GROOIG; the well of Mackenzie with the locks of hair, or ringlets). The person referred to was one of the Mackenzies of Dalmore, who met his death here in a local combat.

Across the Quoich (Coich) is the farm of Allanquoich (Allancoich; meadow of Quoich). The shoulder of the hill above it is Carn Dearg (Carn DSHERRIG; red cairn). Farther on, nearly opposite Braemar, is a house, previously a farm, Allanmore (AllanMORE; big meadow). The main hill behind it is Carn na Drochaide (Carn DROHIC; cairn of the bridge). There is another hill of this name on the Cluny side of Morrone; the meaning is unexplained. Finally, the rocky bluff at the east end of it, which faces Braemar Castle, is Creag Chleirich (Crek HLERRICH; the cleric's craig).

In conclusion, a few names about the village of Braemar may be noted here. The village itself, it may be remarked, was in Gaelic always referred to as Baile Chaisteal (Bal HASHTel; the Castleton). The steep fields across the road from the churchyard are still called the Cromarans, Cromrins

(Na Cromaran; meaning unknown). The pool in the Cluny behind the Union Bank is Pol Chais (Pol Hash; meaning uncertain). The park where the games are held was Moine nan Gall (Mone na GALL; lowlanders' moss). Beside Dalvreckachy, which is the manse, there is a semi-island in the Cluny called Ellenmaun (Ellen na VYANG; kids' island). Beyond that is the golf course, which used to be Croft Muickan (Crotsh VYUHKAN). The last word suggests mickan, which is the Deeside name of an umbelliferous plant common in these upland meadows. The botany books call it, more portentously, *meum athamanticum*.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

GENERAL MEETINGS.

THE 59th Annual General Meeting of the Club was held in the Business Women's Club, Aberdeen, on November 29, 1947. The President, Colonel E. B. Reid, O.B.E., was in the chair. The accounts for the year were read and approved, balances at credit being: Income Account, £6. 1s. 4d.; Life Members' Account, £94. 15s. 1d.; General Works Fund, £53. 15s. 10d.; Emergency Fund, £67. 0s. 10d. There were 285 members on the roll.

The 60th Annual General Meeting of the Club was held in the Business Women's Club, Aberdeen, on November 24, 1948. The President, Colonel E. B. Reid, O.B.E., was in the chair; 41 attended. Accounts were read and approved, balances at credit being: Income Account, £84. 5s. 4d.; Life Members' Account, £108. 0s. 1d.; General Works Fund, £40. 10s. 5d.; Emergency Fund, £60. 4s. 1d.; Luibeg Bridge Fund, £164. 10s. 0d. There were 226 Ordinary, 28 Life and 38 Junior Members on the roll.

Office-bearers were elected as under:—

Honorary President.—R. M. Williamson, LL.D.

President.—Colonel E. B. Reid, O.B.E.

Vice-Presidents.—William A. Ewen and Miss Ruth Jackson.

Honorary Secretary and Treasurer.—William Garden, 18 Golden Square, Aberdeen. Phone 7960-7961.

Honorary Editor.—William A. Ewen, 242 Mid Stocket Road, Aberdeen. Phone 1446.

Honorary Librarian.—Dr R. L. Mitchell, 75 Cranford Road, Aberdeen. Phone 35916.

Honorary Meets Secretary.—Edwin W. Smith, 6 Viewfield Avenue, Aberdeen. Phone 6067.

Committee.—G. A. Taylor, J. H. F. Crawford, A. E. Anton, G. A. Roberts, Dr W. T. Hendry, Dr Angus Thomson, I. M. Brooker, Miss Ada Adams, and Miss Ann F. W. Arthur.

Honorary Secretary of Junior Section.—G. Gordon Mathieson, 79 Osborne Place, Aberdeen. Phone 28405.

Representatives to B.M.C.—Mrs Millicent McArthur and Ian F. Roberts.

Representative to the A.S.C.C.—Hugh D. Welsh. *Deputy.*—E. W. Smith.

ANNUAL DINNERS.

The 1947 Annual Dinner was held in the Caledonian Hotel, Aberdeen, on November 22. Colonel E. B. Reid, President, was in the Chair. The Club had as chief guest and speaker Professor L. R. Wager, F.R.S.,

whose illustrated talk on "High Mountains in East Greenland" was much appreciated. Representatives of the S.M.C., L.S.C.C., Grampian and Moray Clubs attended.

The 1948 Annual Dinner was held in the Caledonian Hotel on November 27, Colonel E. B. Reid presiding. The speaker on this occasion was Mr. Hamish Hamilton, S.M.C., who showed a series of magnificent Kodachrome views of the Scottish mountains. Approximately 120 members and guests attended.

MEETS AND EXCURSIONS, 1947.

THE War over, it was possible to revert to the established custom of spending New Year at the Invercauld Arms. A large number of members and guests took advantage of the restoration of the old facilities, undisturbed, at that date, by the shadow of the Catering Wages Act. Weather conditions left everything to be desired but the tail end of the Meet was favoured with one splendid day and the hills had a heavy covering of snow. On December 29, 1946, the early arrivals (the President, Misses Fettes, Munro, Reid, and Wilson, and R. Reid) walked up Glen Ey, intending to go over the tops to the Sheann Spittal Bridge, but lack of time and bad weather compelled the party to descend by the Baddoch. Next day, the party, re-inforced by MacLellan, Rose, and Miss Arthur, climbed Beinn Bhreac from Derry, returning by the Dubh Ghleann and Glen Quoich. Weather above 2,000 feet was again poor. Reports differ as to dates here, but the President assures me that this account is substantially accurate—for the time of year! It seems fairly certain then that the main activity of the 31st was ski-ing in the Baddoch area, all saving their energies, presumably, for the Hogmanay Dance arranged by the Invercauld. I am also assured that it was weather and not end-of-year festivities which prevented a large party from completing the ascent of Lochnagar from Callater on New Year's Day. That I still entertain some doubt on the point is due to the very intensity with which some maintain that the gale was the worst encountered for years; while the rain is reported as being on a scale unprecedented in the annals of the Club. No great harm is done in repeating that superlative here, even though I shall have to record a still heavier rainfall on at least two subsequent occasions! It is more reliably reported that, on the following day, the party stayed at home and played tiddley-winks. All who remained, however, went to Derry on the 3rd and enjoyed the best day of the period. They tell me that Ben Macdhui "was done"; but how done, or how well done, or who done it is not mentioned. One can, of course, effect a certain economy by using the words do, did, and done, but will correspondents please try not to overwork the poor little things?

The winter excursions in 1947 cannot be described as having been wholly successful; in a word, it was too wintry. On January 26,

two buses reached Spittal of Muick and, although the weather conditions on top were severe, the snow was in good condition. Not so the climbers, who spent so much time on their various ascents that the departure of one bus had to be delayed, to the irritation of the early arrivals. There is no easy solution to this time problem which has been only partially solved by that unholy institution, the 6.30 start. This still allows all too little time for a snow climb and may, perhaps, be regarded by the climbers as a very small concession. This view will not be shared, however, by those walkers who find the 6.30 departure too early and who, therefore, prefer to stay away. Some of these are extremely critical of the members of Committee who, while strongly advocating the 6.30 start, have but infrequently availed themselves of the opportunity offered!

By 16th February new snow had fallen to such depth as made it doubtful whether the buses would reach Glen Clunie Lodge. The Meets Secretary had again provided two buses for the occasion, but last minute cancellations made hay of Smithy's arrangements. As a result of this and of similar occurrences, members who wish to cancel a booking are now required to give seven days' notice. I might here take the opportunity of requesting members not to telephone the Meets Secretary much after 10.0 P.M. on the evening before an excursion. A few hours of undisturbed sleep enable him to meet members' criticisms of the bus accommodation, the price, the food, the weather, etc., with complete calm. A strong character the Meets Secretary—he has even abjured the use of tobacco!

It ought to be obvious by now that I have forgotten much of what happened at these two excursions, but I do recall that the February day was a day for ski and that only a few of those present were so equipped. The Càrn Tuirc side appeared to be carrying most snow, so most of the foot-sloggers betook themselves to the Cairnwell-Baddoch area, while one party, on ski, went over Morrone to Braemar.

