

The Cairngorm Club Journal



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THE CAIRNGORM CLUB JOURNAL

Edited by Hazel A. Witte

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The first volume of the Cairngorm Club Journal was completed one hundred years ago. It incorporated the first six editions of the Journal, starting in 1893, when they were shorter, but came out more frequently. Today's readers should find much of interest, including the first editor, Alexander Inkson McConnochie's descriptions of the Cairngorms in volumes four and five. Articles on mountain measurements, watersheds, peatlands, botany, and tales of climbing exploits, provide insight to the early days of our Club. Bound copies are in the Club Library.

The line drawings are by Ian Strachan, except for those in the Piper's Wood Report, where they are by the author, Heather Salzen.

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THE PRESIDENT

Judy Middleton was elected President of the Club at the annual general meeting in November 1994, in succession to Gillian Shirreffs. A Club member since 1965, she has served on committee from 1971-74, 1979-82 and as Vice President from 1989-92.

Originally from Derbyshire, with early visits to the nearby Peak District and Wales, she was introduced to climbing whilst at Sutton Bonnington, the Agriculture Faculty of Nottingham University.

Judy came to Aberdeen in 1964 to the Bacteriology Department of the North of Scotland College of Agriculture. She attended evening classes run by John Hay who was then Club Meets Secretary, and he introduced her to Muir Cottage, Derry lodge and the surrounding hills, and to the Cairngorm Club. Her husband Robbie is now Club Huts Custodian and daughter Sandra has become a Club member.

A regular on overnight, weekend, bus and midweek meets, she is also a very keen skier and ski mountaineer, becoming a BASI 3 instructor in 1971 and ski-ing the Haute Route in 1985. She completed her round of the Munros and became a Mountain Leader (Summer) in 1995. Her interests have led to part time employment in Outdoor Development within Community Education.



A SOLO ASCENT OF THE MUNROS AND CORBETTS (-1/50,000th)

RHONA FRASER

It all started in 1978 when I bought a camera. By good chance I happened to find a post as GP trainee in picturesque New Galloway. At first I photographed from the roadside, but as time went on I found myself walking further and higher in search of better views. The routes were often trackless and often done alone, my off-duty rarely coinciding with others free time. One day I persuaded a friend to take me up Corserine, the local big hill. It was partially cloudy that day. I watched mesmerised by the twisting motions of clouds up and down the North Gairy Ridge. I had never imagined clouds could dance so delicately. From that moment I was a hill walker.

I cannot remember when I first thought of climbing the Munros and later the Corbetts by myself. It must have been quite early on as my Munros Tables had solos marked with crosses and accompanied ascents by ticks. A cross was greeted with immense satisfaction - a journey completed where the sole responsibility for the route, the vagaries of the Scottish weather (and it's forecasting), and the risk of injury were mine alone. I had to be careful, concentrate and learn.

In July 1995 I ascended Streap, my last solo Corbett / Munro. It was the end of a long journey lasting 16 years and 600 hills. I will not bore you with the majority of enjoyable but routine hill days, rather concentrate on the more memorable outings; my successes and probably more amusing, my failures and errors.

So I will begin with something really impressive - going up the wrong hill! I have done this only twice, both on Corbetts. In December 1988 I set off from Dunmaglas House to climb Carn na Saobhaidhe. I was aware it was a long walk, and probably wishing the miles away started to ascend what I took to be the correct hill. On reaching the summit I looked around, pleased and relieved to have got 'there', only to see across endless miles of Monadh Liath peat hag, a rounded lump very similar to the one on which I was standing, but obviously much higher. As I plodded the extra miles between Beinn Bhuraich and Saobhaidhe, I told myself that I deserved them for my lack of concentration. My second error was only discovered after I was off the hill. By then I was beginning to be more adventurous, learning to cope with more difficult conditions on shorter and supposedly easier days. The cloud base was 300m at best, the hill Meall A'Phubail from Glensulaig. Easy - straight up and down from the bothy. However there was something about the top of the hill, despite its cairn that did not feel right. Unsure of myself, I later worked out that I had ascended 747m, east of the Corbett. Believing it to be straight up from the valley, I had not bothered with compass bearings and must have deviated from the correct line. However, it is worse to realise you

are not quite where you should be when actually on the hill, as happened when I descended to the east rather than the west side of The Brack, and was faced with an unexpected view of a large stretch of water on my right instead of left (Loch Long). To suffer the stomach-churning panic that accompanies this feeling of being lost and out of control is to be avoided at all costs. At moments like these, you become very aware how insignificant you are compared to the vast emptiness around you.

However, sometimes mist surrounds you like a reassuring blanket. I well remember the pleasure and feeling of security that followed my ascent of Gulvain. I gloried in the dampness, the greyness, the fact that I was never going to have any views. The clouds blanked off everything except the grass and boulders at my feet. It was a special two dimensional day with me, the hill and nothing else. I could feel his moods and he mine. I felt so safe *because* I was alone.

There are further advantages in walking solo. It is easier to turn back or alter route without losing face. Excluding injury, when obviously others would aid rescue, I feel that the flexibility of being one's own boss adds greatly to safety on the hill. You can be lulled into a false sense of security in a group, as happened in a 15 hour epic in blizzard conditions on An Teallach with the Galloway Mountaineering Club. I once descended then re-ascended 300m and 3km on Ceathreamhaim to avoid a few metres of ice. Decisions however, sometimes seem to be made from instinct rather than logic as the following two tales will demonstrate.

One June weekend I set off from Craig to bivvy overnight on Sheasgaich and Lurg Mhor. I always remember the strange purple glow in the north sky from Beinn Tharsuinn. Approaching the cliffs of Sheasgaich, the isolation and complexity of the route ahead suddenly became overwhelming. I was overcome with ever rising waves of panic, and despite trying to talk myself through this fear, found myself turning tail and almost running back up Tharsuinn. My headlong dash away from Sheasgaich continued all the way back to the car, never once pausing to reconsider. Something horrible was lurking in these cliffs! Next morning I saw from the hostel window that snow had fallen to 300m. It had not been forecast. Another similar episode occurred on one of the most wonderful of hill days. I had ascended Ben More Assynt from the unusual easterly direction of Glen Cassley. After a snowy start, the day became crystal clear, the snow crisp. For the first time in my life on reaching a summit there was not a trace of human activity. The cairn was unrecognisable in its icy mantle, no footpaths or footprints seen, my crampon marks blending into the roughness of the ice. I felt completely and utterly alone, the vast emptiness of Sutherland stretching behind me. I gloried in the isolation, the knowledge that I had this magnificent mountain to myself, ice and cornices moating it from Conival. I started off for this hill, but found that the walking messages from my brain were not getting through to my feet. I tried to force myself on with reminders of having done this ridge in winter

before, but the fear of avalanche overcame any logic. 'Sheasgaich-foot' prevailed with a safe descent.

Sometimes isolation is enjoyable but often its anticipation is quite frightening. When I am worried by the miles ahead and the risks of being by myself, I think of the view of A'Mhagdhein ten kilometres away along the trackless shore of Lochan Fada, the 967m hill stunted by distance. I looked at her, told myself it was a perfect day for a long walk, that I would be quite safe and got on with it, having a splendid outing. I have developed a long walk rule: stop every two hours to refuel and rest. Am I the only person to associate home made asparagus and blue cheese fillo tarts with Beinn Tarsuinn, hummus and celery pie with Ruadh Stac Mor? I enjoy my food and part of the pleasure is making 'goodies' for the hill. How can I forget the magnificent feeling of looking out from Seana Braigh across a sea of pink cloud and into an orange mid-summer sunset towards the peaks of Coigach. There was no sound. Only colours touched my senses. It was easy to imagine I was alone on this earth. There may be risks and anxieties being oneself, but the rewards can be very special.

I have ascended hills whilst injured but have only once damaged myself on a walk. I had been dropped off a Auch, planning to do the ring of five Corbetts north of Tyndrum and to return to the car parked in the village. Two kilometres into the walk, on a very steep part of the track, I felt the unmistakable tearing sensation of a ruptured calf muscle. It is a condemning indictment of our society that I continued to hop and hobble the eight kilometres back to the car rather than hitch a lift on the main Glasgow to Glencoe road. I felt safer in my hills than in a stranger's car.

I have been pounded by heat on several occasions. In June 1983 I set off at 5am to climb the Aonachs and Grey Corries meeting several like minded individuals on Aonach Beag, attempting to avoid the most extreme heat. Even so, I became breathless on descent into the furnace at the end of the day. Lack of water curtailed an overnigher from Beinn Aighenan to Stob A'Choire Odhar. I knew things would be difficult from the start as the Kinglas River was just a trickle, the only water on the ridge being found on Albannaich. I managed to get as far as Stob Ghabar before the need for moisture overcame my wish to finish the intended expedition. Lightning has encouraged rapid descents of Baosbheinn and Dheiragan, the former stopping a conversation with other walkers in mid-sentence, the latter providing a puzzle till I worked out that the buzzing was my ice axe sizzling with static electricity.

My solo ascent of Ben Lomond came during the second round of the Munros, but it is my first outing that lives in the memory. In these early days I walked in fast spurts, stopping frequently to recover my breath. During these gasping stops an older man would catch me up, walking with the more measured efficiency which I would come to learn. Eventually we both decided that this was being rather anti-social, so we walked together. We talked, I enthusing about hill walking, he about his distant children and recent

bereavement. At the bottom of the hill he pleaded with me, tears running down his face, to join him for a drink. This had been his first happy day since the recent death of his wife. Now he felt that life was worth living.

Snow has given me some interesting days. On Carn Dearg in Glen Buck I coped with gale force winds, freezing temperatures and a mixture of deep snow and wind-scoured ice. Visibility was not quite white-out, the contours implying that I was unlikely to walk over some hidden cliff or cornice. However, when ascending Geal Charn from Carn Dearg on a beautiful day, I picked my way up the steep snow slope towards a path. Wrong! A few paces later I realised it was a fracture line in the snow, and that I was on the wrong side of a cornice. I have been alone in white-outs on three occasions. On Cairn Toul and Meall Garbh I had an eerie feeling of knowing that my sense of vision had been switched off, the only sensory input being from the touch of the wind and the depth of the snow below my feet. I jumped on hearing voices on Cairn Toul, believing some men to be almost next to me, only to discover later that they must have been at least a kilometre upwind. While skiing down Meall na Meoig I could only tell up from down by pushing ahead snowballs to find whether they fell away or towards me. The lack of any sensation of touch in my feet due to the skis, making the indeterminate horizon physically nauseating.

I have tested the friction coefficient of a survival bag on Beinn Dearg Mor. I was on an overnigher, and decided on a direct descent rather than return by the same route. Stupid! I soon realised that there was not enough time to complete this before dark, and should have bivied between Ben Dearg Mor and Bheag. I spent a most uncomfortable night in my orange survival bag, trying not to slip down the very steep heather slope into the jaws of a deep snow-filled gully. In the middle of the night the bag gave up the struggle and disintegrated, leaving me in a wet sleeping bag still trying not to slip into the abyss. I spent the remaining hours of darkness pretending to be some rock climber dangling in a hammock on an extreme rock face.

Skye! anyone who loves it should avoid the next paragraph.

Until Bidein Drium Nan Ramh I loathed the place. Ugly scree-covered lumps! Nothing compared to the space of the Cairngorms or Maoile Lunndaigh, my favourite Munro. I did have a soft spot for Ghreadaidh, she (I sex the hills, but that is another story) being the first Skye hill I did by myself. From An Dorus I took a long time to persuade myself upwards, knowing I had very little scrambling experience and no head for heights. I was petrified of what lay ahead, but if I was to climb all the Munros this fear had to be overcome. Dithering and unsure of myself I set off, ending up glorying in the narrowness of her ridges and the security of the rough gabbro. Sgurr Dubh Mor however was another matter! I set off reassured by a good forecast and the knowledge that I seemed to cope quite well with this difficult scramble during the 1983 Club meet to Skye. As I started up the steep face of the mountain it began to drizzle, the mist swirling over the summits. I began to

feel very much alone. I tried again and again to get up the mountain but always returned to the same narrow ledge. I was attempting to avoid climbing a wet slab and not being at all successful! Frustration led to anger till I literally threw myself at the offending obstacle. My trunk stuck and I slithered up like a caterpillar. Climbers would say I had discovered a friction hold, lesser mortals an eighth point of contact in addition to the seven of feet, hands, knees and bum. The descent was no less spectacular as I made numerous attempts to bypass the 'unavoidable', leaving the hill with torn shorts, bleeding hands and in tears of fear and relief. The next day again promised good weather. I *know* I was the only one up Blaven. Nobody would have been so stupid as to follow my semi-vertical crawl on scree and mud up some unknown gully - the Fraser route direct, in the pouring rain.