It would be difficult, however, to forget March 9, 1947, when snow-blocked roads cut us off from Lochnagar. If we failed to reach the major objective, it was, none the less, a day of days—such a day as comes along once in a quinquennium, or thereby, and one can almost forgive Smithy for all the bad days he has picked for us in the past. The President, Messrs Smith, Mitchell, Phemister, Calvert, Wilson, and Bain and Misses Adams and Lawrence and two guests, went over Morven from Bleack to Ballater, while Welsh took a party of four to Geallaig. Harper, Macgregor (A.), McAndrew (guest), and Ewen selected Cairn Leuchan as the most promising ski slope accessible; conditions were ideal and the party made rapid and easy progress to the summit under an Alpine sun. As many are now realising, there is much to be said for ski in these conditions (but see observation on frequency of occurrence above!), although it does provide the Meets Secretary with one more problem to solve: how to accommodate 30 people, 30 rucksacks, and some 20 pairs of ski in one bus.



SOUTH RIDGE OF STOBINIAN
(Ben Ledi in the distance)

John Duncan

Alas, the winter ended on March 22, and, although several square miles of soggy snow remained on the 23rd, it served only to cut us off from Beinn a' Bhùird. For the ski-ers it was anti-climax, deep despondency relieved only by the discovery of some deep holes which marked the passage of a large party on foot, bound for Culardoch! I heard little good said of that mountain except that, from it, one may descend easily and rapidly to the Inver Bar. Mitchell and a small party stormed Gleann an t-Slugain on foot and reached Carn na Drochaide before crying quits.

By Easter the snow was in good trim again but the overhead conditions were abominable. The Meet was held at Crianlarich, our first visit there for thirteen years and the official days are conveniently remembered as the day of the mist, the day of the flood, and the day of the gale. Some thirty attended, sufficient for the late diners to find the lounge fire as inaccessible as Ushba and the room corners nearly as cold. On occasion my thoughts turned to the desirability of limiting the number of entrants to the Club! But it was a pleasure to see so many of our "country" members present, there being half a dozen or more from London, Manchester, and other remote places across the Border. The President drew up a marvellous chart designed to show at a glance the whereabouts of any party at any given time. It shows, for example, that, on the first day, Mathieson (D.) and Crawford went to Ben Lui by train; with Crawford in the party, anything becomes possible! The others were content to climb Ben More and Stobinian on foot, where the snow was in splendid order if the visibility was poor. On the day of the flood no ascents were made as far as I can ascertain. One party got as far as Arrochar but found that water was as wet in Glen Loin as in Glen Falloch.

So, although Sunday dawned wild, pent up energies drove all afield into the gale. It drove two parties up Beinn Chaluum and acted as a useful brake for the descent. I would have called it an easy day for a lady had not two of them, dignity gone with the gale, arrived on the south top on all fours. Ice axes were required only as anchors. The parties arrived back to find various Press photographers exercising in front of the hotel. While the leading pair were preparing to do their sodden best to look like Finch and Bruce descending from the highest ever, it was conveyed to them that the subject of the photograph was a Russian trade delegation. The only real criticism I have to offer of the President's chart is that it fails to show whether the rest of the party, visiting An Caisteal, did so in ones and twos or en bloc! On Monday morning we descended to breakfast and the unusual spectacle of a large new loch upstream of the railway bridge. So the Meet ended, members departing in various directions in search of the sun.

Those who attended the excursion to Ben Avon on April 20 will hardly wish to be reminded of it. Permission to proceed to Delnadamp was much appreciated, as was the use of a cottage to change in at the end of the day. As far as Inchroty conditions were tolerable but once

on Ben Avon itself the weather did its worst. No party, I think, reached its objective and no one could have got any wetter except he had fallen into the Avon. The really unique feature of the day was the tea, quaintly and excellently served in the barn of the Glenkindie Arms.

For the May Holiday Meet the members were fortunate in obtaining the use of the S.M.C. Hut and the J.M.C.S. Hut at Steall. In addition, two were accommodated in Fort William, while a larger party were at Onich. Unfortunately, the weather was bad and in the short time available, little was accomplished. Over a dozen were at Steall and five of this party were within 100 feet of the summit of Binnein Mòr when the blizzard forced them to beat a retreat. The others went to Nevis, as, of course, did the C.I.C. Hut party, some of whom climbed No. 3 Gully. The Onich group appears to have done little more than walk up to Steall. Although it was May there was deep snow as far down as the Huts.

May 18 found us in Glenshee. If the weather was not good it was very much better than we were beginning to get used to. Most parties were in Glen Thaitneiche for Glas Thulachan, although some went as far as Càrn an Rìgh. A considerable amount of snow remained on the north side of the hills and, in the poor conditions, no one thought of Creag Dallaig. Hugh D. Welsh revealed that he was making a return visit to Glas Thulachan after a lapse of forty-one years.

On June 8 the party for Lochnagar numbered over thirty and two cars were used to supplement the bus accommodation. Several parties were in the corrie, one at least on the Broad Cairn round and one at Juanjorge but no new ascents were made, although an extra long day had been arranged.

The Midnight Excursion is also curiously popular, although it involves, as a rule, an incredibly long walk in unusually wintry conditions. Two buses were required to transport the party to Blair Atholl, from which we were to make our various ways back to Aberdeenshire. Beinn a' Ghlo was by far the most popular route but the summit remained persistently in cloud and navigation was difficult. All routes led eventually to the Linn of Dee, which all reached more or less on time. Protracted ablutions at the river-side, however, delayed one bus, with the result that breakfast was a rushed affair for the later arrivals.

The walk over the Fir Mounth on October 12, was attended by a small select band who enjoyed an interesting day on this, the best of the Mounth crossings. One of the finest mountain views on Deeside is that of Mount Keen seen from the Fir Mounth above Glen Tanner, itself beautiful with autumn colour at this date. Bennachie was on the card for November 9, but a number had to call off at the last moment to assist a Rescue Party on Lochnagar. The victim of the accident was able to walk home next morning and some of those present arrived back at Allt-na-giubhsaich wondering why it had not occurred to them to spend such a splendid day on the tops. On May 31, there was a half-day excursion over the Stock Mounth and on July 5, another trifle, Socach *via* Pittenderrich, or *vice-versa*; the result is much the same.

NEW YEAR MEET, 1948.

All told, thirty-six members and guests stayed at the Invercauld Arms, Braemar, for some part of the period, December 30, 1947 to January 5, 1948; two more were at Mayfield and three at Luibeg. The traditional procedure is to climb Beinn Iutharn Beag on the first day and, keeping the Dance in mind, Morrone on the second. Morrone, of course, is not much more than twice up Chapel Brae! But, if the others went scrim-shanking, Rudge, Champion, Mitchell, and Miss Adams showed them the way to salvation with a good climb on the Cioch of Beinn a' Bhùird. In the prevailing conditions a few of the pitches were moderately difficult.

On New Year's Day, nineteen set out for Lochnagar, Misses Fettes and Munro and Messrs Rose and Rudge pushing on to the top in very bad conditions. A gale was blowing at the summit but visibility improved; in the valleys a thaw had set in, clearing the lower slopes of the snow. The greater part of Loch Callater had also thawed during the day.

January 2, Rudge, Champion, Mitchell, Howitt, Sutherland, the McArthurs, and Miss Lawrence went snow climbing in Coire Sputan Dearg, two parties climbing the Stob more or less directly. Reid and the Howies climbed Ben Macdhuì by the Tailors' Burn; Hutcheon and Smith completed the round of the home peaks, starting with Càrn a' Mhaim; and Whitehouse, Mrs Chapman, Miss Arthur, and guest went to Derry Cairngorm. On the 3rd most parties were again at Derry, ten going to Beinn Mheadhoin, two to Macdhuì, and two to Devil's Point. Both the 2nd and the 3rd were good days and the 4th opened in still more promising fashion; but, by that time, many had left or were leaving. Whitehouse, Macdonald, Champion, and Mrs Chapman, however, had yet another day at Derry.

EXCURSIONS, 1948.

THE first snow climb on January 25 attracted three ladies and thirty-six men, many of them University students. All, or nearly all, were set for a big day, for the starting hour was 6.30, but Lochnagar quietly triumphed. We had a foretaste of the conditions when the first bus was vainly pushed by all its passengers just below the Linn and the trudge in the snow to Allt-na-giubhsaich shortened the day. One party made some progress in Raeburn's Gully but others had to be content with such objectives as the Meikle Pap, Cuidhe Cròm, and the head of Loch Muick. A hard and happy day, but those who brought ski had perhaps the best of it.

W. M. D.

The second snow excursion of the season was held on February 8. This time Glen Clunie was chosen and, at Achallater, a party of four (McIntyre and guest, A. McGregor, and Crawford) descended from the bus into a snowstorm which, however, proved to be transitory. This party proceeded up Glen Callater, where the going was good. On reaching the Lodge one member suggested that the party should proceed along the ice on the edge of the loch, where the going was easier. The others concurred and all went well until within about ten yards of the farther bank when the author of this plan was precipitated into about five feet of icy water. Icebreaker tactics were employed until firm ice was reached, when the victim was enabled to haul himself out and lie at full length on the ice, not unlike a piece of cod in the fishmonger's shop. The victim was then seized and stripped, a complete change being provided by the rest of the party. Continuing without further incident to Corrie Kander, the party split, McIntyre and guest ascending the Twisting Gully (No. 1), at the top of which they joined forces with a party of the Chief Office Bearers who had made the round of Glas Maol and Cairn of Claise. McGregor and Crawford ascended the wide gully where the snow conditions were excellent, and returned by Càrn Tuirc.

Mitchell, I. Roberts, and Miss Arthur visited the scene of the avalanche which had well nigh swept a party to destruction on Sgòr Mòr some weeks previously, returning via Càrn Aosda. Lorimer, Howie, McLellan, and guest proceeded to bag every Munro on the west side of the road and were proceeding in the direction of the main Cairngorm range itself when time of necessity altered their plans, involving a hasty retreat to the bus. Owing to the author's presence at the aquatic events at Loch Callater he was unable to obtain information regarding the movements of other parties, including those dark horses, Welsh and Duff.—J. H. F. C.

(The movements of the others just do not matter; unquestionably the event of the day was Crawford's bathymetrical investigations in Loch Callater, the first authentic sounding since Sir John Murray's Survey of the Scottish Lochs! The depth was not taken with precision, but apparently little was seen of Crawford above the surface—beyond a look of surprise. The affair would have been less amusing, of course, had there not been a complete outfit of dry clothes available or had the water been deeper. The time saved in cutting across a frozen loch is obviously not worth the risk.—Ed.)

On January 29, when we visited Lochnagar, conditions were well nigh perfect, indeed perfect, for the wisp of cloud that blew over the corrie edge about noon vanished as it came. A frost fog in the valleys left the snow-clad peaks hanging above a purple haze. Many were attracted to the White Mounth tops, which meant a longish trudge through heavy snow; but one was reluctant to leave the tops on such a day and the round was completed in the time available. Coire Boidheach was one vast unbroken snowfield and one regretted not having brought ski. Several parties accomplished a gully climb; the Spout and its

branch appeared congested at times but Mathieson and Brooker had Raeburn's to themselves. Mitchell, I. Roberts, and Miss Lawrence climbed the gully between the Little Buttress and Central.

Rather similar conditions were enjoyed on Beinn a' Bhùird on March 14, although the fog was more evident. Everybody, I think, reached the summit plateau of Beinn a' Bhùird somehow, one by a snow climb in the Dubh Lochan corrie. Two parties were as far as The Sneck and one included the main top of Ben Avon.

EASTER MEET, 1948.

Easter Meets tend, for some reason, to be more memorable than the annual New Year celebrations at Braemar, possibly, as the Editor has suggested, because of the monotony of the latter. Be that as it may, the Bridge of Orchy-Inveroran Meet of March 25 to 29, 1948, deserves to be remembered together with the Meet which produced the fabulous Quince tree of Tomich, or turning to more mundane matters, the catering of Fortingall. Perhaps catering had something to do with the pleasant recollections of this Meet. It was with ill-concealed pleasure that each morning the inhabitants of the farther hostelry would relate to their more poorly provided neighbours what culinary delights had regaled them after the toils of the day!

Transport provided rather a problem when the Meet was first planned, but our Meets Secretary conceived the idea of a club bus from Aberdeen. This Mr Duguid willingly provided, and transport both to and at the Meet proved both economical and adequate. An overflow at Tyndrum became possible, for the attendance exceeded the entire joint accommodation of the two appointed hotels.

Weather contributed to the success of the Meet, for the warm sun produced a few pairs of shorts whilst gloves were seldom seen—and that in March! On the other hand, snow climbing was at a discount and axes were often left at home—although this occasionally slowed down the descents, as there was sometimes inviting glissadeable snow which had to be avoided.

Good Friday was probably the best day of all, and the majority of the early arrivals were on Stob Ghabhar; the party including the President, Misses Fettes and Munro, Mrs McArthur, and Messrs McArthur, Duff, Crawford, Mutch, Cameron, Mathieson, and Mitchell. A few continued over Clach Leathad and Meall a' Bhùiridh. A party of ladies were on Beinn Dorain, Miss Daniel and Mrs Ross Mackenzie turning here whilst Mrs Taggart and Miss Davidson took in Beinn an Dòthaidh. Two parties were on Buachaille Etive Mòr; Anton, Ross Cameron, and Alexander on D Gully Buttress and Miss A. Arthur, Thomson, and MacLellan on Curved Ridge.

The following day most of the above were in Glencoe; Buachaille Etive Mòr being most popular, with the Anton party on the Crowberry.

Of the others, Baxter and Cameron went out to Stob Coir'an Albannaich and Meall nan Eun. Lorimer, Howie, and Miss Macdonald (guest) were on Stob a'Choire Odhar, Stob Gabhar, and Meall nan Eun.

The weather was somewhat cooler on Easter Sunday when a party on the Aonach Eagach found the wind strong enough to be unpleasant in places. Others were on Buachaille Etive Bheag, and Beinn Achaladair to name only hills so far unrecorded. Thereafter, the weather broke, and members who stayed on suffered drenchings each day, and did little of note beyond witnessing the intentional destruction of Ba Cottage.

R. L. M.

SUMMER EXCURSIONS, 1948.

The weather will, from now on, figure rather prominently in these reports—it was uniformly scandalous. On April 18, we went to Clova and found the mist down to the chimneys of Glen Doll Lodge, and rain forbye. If there was any noticeable improvement in the day, it came too late to be of any use. Taylor and Bennett Rae went looking for an eagle and would no doubt have been very surprised themselves had they found it. Most were content with the Bachnagairn round, on which the writer discovered them, sitting dejectedly eating their pieces. From time to time the President would discover a certain lightening of the gloom and a rise, of half an inch or so, in the lower level of the mist. On the strength of these improvements he persuaded one or two to follow him to Craig Maud. But most took the shortest route back to the bus.

Sixteen members attended the May Holiday excursion to Glencoe, travelling there and back by private bus. The S.M.C. Hut at Laggangarbh and the L.S.C.C. Hut at Black Rock were kindly put at the disposal of the visitors.

On Sunday, May 2, the President, with Telford and Cameron, climbed Bidean nam Bian, rescuing a crag-fast sheep en route. The party then proceeded by the burn between An t-Sròn and Stob Coire nan Lochan to the top of Bidean. It was a May Day in a thousand, with bright sun and good views in every direction. The Bidean ridge was then followed until it joins the Beinn Fhada ridge, along which the walk is easy, and the descent made into the valley of the Allt Coire Gabhail, about a mile from the main Glencoe road. At this reach the waters of the Gabhail run below ground level and it is a rough scramble among huge boulders, strewn about in the most chaotic fashion, to regain the main glen near the Meeting of the Three Waters.

Misses Hoggarth and Jackson, starting from Black Rock, climbed Meall a' Bhùiridh and proceeded north to Stob a' Ghlais Choire and then back over the four tops to Clachlet, descending to Ba Cottage.

Sutherland and Howitt, who were at Laggangarbh, climbed Buachaille Etive Mòr by Garrick's Shelf Route; Mitchell, I. Roberts, and Miss E. J. Lawrence climbed the North Buttress and descended by the

Curved Ridge, ascending the Crowberry Tower en route. Misses Adams, Alexander, Beaton, King, and Mrs. Topp traversed Buachaille from Glen Coupall to Glen Etive.

On Monday, after an overnight snowfall, most went to Kinlochleven by bus and returned by the old Military Road.

On May 16 a large party turned out for Derry Lodge, and the sun turned out too. There was tremendous activity in the Coire Sputan Dearg, where two parties climbed Anchor Gully, and around the Shelter Stone Crag, where several parties climbed the Forefinger Pinnacle. With a Grampian Club party also in the area there must have been some fifty people on the summit of Macdhuì at one time or another during the day. A McGregor was observed, a lone and remote figure, on Cairn Lochan, and two ski-ers were seen above Etchachan. The snowfields were not large for but little snow remained here or in Coire Sputan Dearg, although the Garbh Choire retained a real Alpine appearance.

The climbers were out in force on June 6, and all the more important rock climbs on Lochnagar were scheduled for execution within the time limit. Perhaps some of them were, although I doubt it. Mathieson and Roberts reached the Terrace on the old Tough-Brown route, where the conditions became quite impossible. They were intolerable even for walking.