Of course it is good to have hills like Sgurr Dubh Mor and dear Ben Klibreck. If hills were always easily attainable then part of the challenge of the mountains would disappear. Ben Klibreck, an easy solo in winter. Alarm bells should ring when I think things are simple. The first attempt was rather rushed due to the impending arrival of bad weather. I should have altered route and climbed by the quickest way, but was determined to try from a southerly direction. In my haste I started to climb too soon from Bealach Easeach, was drawn upwards by some terraces ending on a very steep snow slope covered with avalanche debris. The second attempt was doomed to failure from the start, but forecasts have been known to be wrong, so I set off, the inviting summit cone sparkling white in a clear blue sky. An hour or so later I sat in a whiteout near Meall Aillean and eventually gave up, descending into hailstones coming directly from the North Pole. On the successful attempt I muttered to myself about lack of snow, to be met by a sheet of ice on the final slope. I chipped away with the axe until impatience got the better of me. On went the crampons and I was on the top in minutes. Friends at last! What a wonderful hill!

And so the journey ended on Streap in 1995. Midges in the car had made an early start on Carn Mor a merciful release, my morning walk being rewarded by an unexpected cloud inversion on her summit. Clouds appeared by the time I was 600m up Streap so there were no views, no uncontrollable sobbing that had accompanied my last solo Munro, Sgurr Fiona. A definite anti-climax, yet the best was still to come. I descended directly into Gleann A' Chaorainn and looked back. Streap had disappeared in a wall of white while dark clouds shrouded the Carnaich ridge, my original planned line of descent. Suddenly lightning exploded on either side of the glen and in front of me. I disintegrated, not from fear of this awesome sight, but from the anthropomorphic feeling that it was nature's way of congratulating me. After all, had not the sky looked down on me all those years? I staggered, choking with tears back to the car.

Munros - 1.3.80 Broad Cairn - 12.6.94 Sgurr Fiona
Corbetts - 13.9.79 Broad Law - 14.7.95 Streap

Postscript

The 1/50,000th is of course the Inaccessible Pinnacle. I have not done this solo, my excuse being that I do not own a rope. It was a wonderful feeling ascending Sgurr Dearg on my own on a beautiful day, able to relax with no thoughts of climbing this magnificent but rather frightening object. You may think I dislike the hill - far from it. Was he not especially selected as the best possible 40th birthday present? The weather for once obliged and I finished my second 'round' bawling "Happy Birthday" to myself from the summit. Great stuff!

Do not look in the Munros Tables for my name. "I am not a number. I am a free man". (The Prisoner, ITV).



THE FUTURE MANAGEMENT OF THE CAIRNGORMS

RICHARD SHIRREFFS

On 8 November 1994 the Scottish Office made public a Statement of Intent by the Secretary of State entitled "Cairngorms Partnership". This long-awaited statement set out the government's proposals for a new management regime for the Cairngorms, following on from the initiative taken in March 1991 in setting up the Cairngorms Working Party. It is too soon to appraise the success or otherwise of the new management regime, but this article seeks to record the views which the Club put forward and the manner in which it did so through submissions to the Cairngorms Working Party and other quarters.

There had of course been suggestions for many years, from both private and public sources, that something should be done to ensure that the unique qualities of the Cairngorms were recognised and protected, and that their oversight, instead of being fragmented amongst several local authorities, might be entrusted to some more specific forum. There had been an official suggestion made some sixty years before by the Addison Committee of creating a Cairngorms National Park, and just over ten years after that the Ramsay Committee made the same recommendation. In February 1989 The Countryside Commission for Scotland, which was then the government's statutory adviser on countryside matters, was given the remit to "study management arrangements for popular mountain areas such as the Cairngorms, taking into consideration the case for arrangements along national park lines". They produced a report "The Mountain Areas of Scotland: Conservation and Management" in September 1990. This recommended wide-ranging measures for the management of upland Scotland, including the establishment of national parks in the Cairngorms and three other areas of special importance. Between the commissioning and publication of this report, the government had introduced the Natural Heritage (Scotland) Bill, which proposed natural heritage areas as a new form of protection. It may be wondered whether this was a move to ensure that the government would have an alternative to national parks, if it found itself under pressure to institute them. In any event the publication of the Mountain Areas Report was followed by a period of public consultation and by the publication on 25 February 1991 of the findings of that consultation, which included considerable support for the national park proposals. This in turn was promptly followed on 19 March 1991 by the Secretary of State for Scotland's announcement that he was establishing the Cairngorms Working Party. Around the same time there were other changes on the way. In November 1990 the government announced its intention to propose the Cairngorms for World Heritage Site status. 1 April 1991 was the date when Nature Conservancy Council Scotland became separated from the previously national Nature Conservancy Council. The Natural Heritage (Scotland) Act received royal assent in June 1991, and the

Countryside Commission for Scotland was merged with Nature Conservancy Council Scotland to become Scottish Natural Heritage in April 1992.

The remit of the Cairngorms Working Party was, in general terms, to consider current land and land use practices in the Cairngorms area, and to recommend to the Secretary of State for Scotland an integrated management plan consistent with the importance of the natural heritage of the Cairngorms, the need to assure social and economic benefits to local people, land users and those who invest in the land, and the value of the Cairngorms for recreational purposes. The Working Party was to comprise sixteen members who together were representative of all relevant interests, and to be assisted by panels of technical assessors. It was to be chaired by Magnus Magnusson as Chairman of the Countryside Commission for Scotland and Chairman-Designate of Scottish Natural Heritage. Its other members included a reasonable number of persons representative of environmental and recreational interests, which the Club could align itself with, and indeed included one Club member, John Duff of Braemar, chosen however for his credentials as an active member of the Braemar community, not as a Club member.

Very soon after its establishment the Working Party issued a Mission Statement setting out its basic objectives and how it meant to tackle them. In December 1991 it issued a fuller public statement, recording what it had done to date and how it intended to continue, in particular what it planned in the way of public consultation. Before the Club had been formally invited to make any sort of representations, informal contact with John Duff led to a suggestion that we should make our views known to the Working Party, and as an initial step in this direction, we provided John with copies which he could forward at his discretion of other submissions which the Club had made in the recent past about the same or related topics, namely submissions to the CCS in May 1989 about the national parks issue, the account which appeared in the 1983 issue of this Journal of the Club's efforts in regard to the Lurcher's Gully controversy, and the Club's submissions in 1989 and 1990 in regard to the Highland Regional Council Structure Plan Review. It was gratifying to find that many of these submissions had been prepared in such a way that they were capable of conveying a fairly comprehensive impression of our views on the issues which the Working Party was concerned with.

The contact with John Duff led to a more positive opportunity to contribute to the Working Party's deliberations. The Club was invited to have two or three of its members attend a meeting of the Working Party in Braemar on 24 April 1992, devoted to receiving input on recreation and access issues. Before this meeting the Club's Environmental Issues Sub-Committee had met on a couple of occasions, and we had together compiled a set of written submissions which I had submitted to the Working Party at the beginning of April 1992. These submissions reiterated much of what we had copied to John Duff, though with material and opinions added more pertinent to the remit of the

Working Party. In particular we urged that the scenic and wildness qualities of the Cairngorms could be protected only if there were an integrated management approach over a sufficiently extensive area; we suggested that on the north of the Dee everything from the Feshie (if not the A9) in the west to at least Morven in the east should be included and that on the south everything from the Tilt (or perhaps the A9) to beyond Glen Muick or perhaps even to Mount Battock should be included; we advocated that the northern flanks of Cairn Gorm, around Rothiemurchus and Abernethy and the southern flanks of the south Deeside hills, thus including the Angus glens, should be embraced. We also urged that over such an extensive area, there would have to be different but complementary management policies for the summit plateaux and the corries and glens within the core area, the valleys which had no public roads, the valleys which did have public roads, and the locations of actual towns and villages. We urged that the reliance on "the voluntary principle" which the Working Party's terms of reference set much store by should be supplemented by fall-back legislation, and perhaps most importantly we urged that whatever was set up should have sufficient resources and should be implemented speedily.

The others invited to make presentations at the meeting on 23 April were John McKay of Scottish Natural Heritage along with Eric Langmuir (who was a member of the Working Party as well as being on this occasion a submitter of evidence), and Eric Baird, the Ranger from Glen Tanar (who was able to provide information on how access and environmental problems were tackled elsewhere in Northern Europe). The Club was represented by Gill Shirreffs (then Club President), Eddie Martin (immediate Past-President), and myself. We agreed that Gill and Eddie should speak on particular topics and that I would field the questions. We were entertained to lunch with members of the Working Party (being none too sure in some cases who amongst those that we were chatting with were likely to be "on our side") and then proceeded to the session of submissions.

Gill was surprised to find that she was the only female in the whole group. We received a fair hearing and were satisfied that the effort which we made was worthwhile. I have always felt that it is one of the strengths of the Club in contexts such as this, that it can show that it is not a group with narrow sectional interests but has a large and diverse membership, has a history of over 100 years, and has throughout this time taken an active and responsible interest in matters scientific, ecological and environmental; though our links with these are in one sense external to our proper activities, they add to our weight and credibility. Amongst other things we sought to emphasise that we as a club have always had a good rapport with estates, and that we thought there was ample scope for reducing or eliminating conflicts between recreational interests and land management interests, if the former could be encouraged to seek information about estate activities (and told where it was to be found) and estate managers could be encouraged to avoid problems for

themselves by being more forthcoming with information. These comments seemed to be well received.

Although they were still consulting, the Working Party had evidently by this time begun to formulate views, and on 29 May 1992 they issued a consultation paper and announced that they planned to hold a series of seminars to allow consultees to discuss particular issues at separate sessions. The Environmental Issues Sub-Committee was convened to consider the consultation paper, and Gill, Eddie and I attended the Aviemore seminar on recreation and access. This afforded us less opportunity for saying anything useful, and a large proportion of those attending seemed quite hostile to the sorts of outcomes that we hoped might be achieved; it was noticeable and frustrating how many speakers seemed to think that the Working Party was a Cairngorm Working Party, not a Cairngorms Working Party.

A further set of submissions to the Working Party was finalised on the basis of the deliberations of the sub-committee and our experiences at the Aviemore seminar, and these were forwarded on 25 June 1992. They were much more specific than the earlier general submissions. When necessary they expressed concerns about points which we disagreed with or points which we felt were inadequately provided for in the consultation paper. In part they amounted to simple statements of support for some of the proposals, so that, if there should be any simplistic counting of views for and against, there should be no question of the sensible proposals losing out because supporters failed to express a view whereas opponents did so.

There must at this time have been some indication that a definitive report was to be expected quite soon, as my covering letter for these submissions ended "We all await eagerly the publication of the definitive report later in the summer". The Working Party's official secretary also seemed to rate this as a possibility, as her acknowledgement referred to a report being submitted to the Secretary of State in the autumn. However, the report, in the form of a veritable book comprising 112 pages of main text and another 69 pages of annexes and 7 pages of plans, was not ready for submission to the Secretary of State until late December 1992 and not published until early April 1993. This of course was not an end of the exercise but the beginning of its next stage. The Secretary of State was now inviting comments on the report to allow him to come to a conclusion.

In many respects those of us who considered the Working Party's report on behalf of the Club welcomed it. It expressed support for many elements which we had considered to be important, and it recommended that they be applied over a wide geographical extent (as wide as the Club could reasonably have hoped for), meaning that watersheds, which had for so long formed boundaries between administrative zones, might cease to be important in that regard. The element which we found most disappointing was the conclusion about how the Working Party's general recommendations should be implemented. We believed that the dissenting view of two of the Board's

members, Eric Langmuir and John Hunt, which was set out as Annex 10 to the report, and a presentation of the Scottish Council for National Parks, which was reproduced as Annex 9, and which were broadly similar, both advocating national parks or something very similar as the administrative vehicle for delivering a new management strategy, were to be preferred to the majority recommendation of the establishment of a Cairngorms Partnership and corresponding Partnership Board. Our main reason was that too much reliance was placed on what might be achieved by the "voluntary principle".

After due consideration of the report we wrote to the Secretary of State for Scotland on 29 June 1993 setting out our thoughts, these running to three pages of general comment and two and a half pages of statements of specific support for or opposition to individual recommendations in the report. Amongst our criticisms we voiced the views (a) that a Partnership Board would not be enough to result in six district councils and three regional councils acting consistently and positively towards the furtherance of the Partnership's objective, (b) that the Working Party was in error in thinking that the areas north and south of the actual Cairngorms could not be a cohesive economic, social and cultural unit if once given a management regime which treated them as such, (c) that we did not believe that the voluntary principle could deliver what was expected of it if the only last resort power available were compulsory purchase, (d) that the suggested level of additional funding from central government was inadequate and (e) that the weak administrative structure suggested was insufficient to support the hoped-for World Heritage Site status. We concluded our general submissions with the suggestion - "The goal should be a management regime for the Cairngorms such that anyone reflecting on the history of the Cairngorms in 2050 will think of 1993 or 1994 as a turning point". I hope that if matters do not work out as one might hope, some readers of this Journal in 50 years time will remind the Scottish Office that they were warned.