Some thirty members and guests set out by bus on June 19 for Blair Atholl. We made a new route through Stonehaven while the driver said a few goodbyes. After that he made good time to Blair Atholl, where we had a very inadequate meal. At 7 P.M. the bus set off again, dropping people at various points along the road from Blair Castle to Dalnaspidal, while Train and Nicol scorned a lift and set off briskly in the opposite direction.

A large number of people climbed A'Bhuidheanach Bheag and Càrn na Caim, while others went for Beinn Dearg and the Minigaig Pass. One party found a stone shelter on a shoulder of Glas Mheall Mòr and five people spent a few extremely rocky hours in comparative shelter. Never has so much manoeuvring been done by so many in so confined a space with so little result. The Hon. Editor departed in a cloud of eiderdown from a ripped sleeping bag. Incidentally, one of that party was minus boots, gas cape, and food, but he toiled manfully throughout the night without complaint. The Presidential and geological party weren't quite sure where they got to but they went a long way and came to the conclusion that the map erred. The weather clerk was not too unkind. True, we navigated for hours in mist but the morning, when we did see it, was beautiful and the journey home was completed in perfect weather.

A. F. W. A.

On July 4 the party, smaller than usual, went to Glen Isla. Practically all went over Glas Maol but two went into the Canness Glen where they encountered an unfenced bull. Rather, should I say, they

declined the encounter, pursuing a course which always provided a couple of trees within easy sprinting distance, while the animal's eyes followed their movements with evident interest. From being intermittent the rain became continuous and heavy and remained so until three o'clock. Not one of our best days.

The Skye Meet was an experiment. Was it a success? To judge by the number attending, no. But it satisfied the two acid tests of any Meet—the members present enjoyed themselves and a fair amount of climbing was done. To catalogue arrivals, climbs, and departures would be tedious. Those who were there do not need them and they mean little to others. We do not intend to describe the various visits to the Cioch, the Pinnacle, Coruisk, and Bidein. Those who have been know their wonders. To the others I say, "Go there next year."

G. G. M.

(The above appears to be a subtle plea for the abolition of this *Journal*. Our more advanced thinkers apparently favour a briefer form of publication headed: "Places to Go To." Only some ten members went to Skye; yet, six weeks later, twelve members had a C.C. evening in Zermatt. There the weather was also bad, the Meets Secretary tells me—curious how the man follows the depressions around!—and none of the parties was able to go very high. The Meets Secretary contends that this is incorrect and that he was higher than I have ever been. That still isn't very high!—ED.)

The thunderstorm which marked the end of summer week broke over Deeside in the early morning of August 1. Little rain fell in the main Cairngorm group; the Lui showed hardly any rise but the Clunie rose six feet. A second storm, centred over Ben Avon, broke on the Club party just as it was well launched on the ascent. We are asked to believe that the descent was accomplished through a sea of blue fire and that several of the party were knocked down. "Winking blue devils on every fence post," one description ran; which makes it quite evident that Smithy's gremlins were having a field day! As for the rest, there is no evidence that the word knocked is used with any precision; fell or lay is probably more accurate. These excursions from Delnadamp are becoming quite interesting.

After that we deserved and got a good day on Glas Maol and Creag Leacach on September 19, when the visibility was so good that one member, with better eyesight than the others, discovered a greenhouse on Kinnoull Hill, or thereabouts. (This, of course, has been improved upon. Three members, of whom one was the late J. A. Parker, were sitting on the summit of Griomaval looking at St Kilda, 65 miles away, when another remarked on a white object on the sea horizon away beyond the Butt of Lewis. Parker turned a keen gaze in that direction and, without a moment's hesitation, identified it as Moby Dick!) The arrangements gave ample time to wander over the tops and to descend leisurely to Spittal of Glenshee.

The excursion to Lochnagar, arranged for October 17, was diverted to Loch Lee on account of the temporary closing of the Glen Muick road. The Mounth is a rather more monotonous grind than the Fir Mounth but none of the other crossings offers a vista to compare with the view from Craig Vallich, with the foreground, at this date, a rich display of autumn colour.

The Constitution of the Club, as we have all discovered at some time, has its weaknesses—not, of course, in point of English usage; Duff attended to that! The particular flaw which has appeared in that otherwise bright gem is the absence of definition of the position and status of dogs within the Club. The Dog has been present on so many of these excursions that he must now have collected almost as many Munros as a Junior Member. Until the list, properly attested, has been engraved on his collar, nothing, I suppose, can be done. But the idea of a Canine Associate Sub-section raises fascinating possibilities. (Still, I suppose the Meets Secretary would veto it, since it would fall to him to chart all the “No Dogs Allowed” notices!)

On November 19, Sunnyside of Ellangowan (Sunny for short) again accompanied the party, this time over Ben Rinnes from Dufftown to Aberlour. A proper dog's day! Raised two hares, followed several grouse scents, and sundry other unidentified odours, found a beautiful specimen of *Peltidea canina* on the north side of the rocks and covered twice the distance really necessary. Although there is a stretch of long heather at the start, this can be avoided and the ascent must, therefore, be rated an easy day for a Dachshund! Lacking a report from any other source I thought it only fitting that The Dog should have his say.

JUNIOR SECTION MEET AT STEALL, GLEN NEVIS.

THE Junior Section held a Meet at Steall, Glen Nevis, from March 31 to April 7, 1948. The party included Brooker, Lyall, McConnach, Mathieson (G.), Crawford, and MacGregor (J.). A calendar of operations follows:—

April 1.—Wet. An Garbhanach.

April 2.—Binnein Beg and Mòr.

April 3.—Crawford and MacGregor to Càrn Mòr Dearg.

Brooker, Lyall, McConnach, and Mathieson to Steall Gully. A randkluft 3 feet wide and 30 feet deep was found at the last pitch, which was streaming water and appeared to be severe. An attempt to by-pass the obstacle on the left wall was found difficult and the climb was continued on the left wall to the top.

April 4.—Tower Gully—snow like rice flour.

April 5.—Sgùrr a' Mhaim.

April 6.—Aonach Beg in bad weather.

Brooker, Crawford, and McConnach came home *via* Glen Feshie and Beinn a' Ghlo. Crawford's birthday was celebrated *en route* with fireworks. (Whether Coming-of-age or Jubilee is not stated in the account.—ED.)

G. G. M.

NEW CLIMBS.

Central Buttress, Lochnagar.—Central Buttress has been climbed several times in winter on its easier left flank. Recently, however, attempts have been made to follow the summer route from the bottom but all were defeated by the time factor. The most successful attempt was that by Ross and Still, on February 29, 1948, when they reached the ridge from the left about half way up. The crest was then followed to the top in two hours. Ross again climbed the buttress, with Miss Fleming, on March 2, 1948. There was then a good deal of soft snow on the lower rocks but the summer route was followed throughout. Three hours.

Parallel Gullies: "A," Lochnagar.—The first winter ascent was made by Ross and Still on March 28, 1948. The snow was sufficiently hard to require step cutting and although easy at first (40°), it steepened latterly to 60°. The left branch was followed as far as the final steep cliffs where they traversed to the left for about 50 feet and finished the climb over snow covered rock and then over very steep hard snow. Time five and a half hours.

Raeburn's Gully, Lochnagar.—On Sunday, October 5, 1947, after three unsuccessful attempts at the Wall in Raeburn's Gully, I. F. and G. A. Roberts descended for about 150 feet and climbed straight up a shallow groove to join the Tough Brown Ridge. Commencing about 100 feet above the Mound the climb is over vegetated rock for about 100 feet to a short vertical chimney, awkward to start, and over a further 100 feet of similar unsatisfactory ground. The first good belay was found here. In 10 feet a platform and belay were gained, and after a further 20 feet the groove was crossed to a stretch of broken rock which led without much difficulty to the crest of the ridge.

In its last 100 feet or so, this route is identical with the old escape route from Raeburn's. The latter ran from below the Cave Pitch across the top of the new wall pitch and then commenced to climb obliquely to the crest of the ridge. The two routes are, therefore, converging towards each other. But climbing on this wall is rendered highly unpleasant by the amount of vegetation present.

Douglas-Gibson Gully, Lochnagar.—The second complete ascent of the gully was made by Ian Brooker and Gordon Mathieson on May 8, 1948. The top of the hard section lies about 200 feet below the plateau and was, at this time, completely free of snow. At this point a wide, shallow groove slants up to an overhang below Eagle Ridge and from the foot of the groove the gully bends round to the left. An ascending traverse was

made to the left along a broken, sloping terrace at the end of which a steep wall was climbed at its outer edge. About 12 feet higher up a small platform is reached; the floor of this is formed by a projecting boss which may be used as a belay, perhaps insecure. Above the platform rise two parallel, vertical grooves; the left hand one was climbed by jamming a foot in it but the ascent required delicate balance. Half way up the crack widens to a chimney and the angle eases. But getting from the lower to the upper part is very hard. This section (20 feet) is the hardest part; the whole pitch is exposed and the rock in the lower part of the groove none too sound. Beyond this comes a stretch of very loose rock at a moderate angle. A chokestone forms the final pitch, short and easy.

Tough-Brown Traverse, Lochnagar.—Ian Brooker and A. D. Lyall made a new variation from the Terrace on May 22, 1948. Instead of climbing up from the Terrace, they descended about 30 feet in the direction of Raeburn's Gully and crossed a small gully to reach a right-angled chimney of 40 feet. The chimney is at the side of a square tower; the rock is good but there are few holds and the position is exposed. The chimney leads out below the crest of the Tough-Brown Ridge above the Terrace. The crest is gained easily and, of course, much earlier than by the original route.

Mitre Ridge Gullies, Beinn a' Bhùird.—As recorded in the *Climbers' Club Journal* for 1942, both these gullies were climbed in July 1942. The account does not give details but comments that they are similar in character and fairly easy. Mr Malcolm Smith sends me an account of a climb in the West Gully, which he did with J. Tewnton on September 19, 1948. The party was not then aware of any previous ascent.

The gully lies hard under the wall of the Mitre Ridge and the start is up 20 feet of slab, followed quickly by an indefinite section over large boulders. The bed of the gully is followed by water-worn slabs rock to the foot of a dark chimney cut into the Mitre Ridge wall. The route goes up a crack in the wall to the right of this chimney and then up a continuation groove past a small chokestone. This groove leads to a stance with a good belay. Above this another chimney cuts deep into the Ridge wall and a rib formed by the right wall of the chimney and a depression in the slabs to the right was followed on good holds to a stance with a small belay. A final short pitch, again up a crack in the slabs past a loose block, led to the scree at the top of the gully. The gully is about 400 feet long and the climbing was mostly on sound rock. This party thought the climb difficult, which it probably is by all ordinary standards.

Anchor Gully, Coire Sputan Dearg.—A number of the gullies here have been climbed but the records are fragmentary. Anchor Gully, so called from the snow formation at the bottom, lies to the right of No. 2 Buttress. At least two parties climbed the gully, on snow, on the occasion of the Club Excursion, May 1948. In summer one or two small pitches show but only the second provides any difficulty and that moderate.

No. 1 Buttress, Coire Sputan Dearg.—A moderately difficult climb was made on this buttress by S. R. Tewnton, W. A. Russell, and J. Tewnton on May 2, 1948. The climb starts at the foot of the buttress, up a curving groove to the left, followed by a pull up on good holds over a small overhang to a belay 15 feet above. Easy scrambling leads in 50 feet to a good stance and belay at the foot of well broken slabs which are climbed for 50 feet to a stance and belay. A right traverse across the slabs leads to a short wall (6 feet), above which an open corner was climbed direct on good holds. This pitch would be about 40 feet in all. The climbing ceases here and a scramble of 200 feet leads to the plateau.

Another route, on the same buttress, was followed in June 1948, by R. Still and J. Semple who started from the left side, about 100 feet up the open gully to the left of the buttress. A steep 100-foot pitch led up to the crest of the ridge, where an escape to the right appeared. The party continued on the ridge, however, and climbed a 50-foot slab until obliged to follow a ledge to the left. They regained the ridge by a thin chimney, very exposed. The last 150 feet provided a pleasant scramble.

Crystal Ridge, Coire Sputan Dearg.—This fine ridge was discovered and climbed by R. Still and Miss E. J. Lawrence in September 1948. It lies immediately to the right of No. 1 Buttress, from which it is separated by a short gully. Still farther to the right lies No. 2 Buttress, so far unclimbed. The rocks on which Crystal Ridge lies form, in fact, a wing of No. 2 Buttress.

The climb commences with 110 feet of easy angle ridge, with an alternative start up an easy crack from the gully on the left, to the first notch in the ridge. The second pitch (100 feet) is the most difficult of the climb. The ridge is followed as closely as possible and, where the holds disappear, some are to be found on the slab on the right. Another notch in the ridge provides a good belay at the top of this pitch. The third pitch is about 70 feet and the angle eases off in the middle. A shelf at the top serves as a reasonable belay. The last pitch continues over the nose above the ledge and, after 90 feet, the angle eases and scrambling follows to the top. The climb is continuously difficult and exposed and the ridge is very well defined throughout its 370 feet.

A rock fall to the left of the ridge provided the pioneers with a number of Cairngorm crystals and these suggested the name for the ridge.

Coire Etchachan.—On May 16, 1948, I. F. Roberts and Miss E. J. Lawrence climbed the longest of the rock ribs or ridges on Beinn Mheadhoin. This was a short, moderate climb on nice rock.

Hell's Lum, Ben Macdhui.—This dark cleft can be seen very well from the top of Pinnacle Gully. It lies in the centre of the higher belt of cliff to the west of the Shelter Stone Crag and is mentioned in *C.C.J.* Vol. III, p. 123. Crawford and Ian Brooker visited the Lum on October 8, 1948, but failed to complete the ascent. (An attempt by Lorimer and party some years ago was also unsuccessful.) A number of big boulders block the foot of the gully and the party chose an obvious but

stiff route up the right wall for about 80 feet. The bed of the gully contained much loose rock. About 150 feet up progress was halted by a rock face, estimated at 60 feet and unclimbable. There was no way of avoiding the obstacle, over which a considerable quantity of water poured. The face might become possible from a snow take-off.

Brochain Slabs, Braeriach.—Although the first ascent was made in August 1944 (by G. O. Clarke and G. W. Ross), this climb has not so far been recorded, for the reason that Ross was not at first sure where he had been! A later account, written by Still, missed out a whole pitch but it is believed that the following record is now complete and coherent. The climb lies on the slabs just to the left of the Black Pinnacle, at which level the general trend is leftwards until it becomes possible to work back to the right again, more or less on the line of the original route from the Pinnacle to the plateau.

The start is a little to the left of the lowest rocks in the corrie and there is 300 feet of moderate climbing before the Slabs are reached. Here one is faced with a slab with several cracks running up it. The climb starts from the left hand edge of the platform above the moderate section and proceeds up to the right up one of the fissures. After a run of 80 feet a small stance is reached and the second brought up. The route continues upwards for about 15 feet when one is pushed leftwards by the wall on the right. It is possible, however, to do a hand traverse across a slab to a grassy platform. About 100 feet up lies another slab, split by two cracks. The right hand one was climbed and led to yet another grassy platform.

(At this point there is a chimney going down to the left which can be used to reach West Gully. One should be careful not to continue too far down along the original line; a short climb to the right must be made to reach an easy line of descent.

On the right a chimney leads to the saddle behind Black Pinnacle. See below.)

Proceeding upwards, the party was soon forced to traverse to the left for about 80 feet. Descending slightly, the party reached a lower slab and followed it to a pulpit stance. Continuing along the slab for another 15 feet, where it ended, the party turned right and carried on up a loose depression, taking to the rocks on the right about 50 feet below the plateau and finishing some 30 yards to the right of the summit cairn.

N. W. Chimney, Black Pinnacle, Coire Bhrochain.—On September 18, 1948, G. W. Ross and Miss J. Fleming followed the Bhrochain Slabs route as far as the chimney leading to the saddle behind the Black Pinnacle. There are four pitches, the first easy, the second moderate (with thread belay), and the third can be turned on the right wall. (Direct ascent may not be impossible.) The fourth, it is not possible to ascend directly but a very rough slab on the left can be climbed, the main difficulty being to gain a footing on the slab. Moderate.

From the top of the Pinnacle one can proceed along the original

route to the left (*i.e.*, to the upper part of the Bhrochain Slabs climb) and reach the plateau by the depression as described in the previous climb.

Pinnacle Ridge, Amphitheatre Gully, Hunt Hill.—On February 6, 1949, W. G. Rodger and G. A. Roberts, while visiting the Falls of Unich, noticed a wide, deeply cut gully cleaving the Eagle's Crag on Hunt Hill. The gully is divided in two by a long central rib. The left branch ends in a steep chimney but the right has an easy exit. The rib commences steeply, eases off in the central section and finishes with a steep wall. The start is over 50 feet of steep broken rock to a platform below an overhanging wall. The overhang can be avoided on the right over a wedged block. A vegetable slope then follows to another wall which can be passed on the left. Beyond this the ridge rises in a series of small pinnacles, four in all and all rather shattered. A grassy ridge led to the final wall which was festooned with ice. An escape was found across the gully on the right. About 600 feet. Moderate.