After the expiry of the consultation period, time passed. And more time passed. At some point an ill-informed or insufficiently cautious member of the Scottish Office's Environment Department indicated in response to prodding that the Secretary of State's response was expected "in about a month's time". More than once after this it was still expected "in about a month's time". By September 1994, when the Cairngorm Chairlift Company submitted their planning application for their funicular proposal, a decision was still expected "next month", though officials were now saying this in print. The Club's final "next month" letter was received in late October 1994 and great was the disbelief when the Secretary of State's publication "Cairngorms Partnership" made its appearance on 8 November 1994 - printed (as revealed by reading against the light to see what was below the Tippex and overstick label) as long before that as June 1994.

The Secretary of State's decision was, by and large, to adopt the

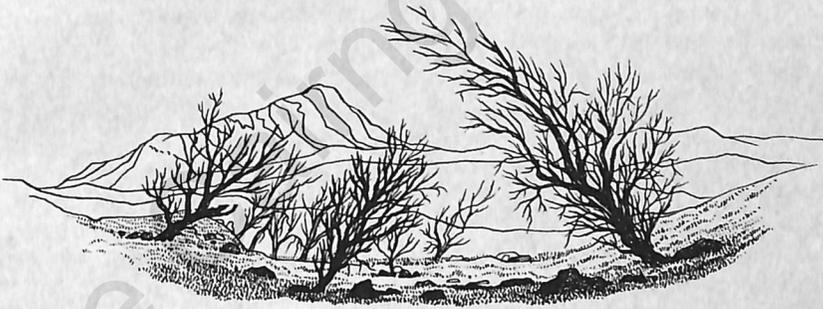
recommendations of the Cairngorms Working Party and to establish a Cairngorms Partnership (the members of which would be the relevant local authorities and various other interested authorities such as the Forestry Commission and Water Boards) and a Partnership Board (the members of which, under the chair of Mr. David Laird, would be nominees of local authorities and representatives (selected by the Chairman or by the Secretary of State) of relevant interest groups, including, fortunately, recreational and other environmental interest groups.

On reading the "Cairngorms Partnership" my predominant impression was that the contents were a step forward, albeit not exactly what we would have liked. I thought however that it would be an interesting exercise to prepare an abstract of its positive statements as distinct from gloss and padding. This left me concerned at how little the positive content amounted to; in particular there was no promise of additional funding from central government (SNH and local government being expected to contribute whatever was needed), and the Partnership Board, however well its members might work together, would still have to devise the management strategy which had been the Scottish Office's avowed ultimate objective in setting up of the Cairngorms Working Party. Nevertheless the way forward was now determined and it seemed better to work with it than to argue that better could have been done.

The Secretary of State selected a chairman for the Partnership Board - Mr. David Laird, a member of SNH and a solicitor with estate management connections - and left it to him to select, in consultation, the other members of the Board. The Club made contact with Mr. Laird about the likelihood of nominations from the Aberdeen area and was invited to make a nomination; we also made contact with the North East Mountain Trust and the Mountaineering Council of Scotland, agreeing that we should all feel free to make independent nominations. The Committee hoped that Peter Howgate would allow his name to go forward as an ambassador of the recreational interest with years of experience of debates of matters environmental, but he preferred not to. With considerable misgivings as to the possible time commitment I then allowed my name to be put forward. We learned that the NEMT were nominating their chairman Roger Owen and the MCofS were nominating Helen Geddes of the "Save the Cairngorms" campaign. Eventually, on 19 April 1995, the membership of the Partnership Board was announced and found to be much to the Club's satisfaction. The members were to include the two last named individuals and also our own member Adam Watson (chosen of course for his personal renown) and our footpath project adviser Bob Aitken. All in all there was as good a representation of the recreational/conservation interest as we could have hoped for.

The Partnership and Partnership Board have evidently worked hard since April 1995, though maintaining as yet a relatively low profile. The Club has recently received copies of all of the Board's minutes up to mid-April 1996 and a list of all the papers which the Board had by then considered, all

indicative of a vast amount of work. A first issue of a Board Newsletter made its appearance in April 1996. At the time of this article being written the awaited Management Strategy still has to be finalised and published, but it is scheduled for later in 1996 and may have been published by the time of issue of this Journal. It is perhaps disappointing that the Management Strategy has not appeared in time to be of assistance in the evaluation of the Cairngorm Chairlift Company's funicular proposals, but the Partnership Board is scarcely to be blamed for not producing in 15 months something which had been under discussion in other quarters for the previous 45 months. What we must ensure is that the undoubted efforts of the Partnership Board do bear acceptable fruit, and if there is any doubt about this coming to pass the responsible politicians, both national and local, must be taken to task.



SCOTTISH NATURAL HERITAGE

PAUL D W TIMMS

Scottish Natural Heritage is a Government Agency, which came into existence on 1 April 1992 following the Natural Heritage (Scotland) Act 1991, by the amalgamation of the Countryside Commission for Scotland and the Nature Conservancy Council of Scotland. Its general aims as laid down in the founding legislation are two-fold, namely, to secure the conservation and enhancement of, and to foster the understanding and facilitate the enjoyment of the natural heritage in Scotland. This article will expand on those aims and objectives to try and give an impression of what SNH actually does, with particular reference to land management.

SNH's name is a very good guide to its identity; it is Scottish in the sense that it is a Scottish body acting for the people of Scotland and reporting to the Secretary of State for Scotland but working within an international framework. It is 'natural' in the sense of deriving from nature whereas it is recognised that most of Scotland has been, to a greater or lesser extent, influenced by man for many a millenium, so the term 'natural' embraces the whole concept of people in the environment. 'Heritage' emphasises a crucial time dimension; it is not just what individuals and society inherits but also what it passes on to future generations either by way of maintaining and enhancing the existing heritage or creating future heritage, provided in so doing the inherited environment is not damaged.

SNH is the first UK Governmental organisation with the statutory responsibility to have regard to the desirability of ensuring that its own activities and those of others in relation to the natural heritage are undertaken in a way which is sustainable. Sustainability was defined by the then Secretary of State for Scotland in the House of Commons in 1991;

'Sustainability is a concept which has been developed over a number of years and is at the centre of the Government's environmental policy. The concept is that the environment should be so regarded and maintained that it does not erode or degrade, and is handed on to future generations in the same condition or possibly enhanced or developed. Therefore, no operation should be allowed to take place which would damage the environment without restoring or replenishing the damage.'

SNH safeguards and enhances Scotland's natural heritage in two ways; namely by influencing others and by occupying land itself. SNH has a statutory duty under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 to notify sites of special scientific interest, where they are of the opinion that any area of land is of special interest by reason of its flora, fauna, geological or physiographical features. There are detailed scientific criteria for determining whether or not an area of land should be notified as an SSSI. The notification is sent to the owner and/or occupier of the land and various statutory agencies, and includes

the reasons why the site has been notified, a map identifying the site and a list of what are called 'potentially damaging operations'. In general, the owner or occupier of any land which has been notified as an SSSI can not carry out, on the site, any of the potentially damaging operations unless they have served written notice on SNH detailing the proposed activities, so that SNH can assess the likely impact of those activities on the SSSI. When SNH receives notice of a potentially damaging operation, it considers the effect of the activities on the land and decides whether or not it is prepared to consent to the activity. There are, of course, many land management activities that have to be undertaken on SSSIs for which SNH will not object. For example, the maintenance of existing drains and ditches, pest control, field sports and, in some cases, changes to the grazing regime. There are other operations which if undertaken on an SSSI would damage the interest for which the site was notified. If SNH is of the opinion that the proposed activities fall into this category, it may offer the occupier a management agreement under which they will be financially compensated for not undertaking the proposed activity. The calculation of the compensation is beyond the scope of this paper, suffice to say that the objective is for the occupier to be in a similar financial position as if they had undertaken the proposed improvement. When considering any notice and subsequent management agreement SNH will consider whether the activities proposed are economically viable i.e. whether the farmer would make a profit out of them, before deciding whether or not to proceed to a management agreement. Obviously if the farmer was not going to make any money out of the activities there would be no compensation payable!

A management agreement is a legally binding contract between SNH and the owner or occupier of the land and may vary in length between 3 and 99 years, the majority being less than 21 years. The agreement includes details of the agreed management of the site including scientific interest, management objectives, e.g. enhance existing grassland, management prescriptions e.g. the land will be grazed by a given number and type of stock together with details of permitted activities such as field sports and pest control. The agreement also covers a whole range of technical and contractual issues.

SNH is aware that attempts are sometimes made to prompt it into giving compensation for work which would not, save in an attempt to get compensation, otherwise proceed. There are several instances where SNH has declined to enter a management agreement as it considered the proposed activities of questionable economic viability and the activity did not proceed.

The relationship between SNH and land occupiers, although governed by statute, is based on the voluntary principle. Thus, although SNH has reserve powers the view has been taken that, in the long term, there will be a more fruitful relationship between the statutory conservation agencies and the land occupying community if, in so far as possible, occupiers are encouraged and rewarded for co-operating with SNH rather than there be

undue statutory control. The success of the voluntary principle can be judged by the effect that in 1995/96 only some 20 SSSIs were damaged (about 1.5% of the total) and the majority of that damage was assessed to be of a short-term nature.

In Scotland there are currently some 1397 SSSIs, covering an area of some 892678 hectares and some 619 management agreements over parts of SSSIs covering some 158,116 hectares.

SNH also enters management agreements with the occupiers of SSSIs to enhance the interest of the site rather than reactively to protect it as discussed above. There are some occasions where the natural heritage interest of an SSSI can be improved by habitat management, be that an adjustment in the grazing regime, the exclusion of grazing or the creation of new features such as pools and lagoons. SNH has and hopes to continue to approach owners seeking their co-operation and will enter agreements accordingly. In addition the majority of Scotland is not an SSSI and there is much of natural heritage interest outwith such sites. Accordingly, SNH has the power to enter management agreements on land that is not an SSSI to improve the natural heritage interest of that area. Under such agreements SNH would normally pay for or contribute to the positive management works to be undertaken, and the farmer may or may not receive compensation, depending on the details of the case.

SNH directly manages land by occupying 70 National Nature Reserves extending to some 113,238 hectares either by owning them outright, leasing them or, through management agreements with owners which by their very nature have sometimes involved compromise over ways in which the land is managed. All NNRs are SSSIs, but are considered to be of outstanding national importance to the natural heritage in Scotland. The suite of NNR provides a representative of cross-section of diverse habitat types; from the seabird islands of the St Kildan archipelago in the west to the estuarine habitats of the Sands of Forvie in the east to the heather grass and spagnum dominated moor of Hermaness in the North and the salt marshes foreshore and mud flats of Caerlaverock in the south. The vast area of the Cairngorms is also an NNR.

The objectives of management of the NNRs obviously varies very considerably from site to site depending on the underlying habitat. One of the NNRs owned by SNH is Creag Meagaidh National Nature Reserve extending to some 4,000 hectares. It is managed for its natural heritage value and important recreational interest. The reserve rises from the side of Loch Laggan across a range of habitats including semi-natural woodland, moorland and the montane high top to the summit of Creag Meagaidh at 1,130m. In the past grazing had restricted the development of woodland on the reserve but, following acquisition in 1985, SNH has reduced the grazing pressure which has resulted in considerable natural regeneration of the native woodland including birch, rowan and willow. Above the treeline, moorland heather

dominates before grading into the montane habitat of the high tops, being the breeding ground of dotterel and ptarmigan.

The designation of land in the SSSI does not remove it from the planning system. If an owner or occupier wishes to undertake an activity on an SSSI that requires planning permission they apply to the local planning authority. The authority will statutorily consult SNH regarding the application. SNH will make its views known and if the local planning authority is minded to grant the application, has reserve powers in which to request the involvement of the Secretary of State for Scotland to determine the issue. There have been instances where SNH has not been consulted on planning applications on SSSIs and it has successfully obtained interdicts preventing works proceeding, and compelling local authorities to take into account SNH views.

SNH's other primary objective is to facilitate the enjoyment of the natural heritage and has inherited the powers and duties previously held by the Countryside Commission for Scotland.

SNH is primarily concerned with informal recreational activities which depend on the qualities of the natural heritage. Sport, physical recreation and field sports are in the bailiwick of other organisations although they touch on SNH's remit where they use the resources and qualities of the natural heritage. SNH is keen to, and does promote co-operation between land managers and those recreating in the countryside. For example, by grant aiding the provision of facilities such as rangers services, working with tourists boards, local enterprise companies and local authorities with a view to improving the provision of access to the countryside. In addition, SNH has invested considerable sums of money in an extensive programme of footpath restoration in several areas of Scotland, and it co-operates with the representative bodies of recreational interest users such as the Mountaineering Council of Scotland and the Ramblers Association. These have resulted in greater co-operation between various interests and, in particular, the publication of various codes of practice. These include SNH providing secretariat support to enable a number of representative bodies for land management, open-air recreation and public access in the Access Forum to produce a concordat on access which aims to establish better understanding among all countryside users, promote tolerance and good practice in the enjoyment of open-air recreation.