STAC POLLY.

West Face.—The route was directed to the very prominent pinnacle seen about one third of the way up the west bastion of Stac Polly, which is entirely composed of Torridonian Sandstone. The climb started at the outmost part of the convex surface (cairn) of the hill and at the outset it is all very much go-as-you-please. On reaching the neck of the pinnacle (by a through route in the fallen rock) a good view is obtained of the western and southern faces of the mountain. The pinnacle itself is 50 feet high but the ascent was found to be unjustifiable. On the south side of the buttress of which the pinnacle is a part a shoot is seen to run up close to the wall. The gradient is not severe but foot and hand hold are scanty. The top of the shoot, level with the top of the pinnacle, is formed by an overhanging slab. The route leads up on to the top of the buttress on the climber's left. (One should resist the temptation to use a loose stone lying out on the right as foot-hold.)

A traverse along a heathery ledge, which narrows at its left end, ensues and, after a short nose of weather-beaten rock, there is a choice of routes, on which the climbing is exposed and interesting. The route was directed towards the right hand member of three featureless gullies above. At its foot the climbing is up the typical Torridon sandstone nose to a spacious platform. From here a large slab, stuck vertically in a crack, is plainly visible and easy climbing brings it within reach. Immediately above the vertical slab, which wobbles in its crack but is perfectly safe, another slab is seen extending 20 feet up without vestige of foot or hand hold. This problem was solved by jamming two stones in a crack on the right of the slab, one at a height within reach of the right foot and the other, rather larger, as high as one can reach. Some strong pulling and hand traversing bring the leader up to a good stance.

The rest of the climb is a traverse out to the right and round a corner to what appears to be a cave. On reaching this feature one can squeeze through the farther end of it to reach the top only a few yards from the summit cairn.

Time—Two and a half hours. Grading—Difficult. Height—600 feet.

First Ascent—September 28, 1948. (Not new throughout.)

Party—A. D. Lyall, G. G. Mathieson, and D. S. McCannach.

A. D. L.

MOUNTAIN RESCUE.

MEMBERS of the Mountain Rescue Service which was organized under the auspices of the Mountain Rescue Committee at the request of the Association of Scottish Climbing Clubs, to operate in the Lochnagar and Cairngorm area and comprising members of the Cairngorm and Etchachan Clubs, together with other local volunteers, have been out three-times since the last issue of the *Journal*. The first two calls were to Lochnagar in the autumn of 1947, one to a benightment on Eagle Ridge and the other to bring an injured climber out of Parallel Gully "A." Both tasks were carried out during the night following the incident and the parties concerned were off the cliffs before daybreak. The third call was to search for a girl reported missing on Beinn a' Bhùird in May 1948. The first party out from Aberdeen met her returning near the top of Glen Slugain. This is not the only instance in Scotland recently of parties being called out for simple benightment following loss of way on easy ground, and it is questionable whether immediate search is necessary in such cases—unless the weather conditions or other factors justify it. In an instance in Glencoe recently, a member of the search party was drowned while the person involved returned safely.

An avalanche on Sgòr Mòr, near Glen Clunie Lodge, which led to injury to four climbers was dealt with by members of their party without calling on other than medical assistance. The occurrence of this accident following the Clova incident reported in the last issue of the *Journal* emphasizes the care necessary on unconsolidated snow on the steeper slopes of these apparently easy hills.

These incidents have all had unwarranted and, as has now come to be expected, completely and, it would sometimes appear, deliberately erroneous reports in the more sensational of our daily and weekly papers. They are doubtless pursuing the policy of giving the public what they think they ought to read rather than the truth.

A notice for exhibition in hotels, hostels, police stations, and other appropriate points throughout the area has been prepared, stating that the Mountain Rescue Service may be called by notifying the police, and giving the location of first aid equipment.

Volunteers for service in search and rescue parties should send their names, addresses, and telephone numbers, if any, to Dr R. L. Mitchell, 75 Cranford Road, Aberdeen (Telephone No. 35916), who has been reappointed.

R. L. M.

AVALANCHE IN RAEBURN'S GULLY.

At the Club Excursion to Lochnagar on February 13, 1949, four members entered Raeburn's Gully about mid-day. Although the leading party (Hendry and Still) had thought that the snow which had fallen some days before would have put the gully out of condition, they found the snow in splendid order and decided to continue. Mathieson (G.) and Anton followed soon afterwards. The leading party climbed the ice pitch in one and a half hours (using a piton as a running belay), and had reached the top of this section about 2 P.M. At this point a small fall of snow from Pinnacle Gully No. 1 suggested a thaw on the upper part of the mountain and this was borne out by the condition of the snow now encountered. Retreat was contemplated but abandoned in favour of an almost immediately attainable escape on to the Tough-Brown Ridge. (This could have been accomplished in ten minutes and seemed, therefore, safer than retreat which was attended by the risk of the party being caught by a fall of snow while descending the ice pitch.) Accordingly, Hendry commenced to cut steps upwards but, soon afterwards, the cornice, which was about 200 feet above and not overhanging, sloughed off, and growing in size and momentum, was sufficient to sweep Hendry off although he had previously driven his axe well in. Still, who was well belayed, momentarily checked the fall but was dragged off when the rope belay ($\frac{3}{8}$ inch nylon) broke his axe; both went down with the avalanche to fetch up on the scree fan of the gully within 3 feet of each other. Still was quite uninjured; Hendry was less fortunate but able to walk off the hill.

Anton, who was nearing the top of the ice pitch and who had clipped a Karabiner on to the piton inserted by the first party, was at once dislodged by the avalanche. Mathieson was safely out of harm's way in a cave with a good axe belay and he was able to bring Anton to a stop at the full extent of his rope (120 feet, $1\frac{1}{4}$ inch nylon). Piton and Karabiner were found later on the rope; the 8 inch ice piton had broken. Anton had apparently suffered injury and was unable to climb down; Mathieson's hands suffered from friction of the rope. Anton's injuries were not so serious as was at first feared, but having been lowered to the bottom of the gully, he was then carried to Allt-na-guibhsaich.

It was fortunate that an R.A.F. Mountain Rescue team from Kinloss was in the area and their aid was enlisted; this splendidly efficient unit was wholly responsible for the rapid evacuation of the injured man. (Certain members of the Club who were on the spot also assisted in various ways.) The avalanche was presumably due to the rapid thaw which, unknown to the climbers, was in progress on the plateau. In the unusual circumstances, it does not appear that the climbers could have done anything to alter the course of events. The incident, however, emphasises, once again, that Scottish avalanches are dangerous, a fact not yet generally appreciated. The Press was not informed, not because

there was any mountaineering blunder to cover up but because the sensational treatment of such incidents by some newspapers not only brings undesirable publicity to the victims but also presents a distorted impression of mountaineering to the public.

W. A. E.

CRAMPONS TO LEND.

Mr William Malcolm has placed in the custody of the Honorary Editor a pair of crampons (8-point, in good condition) to be lent to any member visiting the Alps, Caucasus, Himalaya, etc., free of charge and without material security. Intending borrowers must call and collect; the Editor refuses to contemplate despatch by post!

BOOKS AND JOURNALS.

"A Camera in the Cairngorms," by W. A. Poucher. (Chapman and Hall, 1947; 21s.). This book is a photographic record of one brief spring visit to the area. Considered as such, it will be judged by those familiar with the Cairngorms as a remarkable achievement. It is not easy, in this country, due to our changeable climate, to secure good mountain photographs in a limited time and the difficulty is much increased in the Cairngorms where distances are so vast and where the landscape is, in general, rather devoid of dramatic view-points and striking mountain vistas. That the author should be able to select and present ninety three representative plates is a tribute to his enthusiasm and physical energy. But this is a comparatively expensive publication by a well known author and photographer, from whom readers might rightly expect a certain standard. The book, therefore, must be judged impartially and objectively; credit is not necessarily due for a certain triumph over a self imposed handicap, which, in fact, deprives the area of the detailed and selective treatment merited by it.