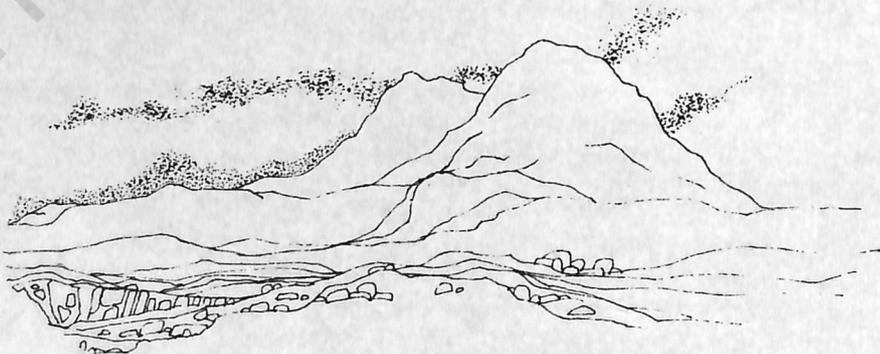
In striving to achieve its objectives of safeguarding and enhancing the natural heritage of Scotland and promoting the enjoyment of and responsible access to the natural heritage, SNH has a statutory role in advising local planning authorities, particularly with reference to planning applications, and central government. SNH also attempts to foster the understanding of the natural heritage through environmental education. This obviously includes schoolchildren but also anyone with an interest in the rural environment, be that the urban population, owners or managers of land together with representative and professional organisations. SNH has also taken the initiative

of starting a thinking process in respect of many issues affecting the natural heritage and has produced substantial policy papers including 'Red Deer and The Natural Heritage' and 'Access'.

SNH is also charged in undertaking its duties to balance other interests such as the needs of agriculture, forestry and fisheries, social and economic development and sites and landscapes of archaeological interests. It should be appreciated that while SNH has a duty to take account of these various elements, its statutory responsibilities are not overridden by them.

SNH has within its statutory functions an extremely wide remit and strives to work with all sectors of the community involved in natural heritage matters, making sometimes controversial decisions, but always with the well-being of the natural heritage as the central objective.

Editor's note: Paul is regional land agent with the North East Region of Scottish Natural Heritage. He points out that this article has given a very brief resumé of some of the activities of SNH and is not a definitive statement on any matter.



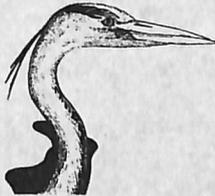
SIXTY YEARS AGO

BRODIE LEWIS

I had portaged from Loch Eil, using two pairs of pram wheels, descended a mile of the river Callop and Loch Sheil lay before me. It was my intention to canoe to Skye. Towards evening I was half way down the loch, and seeing a croft on the south shore, asked the owner for permission to camp on his land. He and his family were speaking Gaelic. At last, I thought, I can learn how to pronounce the names of these mountains on the map. But he kindly explained that though they spoke the Gaelic - and everything I said to his mother by the fire had to be translated, they could neither read nor write it. When they needed to write a letter they wrote in English. At the time the steamer Clanranald plied between Glenfinnan and Acharacle - her mast eventually became the caber used at the Glenfinnan Highland Games - and while I was there they rowed out into the loch and handed a letter up over her bows. They told me they provisioned twice a year in spring and autumn. The goods came by rail to Glenfinnan and then by steamer. The rest they provided for themselves.

Next day I bade them farewell, continued down the loch to Sheil Bridge and pitched to await an appropriate tide. Needing provisions, I went to the local shop. Never had I seen clothes so patched as those worn by the man who served me; there were even patches on patches. He put what I needed on the counter and when I came to pay, apologised for having to charge me - a traveller. He said as they had to buy these items, he had no choice, but the potatoes were home grown and there would be no charge.

Next morning I descended the River Sheil, entered Loch Moidart and took the southern route round Eilean Shona to the open sea. There, for the first time I saw the islands of Eigg, Rum and Skye and the magical effect the light, sea and sky made together, with a tinge of green just above the horizon. It was a memorable journey, but my keenest memory is of the kindness and hospitality of the people I met.



A CONCORDAT ON ACCESS TO SCOTLAND'S HILLS AND MOUNTAINS

Introduction

Scotland's hills and mountains have great natural beauty; they are of high value for open-air recreation and of great importance for wildlife. They are in various forms of private and public ownership and are the home and workplace for sparse and economically fragile populations.

More people are visiting the hills and patterns of open-air recreation are changing. Recreation is now a major use of the hills alongside the traditional activities of hill farming, forestry, field sports and deer management. All are important providers of employment.

There is a common interest between all these land uses because they depend on the natural resources of the hills. There is also a common responsibility on all who visit and manage the hills to conserve wildlife and landscapes and to have regard for the welfare of livestock.

The parties to the Concordat have come together because there is an urgent need for co-operation between different users of hill land. The aim is to establish better understanding between the various interests in order to promote tolerance and to encourage co-operation.

The Concordat has been agreed by all the parties represented on the Access Forum, which are :

- Bodies representing farmers, managers and owners of hill land, where access takes place;
- voluntary bodies representing many different recreational activities which require access; and
- public bodies which have roles in promoting and facilitating enjoyment of open-air recreation.

The Concordat

There is a long-standing tradition of access to hill land in Scotland - cherished by those who use the hills and long accepted by landowners and managers where this freedom is exercised with responsibility. As more people go to the hills, there is a growing need to encourage sensitive management and recreational practice. The Concordat aims to ensure that people can continue to enjoy access to the open hill in a way which shows consideration for the interests of others.

The parties to the Concordat agree that the basis of access to the hills for informal recreation should be as follows.

- Freedom of access exercised with responsibility and subject to reasonable constraint for management and conservation purposes.
- Acceptance by visitors of the needs of land management, and understanding how this sustains the livelihood, culture and community interests of those who live and work in the hills.
- Acceptance by land managers of the public's expectation of having access to the hills.
- Acknowledgement of a common interest in the natural beauty and

special qualities of Scotland's hills, and of the need to work together for their protection and enhancement.

Making the Concordat work

The success of the Concordat will depend on all who manage or visit the hills acting on the four principles set out above. In addition, the parties to the Concordat will promote good practice in the form of:

- Courtesy and consideration at a personal level.
- A welcome to visitors.
- Making advice readily available on the ground or in advance.
- Better information about the uplands and hill land uses through environmental education.
- Respect by visitors for the welfare needs of livestock and wildlife.
- Adherence to relevant codes and standards of good practice by visitors and land managers alike.
- Any local restrictions on access should be essential for the needs of management, should be fully explained, and be for the minimum period and area required.

Implementation

The signatories agree to:

- promote the general adoption of the principles set out above;
- prepare and promote information and advice on the harmonisation of recreation with other land uses;
- endeavour to resolve differences of opinion through discussion; and
- keep under review the overall framework for the provision and management of access to Scotland's hills.

The signatories to this document will foster a caring and responsible approach to access, both by those who visit the hills for enjoyment and by those who own and manage Scotland's uplands. The public bodies acknowledge their role in assisting the implementation of the Concordat, including providing advice and helping to secure resources necessary for the successful management of access.

The Concordat has been prepared and agreed by:

- Association of Deer Management Groups
- Convention of Scottish Local Authorities
- Mountaineering Council of Scotland
- National Farmers' Union of Scotland
- Ramblers Association Scotland
- Scottish Countryside Activities Council
- Scottish Landowners Federation
- Scottish Natural Heritage
- Scottish Sports Association
- Scottish Sports Council

This Concordat was made public in January 1996, and endorsed by Lord Lindsay, the Scottish Office environment minister.

ACCESS - TO BOLDLY GO?

WILL CAMPBELL

James Bryce was MP for Aberdeen South from 1885 to 1906 and Ambassador to the United States from 1906 to 1913. He was also President of the Cairngorm Club for 32 years. During his parliamentary career he several times attempted to get an "Access to Moors and Mountains Bill" passed. This would have established a general right to roam in the Scottish hills and was apparently rather too radical for some of his fellow Club members. Unfortunately it was also too radical for the majority in the House of Commons and a hundred years later hill-goers are still confronted by the same issues Bryce sought to resolve.

Although some landowners still seek to exclude hill-goers from their estates on the pretext of disturbance to game and livestock as they did in Bryce's time, the problem has assumed a greater degree of complexity in the 1990s with the perception of a possible need to limit access to certain areas in the interests of conservation. There have been suggestions recently that European legislation to protect sensitive species and environments could result in substantial areas of wild land becoming no-go areas to climbers and hill-walkers. A couple of years ago, controversy over access to the Letterewe estate led to conservation and recreation bodies negotiating the Letterewe Accord with landowner Paul van Vlissingen. Both sides committed themselves to mutual toleration and environmentally sensitive practices. More recently, the chairman of Scottish Natural Heritage has masterminded an Access Concordat in which landowners and hill-goers agree to be nice to each other. Landowners will not exclude hill-goers unreasonably from their estates. Hill-goers will accept the need not to get in the way of necessary estate work. A further twist has come with the Cairngorm Chairlift Company's proposal to build a visitor centre high on the side of Cairngorm. In the interests of securing Scottish Natural Heritage's approval for their misconceived scheme, the Chairlift Company has now undertaken to prevent its visitors from venturing onto the mountain itself. An interesting slant on the "quality mountain experience".

On the face of it, there is not much wrong with the principles of the Letterewe Accord or of the Access Concordat. Landowners and other users of wild land have come together and negotiated agreements which preserve the essential interests of both sides - presumably gaining in the process some greater degree of appreciation of each other's point of view. Surely the stuff of which civilised societies are made. There is, however, a fundamental weakness in these agreements - their voluntary nature. While not doubting Mr van Vlissingen's sincerity, there is nothing, as far as I can see, to prevent him from repudiating the Accord if he feels in years to come that it is in his interests to do so. If he decides in future to sell the estate, how likely is it that

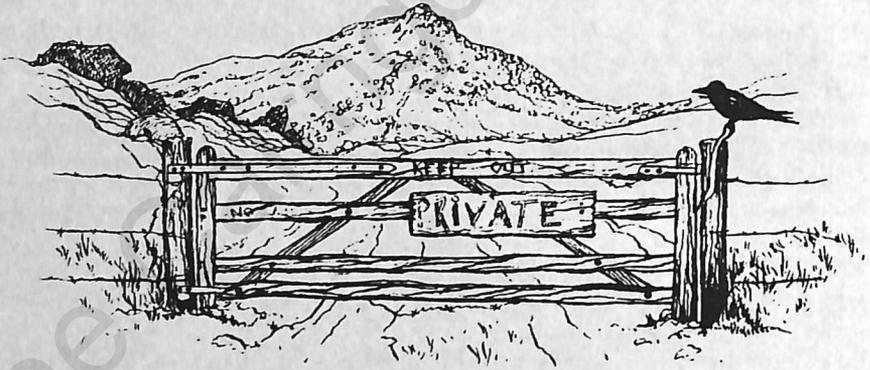
adherence to the Accord will be a condition of sale? Can the Scottish Landowners Federation guarantee that all their members will adhere to the principles of the Access Concordat? And what of landowners who are not even members of the Federation? There seems to me to be a real danger that landowners who wish to prevent hill-goers from exercising their traditional and legitimate right of access to wild land, will in future seek to use the pretext of environmental protection as they have previously used the risk of disturbance to game. In the past we have had some protection from the fact that trespass under Scots law is a civil and not a criminal offence. Today we have the Criminal Justice Act, born of paranoia about those who choose to follow a lifestyle different from the majority. Although we have been assured that the Act will not be used against hill-goers, can we be completely confident that this will never be the case?

In addition to the traditional economy of the post-Clearances Highland estate - resting on permutations of shooting, fishing, stalking and sheep-farming, we have also today to contend with the possibility that conservation organisations might seek to prevent access to estates in order to pursue their own particular mission. So far most of the bodies which have bought estates for conservation purposes - John Muir Trust, RSPB, National Trust for Scotland - are membership organisations who have either an explicit or implicit commitment to responsible public access. The possibility exists, however, that a less accountable body which secured ownership of such an estate - funded perhaps by the whim of a wealthy individual with little understanding of Highland needs or customs - might seek to exclude hill-goers. If this were to happen in an area which had previously enjoyed relatively unrestricted access, the resulting conflict would benefit neither the recreational hill-goer nor the estate's environmental objectives.

It seems to me that the only long-term solution to the problem is the one which James Bryce sought to introduce, the route which has been followed in the Scandinavian countries - statutory right of access to wild land. Let's not forget that under the regime of land ownership which was brought into place after the Jacobite rebellions, the ecological condition of the Highlands has been reduced to such an extent that a leading ecologist described the region as "a devastated countryside", and that the indigenous population was largely removed in circumstances of great brutality. We have no need to feel defensive in advancing the right of access proposition. On both moral and economic grounds, the case for statutory right of access can be readily defended. "The Economic Impacts of Hillwalking, Mountaineering and Associated Activities in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland", a recent study carried out for Highlands and Islands Enterprise, has demonstrated what many of us have suspected - that our activities now make a very substantial contribution indeed to the economic well-being of the Highlands. (Interestingly enough this study seems to have come as such a shock to HIE that they sat on it for several months before releasing it. Perhaps because it

detracted from their arguments for the economic necessity of the Cairngorm funicular?)

With a statutory right of access to wild land established, hill-goers could enter the debate about the needs of sensitive environments and estate management without having to worry about landowners' hidden agendas. The Highland economy would continue to benefit from the economic inputs of "Hillwalking, Mountaineering and Associated Activities" and at least one of the historic injustices of the Clearances would have been redressed. Will we finally see the vision of James Bryce realised in the Scotland of the twenty-first century?



SOUTER HEAD

STUART STRONACH

The following article has been unearthed from C.C.J Vol XV No. 84 (1945). I have reproduced it here verbatim, but with the addition of the current climbing guide descriptions for the routes noted (Northeast Outcrops, NEO). Any additional text, including the up-to-date route descriptions, is given in italics. The original article, written by R.R. MacDonald, R.O. Scott and W.T. Hendry, was the first appearance of a climbing guide to the North East coastline, and most of the routes listed were pioneered by Club members. Some of the new descriptions have been paraphrased in order that they make sense in the context of the rest of the descriptions. Altered words are shown in [], and words omitted are indicated by The text of the current North East Outcrops guidebook has been reproduced by kind permission of the Scottish Mountaineering Club.

'On the Kincardineshire coast at Souter Head,¹ about two miles south of the Bay of Nigg, some excellent climbing may be had any summer evening or Saturday afternoon. Although Souter Head has been mentioned in previous numbers of the Journal, any description of climbs is usually brief and vague. In the following notes an attempt has been made to describe the main climbs in such a way that their position can be easily identified. The climbs do not exceed 60 or 70 feet, but there is a surprising variety both as regards type and degree of difficulty. The rock is excellent, and it is seldom that one comes upon a loose hold. The climbs are described below going from north to south.



(A).- This is a small pinnacle north of Souter Head, surrounded by water except at low tide. An ascent by Aitken is described in Vol. XIII, p.274. By doing a very difficult hand traverse round the south side he managed to ascend the front of the pinnacle. A brief survey last summer in a bathing costume persuaded us that the south side was the most feasible route,² but the cold wind and absence of a rope prevented a serious attempt at climbing it. Perhaps someone who has the benefit of an army training in amphibious operations may manage the ascent at high tide.

NEO: Southern Diagonal Traverse 8m Very Difficult

Start from the neck and traverse right and up to a ledge on the edge. Continue easily to the top. This is the easiest descent route, but there is also a metal ring on the summit from which to abseil.

¹ Reached by crossing bridge over railway at Burnbanks and proceed east through field.

² Other comments appear later in the article.

GRASSY PINACLE (B).- This is the first promontory in the accompanying diagram and is much frequented by sea-gulls. The approach is along a neck of rock to a pitch of 14 feet which is not quite so easy as it looks. A descent can be made from the neck on either side and the pinnacle traversed at sea level without difficulty.³

THROUGH ROUTE CHIMNEY (C).- The south side of the second promontory is approached along the edge of a small pool by means of a fine handhold about seven feet from the ground. Here will be seen a hole in the rock giving access to a V-shaped chimney. Anyone of more than average girth will find this hole difficult to negotiate, and even a reasonably slim person will discover that there is only one position in which his body will pass through. The walls of the chimney are rough with few good holds and the descent is made by keeping the body wedged into the narrow part. Although the chimney is short, the ascent is slow and laborious, and anyone who goes down and up without losing any buttons may consider himself lucky.

NEO: At the back of the inlet is a through route (Moderate), which gives an enjoyable squirm.

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

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

*NEO: Milestone Direct 10m Very Difficult **

The slabby north wall can be climbed at any point. The best route starts directly below the milestone. Climb up to and directly over the milestone, then continue straight up to a slight overhang. Step left and finish on good holds. The overhang may be climbed direct (Severe).

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

*NEO: Slab Top Chimney 10m Difficult ***

Climb the obvious chimney with a constricted top.

LONG STEP CHIMNEY (F).- A few feet to the left of the Slab-top Chimney is another and narrower one commencing about 15 feet above the rocks at the foot. Half-way up there is an overhang which can be avoided by a long step out of the chimney to the left.⁴ The climb is then finished up easy rocks.

³ There is a possible route (V.D.) on the seaward corner of the N. face.

⁴ There is an alternative route on the steep slabs on the right of the overhang.

NEO: Long Step Crack 10m Mild Severe

Climb the crack left of [the] arete.

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

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

NEO: Bird's Nest Crack 6m Easy

The easy-angled narrow crack above the pool provides a useful descent, and E-points for beginners.

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

*NEO: Overhang Crack 10m Mild Severe **

The obvious corner on the north wall starts with an overhang and finishes on a shelf slanting off to the right. Swing up over the overhang into the corner with the help of an excellent time-honoured flake (crux) and continue up the corner.

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

The location of this climb is open to question, but it is likely to be St. Andrews Crack, followed by either The Rat Trap or The Catwalk

NEO: St. Andrew's Crack 4m Moderate

The crack line left of Overhang Crack leads to a big shelf below [a 4m wall]. The climb is named after a characteristic white quartzite cross on the finishing ledge.

NEO: The Rat Trap 4m Very Difficult

Climb the wall 3 metres left of [the top of St. Andrew's Crack], finishing at the top of a small sloping shelf.

NEO: The Catwalk 4m Difficult

Climb the sloping shelf up right. A paltry offering.

R. R. Macdonald.

R. O. Scott.

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

NEO: *Direct Route* 6m *Severe*

Climb straight up the centre of the landward face. The initial moves are the hardest.

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

The cracks are now climbed from sea level by a route called Bootlace crack.

NEO: *Bootlace Crack* 10m *HVS 5a*

Near the landward end of the wall an obvious crack splits a black overlap. Climb this teasing bulge and.....finish up the easier corner. The upper corner was originally called Parallel Cracks.

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

NEO: *Puffin's Perch* 10m *Moderate*

.....climb a steep left-slanting shelf, then traverse the ledge across [the] wall to finish just right of [a] crack.

VARIATION EXIT (V).- An interesting variant to the usual route out of this bay will be found at the back of the bay to the left of the previous climb. It is a short climb on small holds, steep and interesting. Rubbers.

NEO: *Rainbow Wall* 6m *Difficult*

At the back of the inlet is a smooth slab. Climb its centre, much more easily than it looks.

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

NEO: *The Sickle* 10m *HVS 5b*

Start a few metres up the gully above the pool. Work right across the face to a small recessed overhang. Continue round and finish up a right-slanting crack. Very strenuous. The rock is less sound than elsewhere at Souter Head.

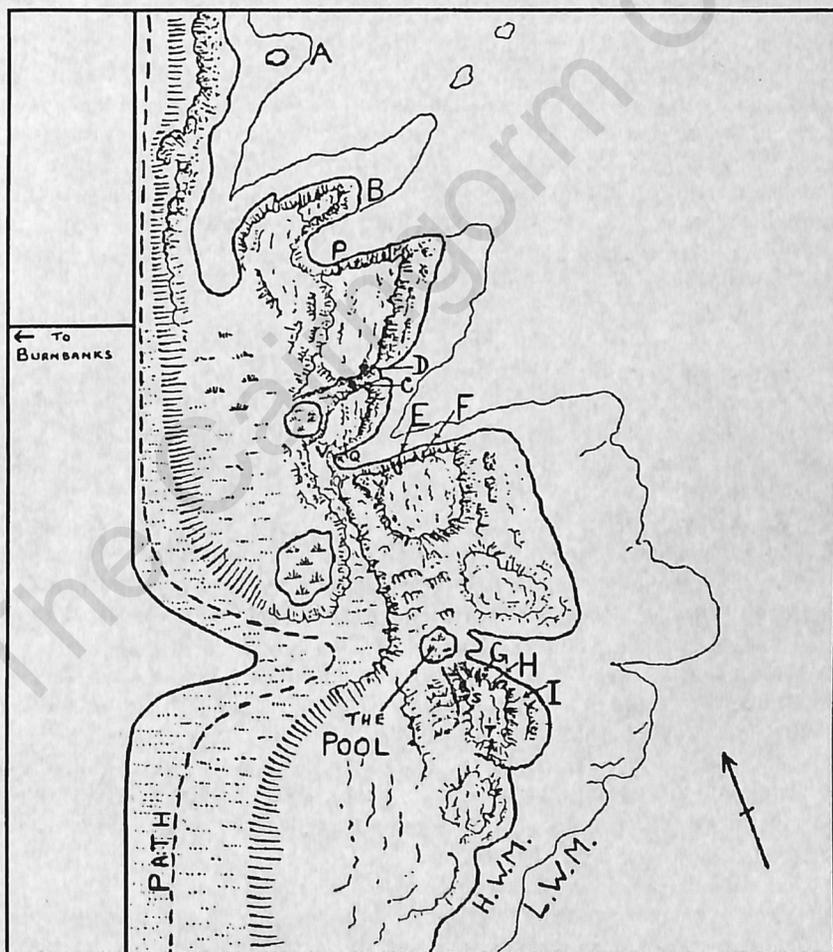
(T) On the south side of this same promontory a good climb starts from a shallow recess, out over the outhang above, and then up a small crack.

About 40 feet. This may be done in boots, but as a general rule the face climbs will be found more enjoyable in rubbers.

NEO: Scylla 8m Very Difficult

Go straight up on good holds over the bulge at the back of the recess.

W.T.H.



SKETCH MAP OF SOUTER HEAD

DALMORE

GRAHAM EWEN

Dalmore was the ancient name for most of the area that now comprises Mar Lodge Estate. The name comes from the Gaelic *Dail Mhor*, meaning the big haugh. This was the big haugh (a piece of level ground on the banks of a river) on which the present Mar Lodge now stands. The Dalmore Estate was granted to a natural son of Mackenzie of Kintail by James IV around the year 1500. The Mackenzies built the first 'big house' on the Haugh of Dalmore, which for many years was known as the House of Dalmore. In 1673 the small estate of Craggan which had belonged to Alaster Mackenzie of Blairnochter was added to Dalmore. The Mackenzies took part in the 1715 rebellion on the Jacobite side and according to previous writers on the subject had, like the Earl of Mar, their lands confiscated by the Government. It is clear however that this did not happen as the Mackenzies continued in possession of the Estate for many years thereafter. The Earl of Mar on the other hand did lose all his lands in Mar, but they were bought back by his family at a price well below their valuation and administered under trust by Lords Grange (the Earl's brother) and Lord Dun, on behalf of Thomas Erskine, the Earl of Mar's son. They therefore became the feudal superiors of Dalmore along with the rest of the Earldom at this time, but there were considerable debts to be paid which necessitated the sale of a large part of these possessions. Lord Braco (later the 1st Earl of Fife) bought the superiority of large parts of the Earldom of Mar including the Dalmore Estate from Lords Grange and Dun in 1735. He later bought the Dalmore Estate from the Mackenzies in 1739 and it then remained in his family until it was sold to the Panchaud brothers in 1961.

The boundary of the Estate including Craggan was as follows. Starting at the point where the Quoich meets the Dee the boundary followed the Dee westwards and then the Geldie to its confluence with the Bynack Burn. From there it followed the watershed between the Geldie and the Bynack to the top of An Sgarsoch. It then followed the present Estate or Aberdeenshire boundary round as far as the top of Ben Macdhui. It continued round the watershed of the Luibeg to the top of Derry Cairngorm. From this point the remainder of the boundary is uncertain, but it is likely that it continued along the high ground southwards to Carn Crom, descending to a ford across the Derry, probably in the vicinity of Derry Lodge. It then went over the hills to the east to join up with the Quoich at some point, and followed the Quoich down to its junction with the Dee.