The various excursions are dealt with in texts which are commendably brief but direct and informative. The photographic quality is rather variable, some of the views, *e.g.*, that of the Lairig Ghru from Rothiemurchus, being most attractive but others are comparatively mediocre and, in many cases, lack of sharpness is very obvious, especially in some of the cliff photographs in which climbers expect good definition. This defect spoils the rather distorted picture of the Lochnagar cliff, Plate 8. Though the book could hardly be said to add anything to the many fine works dealing with the area nor to be of much direct use to climbers, especially those already familiar with the mountain mass, it does, nevertheless, present under one cover a useful and pleasing collection of views, not only of well known mountain aspects but also of minor and interesting features of the glens and foothills. A remarkable and

frank analysis of the photographic technique is given in three pages of notes dealing with every plate. From this it is seen that a Leica is used throughout. Strangely, for the class of work, a wide angle lens has been employed on twenty-one occasions, introducing, in some cases, noticeable distortion; a long focus lens has never been used. For all but four exposures a $\times 5$ orange filter was fitted. It might have been an advantage to carry an additional and lighter filter. Though Mr Poucher does not emphasise his choice of a Leica, it may be as well to point out to aspiring photographers that a larger (and cheaper) camera does also have certain distinct advantages for mountain photography in black and white.

G. A. T.

“Mountaineering in Scotland,” by W. H. Murray. (Dent, 1947; 18s.) It is late in the day to be commenting on this book which many members will have already read and enjoyed. The book deals exclusively with climbing in Scotland and the emphasis is rather on the winter aspect. While the western hills figure largely in the text, the area covered is fairly wide and the matter is well arranged and nicely balanced. In the main, it is a vivid narrative of the author’s experiences on some of the hardest problems the Scottish mountains have to offer. But action is here skilfully blended with comments on the purpose and value of climbing and with a deep appreciation of mountain beauty. The author’s attitude to climbing is wholly admirable; while he endeavours to make converts to climbing he knows the value of hill walking, not only as a preliminary training but as an end in itself. Even those who do not aspire to more than this will find the book absorbing, and some may even try the experiment of a night walk over the tops, though they may draw the line at high camping in winter!

Although the author’s preference appears to be for the Glencoe and Nevis climbs, perhaps because they generally carry more ice in winter and, therefore, provide harder problems, he ranges over most of Scotland, except the north-west. Four chapters are devoted to summer climbing in Skye and one to Arran. Members will find two chapters of special interest—The First Ascent of Parallel Buttress, Lochnagar and Cairngorm Blizzard. Parallel Buttress is not one of the most striking features of the Lochnagar cliff; it is narrow and rather insignificant in contrast with its larger and more impressive neighbours. Its smooth black slabs—usually glistening wet—are rather repellent but these fell fairly easily and the difficulties were concentrated in one relatively short section on which pitons were used. The caption to the illustration accompanying this chapter is misleading; the buttress is not directly above the snow patch but well to the right of it; in fact, it is not in the picture, which shows the Shadow Buttresses.

Cairngorm Blizzard presents very vividly a five-hour journey from Devil’s Point to Braeriach in the teeth of a storm. In discussing the dangers and difficulties of proceeding in such conditions Mr Murray gives his reasons for continuing. But the truth surely is, as he himself

says in another context, "Who rides on the back of a tiger cannot get off!" Even with local knowledge it would be far from easy to hit off any of the easier ways down into Garbh Choire in a blizzard. At what point it becomes wise to retreat in the face of bad weather must always be a difficult decision and one can sympathise with Mr Murray's companion who suggested a return to Corroun with the wind behind them. It is possible that, as the author says, the Corroun might become a death-trap in a prolonged blizzard but there is surely no evidence to suggest that Baird and Barrie were weakened by their stay at Corroun. It was not, as Mr Murray implies, an enforced stay (three nights), and presumably they felt confident that they could reach Glen Einich over Braeriach, instead of returning, as they had come, by Lairig Ghru. The day was perfect but, in the late afternoon, a storm blew up from the south and raged for some hours with great severity even at 1,000 feet. Whatever the reason, the climbers were apparently still on the plateau when the storm broke and the disaster is sufficiently explained by the fact that the climbers were not wearing clothing adequate to withstand the effects of such a blizzard. A similar explanation accounts for the loss of Ferrier and Mackenzie on Cairngorm after spending "a comfortable night at the (Shelter) Stone." The case for or against taking refuge at either place cannot well be decided on these instances alone since neither party chose to return by the easiest route. It is worth noting also that in at least one of these cases (and probably in both) the wind was *behind* the climbers. That I have dwelt on these points is due simply to the fact that we have here the most difficult problem that the winter mountaineer in the Cairngorms has to face, and it is not just a matter of a sufficiency of clothes. Mr Murray does not, of course, underestimate the difficulties and the general picture here presented is very realistic indeed. It is this gift of vivid portrayal of a climbing situation or of a glimpse of mountain beauty that lifts this book above the average. So many climbers, when they come to write, walk upon wooden legs!

W. A. E.

"Mountains of Memory," by Arnold Lunn. (Hollis & Carter, 1948; 15s.) Information regarding mountains can be obtained either from the standard guide books or from the personal narratives which are to be found in most mountaineering libraries. A guide book has the advantage, if it is an advantage, of covering its prescribed area in detail, whilst the other roams, just as did the earliest writers of books of this type, such as Mummery or Stephen, from one mountain group to another. But if such books are read intelligently, with each mountain located and each route followed from an appropriate map or picture, then probably more is learned regarding the particular ascents being discussed. Personal experience, the trivial incident at the hut, the little point which is crowded out of the all embracing guide, all make books such as Lunn's "Mountains of Memory" worth reading by prospective climbers or skiers, as well, of course, as by those whose

own memories are stirred by the names of Concordia, Theodule, or Scheidegg. But for a book to be of lasting use for such a purpose, an index is a necessity, since the list of books to be consulted grows everlonger and this is in all other respects a valuable addition. R. L. M.

"The Mountains of Snowdonia," by H. R. C. Carr and G. A. Lister. (Crosby, Lockwood & Son Ltd., 1948; 15s.) This admirable book returns to fill a gap in many of our bookshelves. To many of the younger generation its existence was unsuspected. What enjoyment it adds to our climbing to meet in retrospect the famous climbers of the past, squirming and scratching up the same climbs we find strenuous to-day! To read about the days when all climbers knew each other by their christian names—when chronicles composed during the day were read on the floor of the smoking room at night—when Pen y Pass, Pen y Gwyrd, and Ogwen Cottage were thronged with sideboards and alpenstocks, and when Owen of Pen y Pass could turn out the smartest pair-and-brake in Wales (the only transport). There have been many changes in the last thirty years, as this book relates, and mountaineering is now truly the sport of the proletariat.

This book returns at a time when North Wales is again becoming, after a period of stagnation, perhaps the main centre of modern rock climbing technique in Britain and focuses attention on the effect environment has had upon it. Wales is coming back into the limelight by virtue of the great number of climbers who climb there. A new chapter by "Nully" Kretschmer brings the book up to the end of the late war. Modern transport has made Wales available to everybody in the Midlands and has made it the climbing ground of the London mountaineers. To-day there are a number of climbing huts and more are being opened.

In 1927 Fred Piggott led the first serious route on Clogwyn du'r Arddu, which to-day has eleven superb routes of severe or harder standard. They are long, up to 500 feet, and of such a serious nature as to require careful consideration before tackling. But to-day, as Kretschmer points out, the focus of attention has shifted to the Llanberis valley where are found, close to some of the earliest climbs, the hardest routes in Wales. The guide book to this valley, to be issued soon, contains 130 climbs, most of a hard standard.

The photos are good while the remaining chapters cover almost every aspect of Snowdonia. To the climber who intends visiting Wales this book is a "must," and to all others a pleasant bedside companion.

D. T.

"The Western Highlands": S.M.C. Guide; 3rd Edition, 1947; 10s. 6d.

"The Island of Skye": S.M.C. Guide; 2nd Edition, 1948; 12s. 6d.

We welcome the first two post-war S.M.C. Guides, which have now been published. The revision of these is in both cases slight, and their

object is obviously to satisfy new demands rather than to replace the editions already on older climbers' shelves. The Western Highlands Guide has the bibliography brought up to date and some of the recent climbs on Garbh Bheinn of Ardgour included, whilst the main change in the text of the Skye Guide is an enlarged appendix of new climbs. In both instances several new photographs are included, but in each the reviewer has noticed the separation of diagram and photograph previously printed face to face, a change the reason for which is difficult to see. The maps of the earlier editions are no longer included and in their place are end-plate sketches. That in the Skye Guide is rather unconventional both as regards orthography and cartography, unless it be that Alaisdair has indeed slipped into the Tearlach (*sic*)—Dubh Gap!