In ancient times Dalmore and the whole Braemar area was reserved as a 'King's Forest' or 'Hunting Forest', and the only people who were allowed to live there were those who were required to assist with the hunting. John Taylor, a native of Gloucester, attended one such hunt in 1618 as a guest of

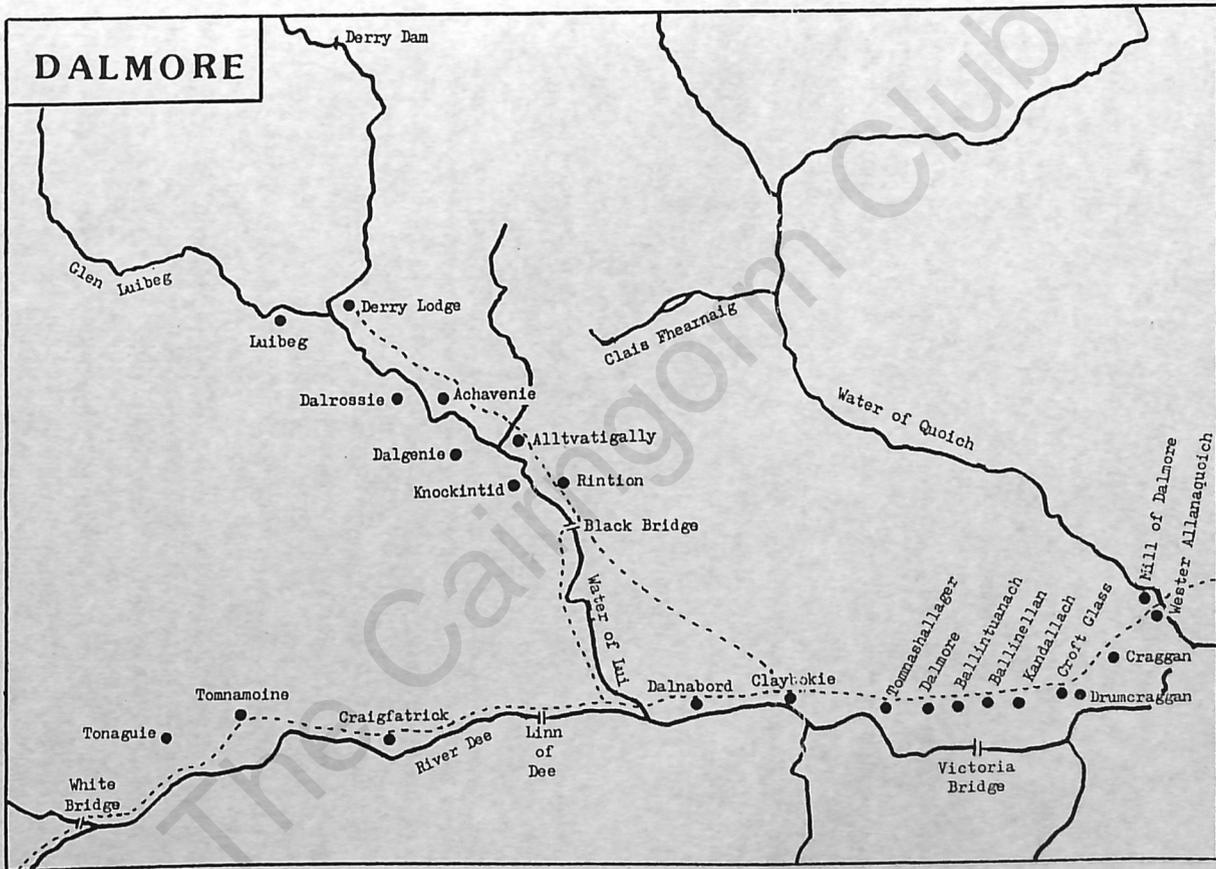
the Earl of Mar, which he described in his book 'Penniless Pilgrimage'. He estimated that about fourteen to fifteen hundred men were involved in the hunt. About five or six hundred of these known as the tinchel rose early in the morning, spread out over a wide area of the hills and drove the deer down to an appointed place in the valley, rather similar to the manner in which beaters drive grouse today. When a herd of about four hundred deer appeared, they were attacked with dogs, guns, arrows, dirks and daggers, and in the space of two hours four score fat deer were killed. He also described the stone cottages or luncarts in which they stayed during the hunt, many of which are mistaken for old shieling huts today.

A visitor to the area now could be excused for imagining that the main focus of settlement has always been confined to the south side of the Dee, but in the past this was far from the case. The north side was just as well populated as the south. The poll book of 1692 lists Kenneth Mackenzie of Dalmore with three servants and thirty-six tenants or subtenants. This compares with the Laird of Inverey who is listed with seven servants and thirty five tenants or subtenants on the Inverey Estate.

The most easterly settlement on the Dalmore estate was Wester or Little Allanaquoich. It was situated on the flat ground on the west side of the Quoich near the site of the present bridge. From 1739 onwards, when tenants lists first become available, there were usually three tenants here. Just upstream from the present bridge was the Mill of Dalmore, a meal mill. There is no room today for a mill on this site between the river and a steep bank, so we must conclude that at this time the river was slightly to the east of its present course. The tenants of Dalmore were thirled⁽¹⁾ to this mill but so also were the tenants of Corriemulzie, which by this time belonged to Farquharson of Inverey. Craggan, situated slightly further to the west, was a much larger settlement with eight tenants.

Further to the west opposite the mouth of the Corriemulzie burn was a small hamlet called Drumcraggan which usually had four tenants. They were not however tenants of Dalmore. Some time in the past the river had changed its course, leaving some of Inverey's ground on the north side of the river. The old course of the river, called the Sheanusk at this point, served as the boundary between the two estates. Some time later Inverey's tenants had built their houses on the north side of the Sheanusk (i.e. on Dalmore's ground), possibly on slightly higher ground to avoid flood risk. It is not clear whether they had permission from Mackenzie of Dalmore to do this or whether they paid any rent or services for the right. It may of course originally have happened when this ground belonged to Alaster Mackenzie of Blairnochter. In 1740 Lord Braco's ground officer started harassing the tenants by pulling down their houses and damaging their kailyards, an event which led to Farquharson of Inverey getting an interdict to stop this happening. This

¹ Thirl - to bind or oblige a person to give his services or custom to a particular person, in this case a miller.



argument continued for many years until it was finally solved in 1776 when Farquharson of Inverey exchanged the lands of Drumcraggan with the 2nd Earl of Fife for the multures ⁽²⁾ of Corriemulzie.

On the Haugh of Dalmore there were several other settlements apart from the big house and the Mains of Dalmore. Next to Drumcraggan there was Croft Glass with one tenant, Kandallach normally had one tenant, and Ballinellan two. Ballintuanach was seldom let out during the Earl of Fife's time and Tomshallager never was. Part of the Mains was let out for a time and had four tenants in 1744, three in 1746, one in 1750 and 1764.

Claybokie had two tenants in 1739 and 1743 but only one after that. Delnabord, which is the small area of flat ground opposite Muir had normally one tenant. Therefore for most of the 1700's, there were between 22 and 27 families living on the north side of the Dee between the Quoich and the Linn, not including any servants who may have been employed at the House of Dalmore.

Glen Lui was probably first settled in the late 1600's or early 1700's. In the Charter granted to Kenneth Mackenzie by the Earl of Mar in 1692 the farms in Glenlui are named as "shealing ⁽³⁾ grounds". In a later Charter granted to Donald Mackenzie of Dalmore by Lord's Grange and Dun in 1733, these farms are specifically mentioned as grounds where the tenants had formerly only the right of shealing, grazing and pasturage. The first settlements in Glen Lui were apparently set up without the approval of the feudal superior and would definitely have been in breach of the conditions laid out in the Charter of 1692. It would appear that Lord Grange felt that these encroachments would be hurtful to the forest. (By this he meant the woods not the deer forest). In any case, in 1727 James Farquharson of Balmoral, then factor for Lords Grange and Dun came to Glen Lui with a notary public and dispossessed the tenants in Achavenie, Alltvatigally, Rintion and Knockintid and laid them waste. Later in the same document it is said that these possessions remained waste for only three or four years.

One may perhaps assume from the above that prior to 1727 there had only been four holdings in the glen. After it was resettled there were probably as many as seven, all situated between the Black Bridge and Derry Lodge. Only four of these seem to have been in continuous occupation from 1739 onwards; Achavenie which was often split into Wester and Easter usually had two tenants but sometimes only one, while Rintion, Alltvatigally and Dalgenie each normally had one. Dalrossie only appears to have been tenanted until 1743 (In the 1747 rental list it is described as waste and does not reappear in any of the later lists), while there is no record of an individual tenant for Knockintid which was rented by the tenant of Dalgenie from 1764 onwards.

² Multure - a duty consisting of a proportion of the grain or meal payable to the proprietor or tenant of a mill on corn ground there.

³ Shealing - the usual spelling is now shieling, a remote summer pasture, usually with one or more shepherd's huts.

Two other holdings are mentioned in the rental lists, Croislich which appears to have had a tenant only from 1770 to 1776, and Tornaleal, which only appears once. In 1750 it was tenanted by William and John Caddell. These last two are not shown on the map as their locations have not been traced.

In Glendee (the name given to the area west of the Linn) there were two holdings, Tomnamoine and Craigpatrick. Like Glenlui these holdings were first set up on former shieling lands some time in the late 1600's. Like Glenlui, the tenants were cleared out in 1727 and the holdings reoccupied some three or four years later. A new settlement further west at Tonaguie was set up at this time. Tomnamoine and Craigpatrick normally had one tenant each. Tonagui had four between 1739 and 1743 and two from 1744 to 1750. From 1764 there was only one.

The tenants must have lived a very precarious existence. There was a great shortage of potentially arable land and given the number of tenants, they would have been lucky to have any more than four acres. On this they grew corn, bere and kail for their own subsistence. They also kept cattle and occasionally sheep. For about twelve weeks in summer the animals were taken to summer shielings further into the hills. They were able to pay their rent from the sale of their cattle. They lived in fire houses which were small buildings with low dry stone walls and thatched roofs. There were no chimneys and the smoke from the fire simply escaped through a hole deliberately left in the roof for this purpose. Their barns, byres and other office houses ⁽⁴⁾ were constructed in the same manner.

The process of clearing people out was a gradual one. The Mains of Dalmore and Ballinellan were cleared by 1770 and all the remaining holdings from Croft Glass westwards to Claybokie and all of Glen Lui in 1776. Drumcraggan was cleared within a year of the Earl acquiring the property. By 1792 all the remaining tenants in Craggan and Wester Alanaquoich had also been cleared.

It is not possible to give a single reason for these clearances. There is no doubt that the tenants were seen in many ways as a nuisance, probably as a result of population pressure. There are frequent complaints in the estate correspondence about abuses of woods, poaching, and tenants allowing their cattle to stray on to the reserved forest. Many of them were constantly in arrears with their rent. There is however no doubt that the clearance in Glenlui was to extend the deer forest, and that of Dalmore Haugh was an inevitable result of the development of the policies around Dalmore House. Once Craggan and Wester Allanaquoich had been cleared they were normally given out to rent as one holding along with the farm of Allanaquoich itself, to the factor of the estate.

When Lord Braco first bought the superiority of the Estate, one of the first things he did was to have a survey made of the pinewoods. This was

⁴ Office houses - associated buildings.

carried out in 1736. At the time these were very extensive and covered the whole of Glen Lui, with the exception of the farmed area, up to beyond the present Luibeg bridge and the entire side of the Dee valley all the way from the Quoich to beyond Craigfattrick. As Superior, the pine woods belonged to him and he was anxious to try and make money out of them. In the early days some of the standing timber was auctioned for others to exploit, but this does not seem to have been very successful. By 1760 two sawmills had been established, one at Delnabord which was situated on the north bank of the Dee about quarter of a mile below its junction with the Lui, and the other at Culter to which logs were floated down the Dee. There also was a third mill which had been in existence since 1695 on the neighbouring estate of Allanaquoich. The Earl was now in a good position to exploit the woods himself. The tenants of the estate were able to pick up casual work as floaters and earn some extra money. This must have involved wading about in the water freeing logs which had jammed and a cold, uncomfortable and sometimes dangerous job. In 1760 as many as eighteen were employed on any one day floating on the Lui, for which they were paid the princely sum of ten pence Scots (slightly less than one pence Sterling). Additionally, a bottle of whisky was supplied daily to share between about eight workers. At that time it was suggested in a report by Alex Stronach (the Earl of Fife's principal factor) that it seems to be very necessary to repair the old dam dyke in the Derry in order to float logs successfully down the Lui, a practice he says that was carried out successfully in Mackenzie of Dalmore's time.

The House of Dalmore which the Earl of Fife inherited from the Mackenzies was a simple rectangular structure of no great size. It was situated just to the east of the present building. Work was put in hand and two wings were added in front of the existing house to produce a courtyard of about 60 feet square. Then on the 18th January 1770 a serious fire all but destroyed the east wing and main part of the house. It was rebuilt in much the same way, except for the chimneys which had been in the middle of the roof, were now shifted to the gables. Later additions, of which there were many, included a third storey to the main part of the house and a circular tower in front of the main door. In 1775 the 2nd Earl of Fife built a gothic style monument on the Hill of Craggan. This became an obvious feature welcoming guests to the grounds of Mar Lodge, the main road into the area at that time being the one which follows the north side of the Dee from Invercauld.

A great deal of effort was made to protect the haugh from flood damage. All round the haugh large stone bulwarks were built which were afterwards covered with turf. Strangely there seemed to be difficulty in obtaining enough stones for this job, and on one occasion there was a row with Farquharson of Inverey as some of the workmen had been carrying stones over from his side using a boat at night. This is the reason why nothing remains of any of the old settlements which used to be on the haugh, because as soon as the people had been cleared, their houses were dismantled to provide stones for the

bulwarks. Once built these bulwarks needed constant repairs.

There is no evidence of any shooting being let on the estate in the early days. This seemed to be reserved for the enjoyment of the Earl and his family. He also carried out some farming on his own account. In this respect the most important aspect seems to have been a herd of cattle always referred to as the Mar Lodge cattle. These were kept at Mar Lodge during the summer and sent to Duff House or Rothiemay during the winter months. A garden was made, the main purpose of which was to supply the family with vegetables during their summer sojourn at the Lodge. Any surplus was auctioned at the beginning of October with most of the produce bought by local people. Butter and cheese were made and also sold nearby. The servants kept on at Mar Lodge were expected to earn their keep in the winter months by spinning lint (flax). There was even an experiment made in growing flax locally, which although apparently fairly successful, did not appear to catch on, and most of the lint would have been imported.

The Muckle Spate of 4th August 1829 caused considerable damage in the area. The wooden bridge which spanned the Linn of Dee was carried away despite being 30 feet above the normal water level. At Mar Lodge the haugh was covered with about 5 feet of water. Some structural damage was caused to the house and the whole ground floor became filled with a mixture of sand and mud. The garden was completely destroyed, the lawn very much sanded and the wooden bridge across the Dee was carried away. The water of Quoich burst at it's mouth out to the westward, forming a 60 acre lake which almost entirely destroyed the former farm of Craggan.

In the following year there is the first evidence of shootings being let out on the Estate. Mar Lodge shootings and fishings were let to Sir Harry Goodriche on a seven year lease for £1200 per annum. This turned out to be short lived as Sir Harry died on the 21st August 1833 and the let was taken over on a year to year basis by the Duke of Leeds for the same rental. It was for this reason that the 4th Earl of Fife developed Corriemulzie Cottage as New Mar Lodge for his own residence, and nothing to do with damage caused to what was now called Old Mar Lodge by the Muckle Spate as previous writers have suggested. The present bridge at the Linn of Dee was built by the Earl of Fife's Trustees and opened by Queen Victoria with elaborate ceremony on the 9th September 1857. It is the third bridge to occupy the site, the previous two having been wooden structures.

The various shooting lodges and keepers houses were built in the glens in the mid eighteen hundreds. However the Earl of Fife did have a shiel in Glendee about a mile beyond White Bridge in the early days. Mention is also made of Derry Shieling as early as 1798. It has not been possible so far to determine when Derry Lodge was extended to its present size. The first time it is mentioned under that name is in the 1861 census, but the name Derry Shieling continues in use in the estate papers for some years after that. Little use seems to have been made of it, and for most of its lifetime it remained

empty. There were times when it was occupied by a keeper, but there is no evidence that shooting tenants ever stayed there. Geldie Lodge was built in 1854 and extended in 1868. It was occupied for about 8 weeks during the shooting season, but its use was short lived and it was abandoned after about 1897.

In 1889 the sixth Earl of Fife married Princess Louise Victoria Dagmar of Wales, a grand-daughter of Queen Victoria and in 1900 was elevated to the Dukedom of Fife. From that time on the estate saw the arrival of many royal guests including the King himself to take part in shooting parties. For this purpose the Derry beat seemed to be the most popular, and this may explain the fact that the Derry road was kept at a higher standard than the other estate roads.

On Friday 14th June 1895 New Mar Lodge (at Corriemulzie) was almost completely destroyed by fire. Plans were quickly drawn up to build a replacement building. The architect was Mr A. Marshall Mackenzie of Aberdeen, but the design of the building was very much influenced by the ideas of HRH the Duchess of Fife. The foundation stone was laid by Queen Victoria on the 15th October 1895 on a site immediately to the west of Old Mar Lodge. Much of the material used in the construction was produced locally, the pink granite being quarried from the Duke of Fife's quarry in Braemar, and the timber from the estate's own woods. Once the whole complex was finished in 1898, Old Mar Lodge was demolished and stables erected on the site. A small hydro electric scheme was built at Corriemulzie to provide lighting for the new lodge. In 1905 the present bridge across the Dee at Mar Lodge was opened by King Edward VII. It is called Victoria bridge because it replaced the previous wooden structure which had been opened by Queen Victoria in 1848.

After the First World War the estate was again let out for shooting purposes, but this proved difficult and there were some years when a few of the beats were not let. The decline in the popularity of the sport led to a reduction in the number of keepers employed. Only essential maintenance was done and gradually the various shooting lodges fell into disrepair. During the Second World War most of the remaining woods were felled. On the death of the Duchess of Fife in 1959, the Mar Estate passed to Captain Alexander Ramsay, and the north side of the river was sold to the Panchaud brothers from Switzerland. But that's another story.

Most of the information on which this article is based, derives from the Duff House Papers which are held in the Special Collections Department of the University of Aberdeen Library.

PIPER'S WOOD. REPORT 1994-1996

HEATHER SALZEN

Since my first report (1989-1993) on changes in the vegetation within the enclosure, only two full years have elapsed and half of a third (to June 1996), yet there have been further changes. The botanical details may not be immediately obvious, but the general aspect of the plot is strikingly different to that before the enclosure. The whole area is greener and grassier, and groups of small Birches and a few Rowans are now clearly visible when in leaf. 14 gaunt old Birches remain upright; they, and one fallen tree remain alive, but only just. Little seed is being produced and I believe we have to rely on the existing, formerly browsed, many-stemmed small Birches to grow taller and produce seed before a crop of 'normal' straight-stemmed trees can be expected. This does not matter, for the food and shelter which the bushy trees provide, will be equally attractive to wild life.

Notes on changes in the vegetation zones.

This section should be read in conjunction with the botanical survey and map published in the 1991 Cairngorm Club Journal.

D - The dyke and strip of ground above it:

No longer can this be described as 'grass and heather hummocks'. The Dwarf Willow which previously was overtaking the Heather is now becoming obscured by other plants. The area is becoming wetter and water now flows along the ditch above the old dyke for three quarters of its length into the runnel at the south end. The north section remains dry. Increasingly wetter, acid bog conditions are indicated by the appearance of Deer Grass (a new record for the enclosure) and Sundew. The Fragrant Orchid reappeared in 1994 with over 100 superb flowering spikes, produced only a few in 1995 and could not be found in 1996. Most ground orchids require a grazing regime to compete with grasses, so we may lose it. On the other hand orchids do have resting seasons so it will be interesting to note what happens in the future.

UB - The upper bank:

This is now completely covered with close turf consisting of grasses and numerous herbs, the composition of which alters slightly each season. Heather is present but nowhere dominant. Annuals such as the Field Gentian are decreasing as the growth of grasses leaves fewer spaces to seed into. The tiny Moonwort Fern, recorded in small numbers from the north end of the bank, could not be found in 1996 but is easily overlooked. The Alpine Cinquefoil, an uncommon and local species, grows at the north end of the upper bank and is a new record for the enclosure.

UM - The upper marsh:

This appears to be getting wetter, with open water in pools and runnels and more Sphagnum Moss. In early summer it is colourful with lilac Lady's Smock, yellow Kingcup, and white, fluffy heads of Cotton Grass.

G - The grassland:

This, the largest vegetation zone within the enclosure, continues to provide the greatest contrast with the closely-grazed turf outside the fence. The grass is becoming tussocky as it remains ungrazed, and fewer herbs are able to compete, though a number still grow and flower. Chickweed Wintergreen was abundant in June 1996. Hogweed has appeared near the south fence, and the newly recorded Alpine Cinquefoil extends down the north fence from the upper bank. Blaeberry and Heather remain on small drier knolls which are becoming less conspicuous each season. Numerous small Birches are growing well on grassland nearest to the south fence.



Cardamine pratensis
Lady's Smock

LB - Lower bank:

The vegetation cover continues to increase and is now almost complete except for some boulders. Erosion has ceased. Heather is increasing but Bell Heather remains dominant. Small Birches and Rowans are numerous but make slow growth. Small patches of bare soil at the north end are a favourite haunt of adders. (see Fauna)

LM - The lower marsh:

The south end of this area continues to become more like wet grassland than true marsh. The pool which dried out in 1992 has not reverted to open water, and its area is now filled by grasses and abundant Lady's Smock. Marsh Spotted Orchid flowered in 1994 and Water Avens is increasing. This area has the largest and most vigorous group of birches; a few have attained 1.5m. The northern part of this area, up to the runnel which divides it from the grassland, is much wetter and has hummocks of Bogmoss (*Sphagnum* sp.) and the dark green moss *Polytrichum Commune*.

R - The river gravel:

This remains an area of low vegetation but is becoming increasingly varied, with new species appearing year by year. Yellow Vetchling was a new record for the enclosure in 1996, and Petty Whin flowered prominently then as well. Birches are numerous, though they do not grow as fast as those in the lower marsh.

Additions to the flora of Piper's Wood, 1994-1996

With the main body of the flora already recorded, it is obvious that only a few new species will present themselves each season. Only four additions have been made since 1993.

LATHYRUS PRATENSIS - Yellow Vetchling. R

POTENTILLA CRANTZII - Alpine Cinquefoil. D,UB,G.

HERACLEUM SPHONDYLIIUM - Hogweed. G,R.

TRICHOPHORUM CAESPITOSUM - Deer

Grass. D.

Fauna

With growth of herbs to flowering size and hopefully shelter provided by the growing Birches, it is to be hoped that Piper's Wood will increasingly attract wildlife. For example Lady's Smock, now flowering in the marshes, is a host plant for caterpillars of the Orange-tip Butterfly. Can we hope to see these flying in June in future years? Similarly Bird's-foot Trefoil which flowers on the banks is a host for the Small Blue Butterfly.

Reptiles are already in residence. The Common Lizard is occasionally glimpsed and Adders have been seen on every visit. Their favourite haunt is the lower bank, where on June 20, 1996 I encountered a large female and smaller male together. So keep your eyes on the ground when you walk in Piper's Wood!

Of mammals, only Moles indicate their presence under the grassland. There are many Red Deer outside the enclosure. On June 20, 1996 we saw nearly 500 stags on the east-facing slopes across the river, grazing in three large groups. The sight of them emphasised the importance of maintaining the deer fence around Piper's Wood in good condition - vital if the Cairngorm Club's input and effort into this interesting, and so far successful experiment is not to be wasted.



Lotus corniculatus
Bird's-foot Trefoil

Please send any observations on flora and fauna of Piper's Wood (via the secretary or to me direct), so that a more complete record can be compiled. Heather Salzen, 25 Rubislaw Park Crescent, Aberdeen. AB15 8BT Tel. 324503.

A GLACIER WALK, WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM FRIENDS

ALISTER MACDONALD

Most hill walkers and climbers enjoy the occasional through-walk; along drove roads, old military routes or valleys. There is a satisfying sense of progression, of the view unfolding and an objective being reached. Summits are avoided but nevertheless the scenery is often splendid. Glacier walking is a special version unobtainable in Scotland, but possible in the big mountain ranges, the closest of which to home is, of course, the Alps. This is an account of such a walk which I undertook in late August 1995.

The walk was organised by a Swiss mountaineering school, for experienced hill walkers with no particular climbing expertise, and the group was to be led by a professional guide. The intended route started at the Jungfrauoch (3475m), heading down to the Aletsch glacier to the first night's hut, the Konkordiahütten (2850m; see map). Then the route went west; along the Aletsch glacier, up the Grosser Aletschfirn (ice field) to the Lotschenhütte (3187m) for the second night, and down the Langgletscher to Fafleralp (1787m), off the glacier for the third night. We were then to head north up over a bealach of the Lotschental and on to ice again to the Mutthornhütte (2898m), an island in the Kanderfirn. The fifth and final day's walking was to be a descent from the Kanderfirn and Tschingelfirn into the mighty Lauterbrunnen valley, eventually connecting with the Swiss railway network. I was particularly keen to walk this route, as I had previously descended from the Jungfrauoch to Konkordia, and then walked east via the Finsteraarhornhütten. The views had been magnificent, starting in an amphitheatre formed by the Jungfrau and Mönch. I had found the crevasses, the major hazard of glacier walking, a demanding but not terrifying presence. A skilled guide, and disciplined walking by the roped group kept the hazard in the background and even allowed some of the more spectacular, cavernous crossings to be oohed and ahed at, in the best sight-seeing manner. So I was all set and raring to go.

The group needs to be described. Our guide was Hans Krebs, immensely experienced, with a Father Christmas beard and a twinkle in his eye. He had led my previous glacier walk and I was delighted to be in his company again. All the walkers were experienced, and except one, British. In the under-thirty years age bracket were Andreas, Swiss medical student and climber, Lara, geology student and climber, and Stephen, geologist and marathon runner. The under-fifties were Mike (father of Lara), climber in youth, Alan, competitive mountain biker and cross country skier, and Chris and Philippa, downhill skiers with Alp and Bavarian trekking experience. Over fifty years of age were Dave (father of Stephen), a marathon runner, and the author, a mere Munro-bagger.