The standard of production is high and these volumes, which are excellent value in present conditions, serve to increase the impatience with which we await the Rock Climbing Guide to Glencoe and Ardgour, and the Southern Highlands Guide, two new publications which are promised in a few months' time.

R. L. M.

Alpine Journal, Vol. LVI, Nos. 274, 275, and 276. Our members will probably turn first to Prof. H. W. Turnbull's article, "My Friends the Mountains" in No. 274 to read more of the reminiscences which entertained us at our 1947 Annual Dinner. Many of the papers in this number in fact deal with historical topics, into this category falling the Valedictory Address of L. S. Amery, Lord Malcolm Douglas Hamilton's "Introduction to the Hills," "English Travellers in the Graians," by Michael Roberts, and articles on Mont Blanc and the Nushik La. A welcome change is A. M. Carr-Saunders's "An Alpine Artist: Francis Unwin," or "On Top of Egypt," the story of the fifth ascent of Shayib el-Banat—the "Old Man of the Girls"—in the twenty-one years since its first ascent.

"Six Months on the Abruzzi Apennines," by T. A. H. Peacock in No. 275, is another of the articles on climbing in out of the way spots for which we must thank the recent war. It is in fact remarkable how often climbers found themselves in just such areas. A timely article is that of Gerald Seligman on "Snowcraft and Avalanches," well illustrated by photographs and sketches of typical snow forms. In "Old Friends and New Huts," E. H. Peck takes us back to the Alps, in fact to the tops around Zermatt, describing the use of ski in this area in early summer. Other articles discuss Alaska and the Karakorams, whilst H. H. Hardy's "Humble Pie" ranges from Skye to Randa, Wasdale Head to Everest, before turning briefly to mountaineering books and films and the *gaffes* therein.

In No. 276, Lord Malcolm Douglas Hamilton describes the courses on mountaineering being run at Glen More Lodge. The policy of the C.C.P.R. is to encourage all facets of outdoor activities, not solely mountaineering, as the popular press would lead us to believe. These

courses would appear to be very successful: whether organized courses in mountaineering are really desirable is quite another matter. It is good to find something new from Eric Shipton, and "The Arch," an account of the search for a cleft mountain with an aperture 1,000 feet high and about 200 feet wide is an admirable account of the unexplored terrain in the Kashgar area. Bryan Donkin was in Czecho-Slovakia in 1947 and gives an excellent idea of a holiday in the Tatra. C. A. Elliot compares ascents of the Dent Blanche from the Col de Zinal in 1928 and 1947, whilst in addition to several other articles there are no fewer than 20 pages devoted to "In Memorial" notices in an excellent number which would appear to include more accounts of new expeditions than has recently been the case.

Climber's Club Journal, Vol. VIII, Nos. 2 and 3. 1947 and 1948. One lack which has long been apparent in our own and most other climbing journals has been the absence of imaginative humour, either in factual or fictional form. Thus Kemball-Cook's account in the 1947 number, of the Ascent of the Beispielspitz (our old friend from the Badminton "Mountaineering") is all the more welcome, with such delightful incidents as that of the fleas deserting the leading guide from the Kartoffelthal as he crosses the ice-glazed couloir. Articles of Scottish interest are those by J. Cortlandt-Simpson and Wilfrid Noyce, the former describing snow and ice climbing in the Glencoe and Nevis areas. New climbs in these areas are described in the notes, whilst among the illustrations is one of the first ascent of Suicide Wall.

The 1948 *Journal* marks the 50th anniversary of the foundation of the Club and we take this opportunity of sending our congratulations, wondering at the same time if it is to ourselves or to the S.M.C. that Geoffrey Winthrop Young refers as the first island Club? Amongst the general articles in this 180 page issue is a "Letter from Chamonix" by Richard Meyer, and "Alpine Skylines" by J. H. E. Jones.

R. L. M.

Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal, Vol. XXIV, No. 139, 1948. This number offers varied fare with articles on Rum and Harris (the latter by E. C. W. Rudge) and, in "Mountain Howffs" some suggestions by J. B. Nimlin for overcoming the Hut shortage. I recall reading, in the Shelter Stone Visitors' Book, Mr Nimlin's rather unfavourable comments on the Stone as a haven for the night; presumably those described offer none of the discomforts which he experienced at the Shelter Stone. The article is illustrated by a good photograph of a snow cave. There is an interesting short note on the formation of Wind Slab, and another brief account of a climb on Creag Herrich (Glen Isla). Both this issue and its predecessor reflect the great developments taking place in climbing in Scotland.

W. A. E.

The M.A.M. Journal, Vol. II, No. 1, 1947. The first number of this enlarged *Journal* (previously the Bulletin of the Midland Association of Mountaineers) contains a review of climbing areas in Scotland by J. H. B. Bell in which the author's opinion regarding the pre-eminence of Eagle Ridge, Lochnagar over other steep ridge climbs in Scotland must give some satisfaction to our members as we feel Lochnagar to be our home territory. Other interesting articles include the account of a beginner's ascent of Castor and an ascent of the north wall of the Langkofel.

The Rucksack Club Journal, Vol. XI, No. 1, 1948. An article on the new generation of climbers is illustrated by one of our own members on Lot's Groove and includes some remarks on the Tarbuck system of rope management. Three Alpine articles comprise the bulk of the general portion of this excellent *Journal* which also includes extensive sections dealing with Club affairs and new climbs. This Club, like several others, holds monthly meetings indoors throughout the year, and there seems every justification for our own programme of indoor meetings being considerably extended, judging by the variety of topics which the Rucksack Club find it possible to include.

Yorkshire Ramblers' Club Journal, Vol. VII, No. 24, 1947. Much of the activity of this Club is devoted to pot-holing, a sport almost unknown to us, although we fear that it may result in one ending the day in a state only too similar to that produced by too close acquaintance with one of our better peat bogs. The accounts of cave exploration in this *Journal*, however, make good reading, whilst other articles deal with South African and Swiss topics.

Journal of the Mountain Club of South Africa, No. 50, 1947.
Wierchy: Annual of the Polish Tatra Society, Vol. XIII, 1948.
We congratulate the Mountain Club of South Africa on the 50th issue of its *Journal* and the Polish Tatra Society on celebrating the 75th year of its existence. Both *Journals* are welcome additions to our library, which cannot hope to be of use to members unless exchanges with clubs in other countries are established and maintained.

American Alpine Journal. It is with pleasure that we report the resumption of the exchange of *Journals* between the American Alpine Club and ourselves. A substantial number of back numbers have been received and our set now lacks only Vol. II, No. 1 and Vol. III, No. 2. The four most recent numbers are characterised by a freshness and originality absent in many recent British Climbing *Journals*. No. 18, for instance, takes us over the Mountains of Iceland and Tolosa in the Argentine as well as discussing at length the Kinetic Theory of Mountain-Building. No. 19 is a special war number with accounts of mountain operations and of mountain equipment. The article in No. 20 on Dynamic Posture—an account of the relation of anatomy to climbing—

will no doubt interest at least our medical members. In No. 21 a son of the leader of the Swiss Expedition of 1930 writes on the chances of climbing Kangchenjunga, and there is an article on the formation of corries which must arouse interest, since we must thank corrie formation for the existence of most of the climbable rock in the Cairngorms. The notes and adequate reviews in all numbers are of great interest: so too are the Annals of the Club being published in serial form—their honorary members included our first two Honorary Presidents.

R. L. M.

“In the High Grampians,” by Richard Perry. (Lindsay Drummond, 1948; 15s.) This is a naturalist’s account of a two years’ stay at Drumguish in Glen Tromie, in the south-west corner of the Cairngorm area. Most of the observations cover the valleys and the lower tops, although the trail of the dotterel and the snow bunting led to the 4,000-foot plateau west of the Lairig Ghru. To the hill-walker the difficulties of covering the high tops are no doubt exaggerated, but this is no fault when writing for those lacking hill experience. The book does serve to remind the climber just how unobservant he is, for seldom does he notice even those birds or beasts whose identity he should have the ability to recognise as he passes through these to him dreary stretches which, in our area, separate the road and the rock.

The author’s main interest is ornithological: crested tit, crossbill, greenshank, dotterel, snow bunting, as well as commoner birds from goldcrest, siskin, redstart to swan, capercaillie or eagle, all find their place among the 92 different species mentioned—several of which are unfortunately no longer found in the area. Mammals, insects and plants are also dealt with, whilst space is found to mention items such as the Gaick accident and Landseer’s bothy.

The book is one which can be whole-heartedly recommended to our members, not only for the text but also for the illustrations, particularly those of Robert M. Adam and Eric Hosking.

R. L. M.

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