The group assembled for practice on a handy low-level glacier. We spent

the day hacking ice, clumping about on crampons, fixing ice screws and lowering light persons (ladies) into crevasses, and then hauling them out again.

Day one. We assembled at 08.30 at the railway station in Meiringen, where the mountaineering school is based, and started a train journey to Lauterbrunnen, where we would change to the narrow-gauge train to take us up the famous tourist route through the Eiger to the 'Top of Europe', the Jungfrauoch. The weather forecast had been on our minds, and during the ascent we saw it confirmed; low cloud, strong winds, snow. From the smart Jungfrauoch restaurant and observation platforms we looked glumly out into a blizzard. Coffee and cakes helped settle our anxiety, and we waited for Hans to telephone around for more information about weather and conditions. On the basis that Konkordia had better visibility than we were experiencing, he decided we should set out. After all it was only 7.8km downhill from us, and on my last trip we had walked there in three hours in bright sunshine.

By the time we had sorted out our gear, particularly our packs, which weighed about 14kg, descended into the service tunnel and roped up, it was 13.30. We walked out of the tunnel into a moderate blizzard, with Hans leading the first rope of five, me at the back. Andreas led the second rope, following the exact footprints of the first. The snow was dry powder, knee-deep, but the going was not too difficult because we were descending. Visibility fluctuated at around twenty metres, so we saw nothing of the Jungfrauoch or Mönch, but Hans was able to track along the edge of crevasses, searching for the points where the walls were close enough to support a snow bridge over which we could safely cross. Probing with his ice axe, Hans would assess the snow and move forward. If the snow support collapsed he would spread-eagle himself, diving forwards on a slack rope, and scramble across. The rope would hold him if the snow bridge failed catastrophically. Sometimes the snow yielded under the weight of someone further along the rope, but the routine was much the same. In other cases the hard ice edge of a crevasse appeared, giving a firm take-off point for a 'bad step' across. I soon realised that although the snow was an obvious nuisance, disguising crevasses and obstructing the view of their ice-blue walls, it was also helping us to cross the narrow sections, which in turn helped reduce the amplitude of our zig-zag route. I never really understood how Hans, who was following a compass bearing, compensated for the seemingly erratic zigs and zags we were forced to follow.

So we proceeded, rapidly perfecting the use of a slack or a tight rope, and resigning ourselves to the fact that when you are sprawled, often lop-sided in deep snow, with one foot pushing against thin air, there is no neat and dignified way out. You just get on with it, with a little help from your friends fore and aft. After a couple of hours we stopped for a snack and Hans admitted he was disappointed we had not descended into better visibility. At least the wind

was still in our backs, but the terrain was worsening. In the next section we navigated around very extensive crevasses, and several times did what I really dislike on glaciers, walked along a narrow isthmus of ice between crevasses. Here the protection afforded by the rope is at a minimum. On one occasion we became 'crevasse-bound', and followed a huge circular route to get out of difficulties. After a further two hours I began hoping for evidence of the Konkordia junction (see map). Hans' compass bearing should take us to the base of the rock cliff, at the top of which the hut was situated. I took comfort in some brief glimpses of black rock on our port bow, but after that, nothing.

We halted again for a snack and I noticed that Hans was discreetly using his radio. We continued plodding, zigging and zagging, hopping over bad steps and wading through powder snow on the snow bridges. The dim, eerie light of our private blizzard was darkening, the wind was not slackening nor the snowfall lessening, but the misty cloud was thinner and we had somewhat better visibility. Excitement rose when we came across surface streams, which, with an increase in the presence of surface rock and debris, suggested that we were close to making a landfall. Surface streams on glaciers can be an awful nuisance, and the ones we had to cross were full of a mushy, rushing slurry of ice, the worst possible way of getting very wet feet and legs. Most of us were lucky. Then, without warning, we realised we could see two figures on our starboard bow. They had spotted us and we both changed courses to meet. Much hailing preceded the first handshake between Hans and the two figures; the rest of us on the rope kept in position and just hailed heartily from the rear. We learned that they were Swiss Army soldiers who had come out from the Konkordiahütten to guide us in. Our spirits soared; we had been more anxious and tired than we had been prepared to admit. Now we could reasonably anticipate a happy ending to the walk. Hans' navigation had been good. We had been heading for a point upstream of the Konkordiahütten, to ensure we did not overshoot the rocky promontory on which it is situated. We would have made our landfall and worked our way south-west, along the foot of the cliff, to find the stairway which leads up to the hut. The soldiers had been able to follow a more direct route from whence they had come, and they also broke trail and navigated round crevasses with fresher legs than ours.

Gradually a rock cliff emerged from the gloomy blizzard, and I could make out the famous Konkordiahütten staircase, bolted onto the vertical rock, uncannily like a fire escape on a Manhattan office block. At the foot of the staircase, a chaotic region of ice, moraine and boulders, the soldiers carefully checked that we could manage the ascent with our packs. We could, so we started up, first the amateurish wooden ladder and then on to the more convincing aluminium section, now heavily iced, but surely a route to heavenly bliss, like hot tea. The ascent must be at least 100m, very exposed, and in the present conditions the wind was very strong indeed at the top. The stairs deposited us on a wooden platform, but there was still a bit of a scramble

before the hut proper was reached, passing latrines perched on the edge of the rock wall in the traditional Swiss Alpine Club style of architecture. We clambered into the hut, ten iced-up, puffing but beaming bodies. We had made it! The hut warden was there to help us get our ropes and harness off, an indication of the alert we had been involved in, and the two soldiers fussed over our two women. Frozen hands gradually coped with zips, knots, buttons and the rest of the paraphernalia familiar to winter walkers. Our 7.8km walk from the Jungfraujoch had taken us 6.5 hours!

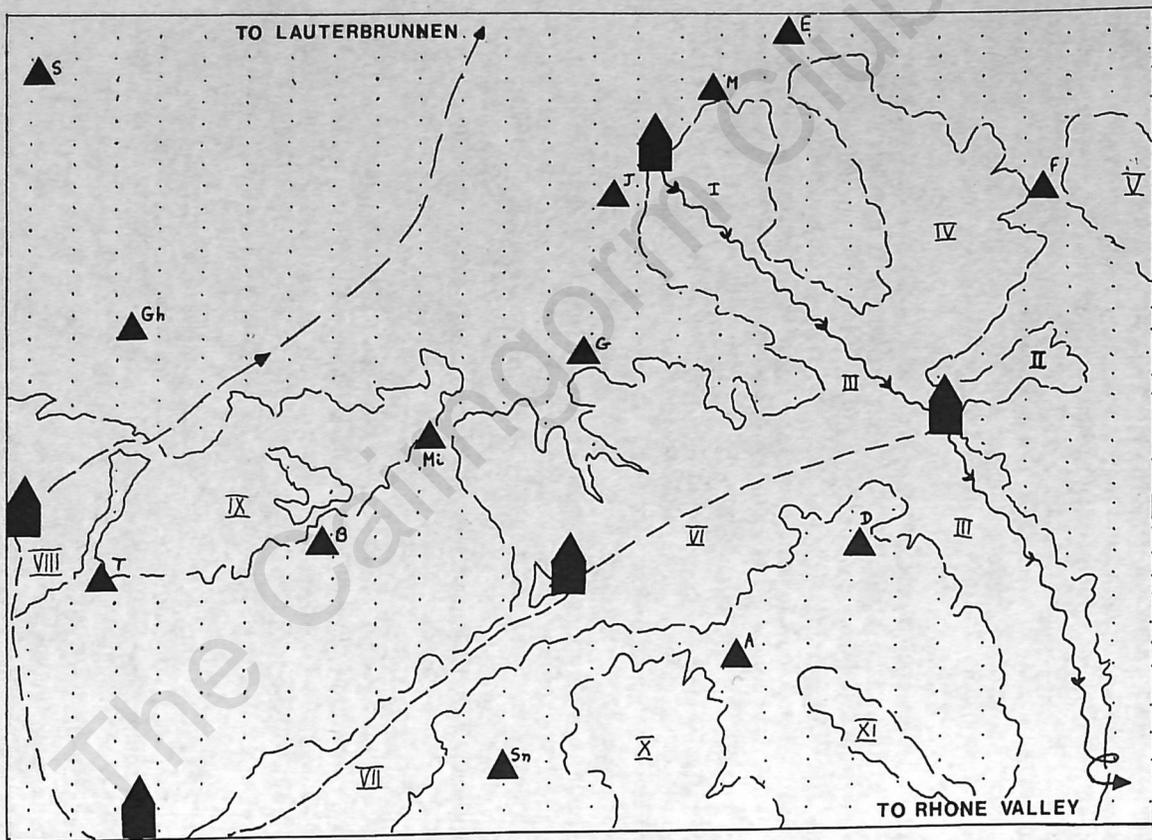
We sorted out our gear, finding that we were not very wet at all, but I noticed that my water bottle had acquired ice, an indication of the very cold conditions. Over the hot meal we found that our two soldiers were part of a group of five who had recently climbed the Finsteraarhorn for recreation and were making their way back to base. They belonged to the Swiss Army mountaineering school and were therefore highly competent. Just the right sort of company we would have chosen in the circumstances! We turned in for the night in good spirits, despite the rising wind shrieking and howling outside.

Day two. Dawn brought no improvement in the weather, but by breakfast time the wind was merely very strong and we could see glimpses of the glacier below. Hans and the senior soldiers discussed the situation, and decided that we had no hope of crossing the glacier to the Lotschenhütte as planned. The options were that we could stay where we were, or attempt an escape route, continuing down the Aletsch glacier with the wind in our backs, and turning east into a side valley where there was a small hut. In any event we could get off the glacier. It would be a long walk but the soldiers would lead, breaking trail and sharing the navigation round the crevasses. So by mid-morning we were roped up and ready to descend that awful scramble and staircase. Down on the glacier the wind was not too bad, and visibility better than on the previous day although snow continued to fall. "Have a nice day", we said to each other and started walking. The soldiers, a rope of two and one of three, made good progress and saved us a great deal of hard effort. But after two hours of plodding Hans called a halt and put it to us. We were progressing rather slowly. We could return to the hut, or push on if we were prepared for a very long day's walking. We looked back up the glacier, into driving snow and decided to continue. After a further two hours plodding, bad-stepping and digging ourselves out, we had quite a jolly lunch break. We could see the mountains on either side, which did not look very high, but we were standing on top of well over 1000m of glacier ice which filled the valley between. We were on the eastern side of the Aletsch glacier, intent on finding our side valley, up which we fondly imagined ourselves strolling.

We continued walking with two ropes of soldiers scouting ahead, and eventually, like a fleet of four tiny boats manned by drunken sailors, we made landfall at a rock promontory, just upstream of our side valley. Hans

and the soldiers climbed the rock cliff to reconnoitre. They were looking for a cliff path to the hut up in the valley. Hans descended, convinced that we had made a lucky landfall, because there were pitons in the rock. He took the first rope up; a muddy scramble at first then an unpleasant sloping ledge, curving up and round a shoulder. The ledge was too narrow for hands and knees, but an overhang prevented an upright stance. Various protuberances attempted to nudge my rucksack, and me, off into space. The belay was very oblique and doubtless totally firm, but my knees were not. I did not fancy ending up smeared as a human pendulum across the rock face. After the ledge there was a straightforward climb and scramble up a slab, with plenty of muscle to help, but it was all very exposed and wintry. The blurred upturned faces of the second rope party, patiently waiting below, spurred us on. We reached the intended resting spot, and while Hans descended to bring the second rope up, we tried to admire the view through driving snow. We were interrupted by one of the reconnoitring soldiers who had come back to report that the route was very difficult, and they had discovered that the correct path, complete with fixed ropes, was some 300m further along the rock cliff. Our landfall had not been lucky after all; we would have to descend. The steadily driving snow encouraged this and the soldier rapidly fixed a line to winch us down the slab section. Hans then belayed us individually as we somehow got round and down the unspeakable curved ledge; the final muddy scramble was a joy. Back on the ice we re-formed and had to walk right out on to the glacier before looping back to make a fresh landfall, such was the turbulence of the ice and crevasses in that area. It took at least another hour while the soldiers waited on their various perches high up on the rock cliff. We found the comforting fixed rope path, and after a stiff climb, realised we were off the glacier, on to Bergweg paths and safety. Our joy at being miles from anywhere, close to dusk, after eight hours walking in winter conditions, is an interesting reflection of our state of mind. Pressing on, we found the hut closed with no winter room (a permanently open section providing shelter), and so we had to prepare mentally, for a further walk into ski-tow territory where we would probably find shelter for the night. We tramped on along Bergwegs, crossing over into the Rhone valley. We saw distant lights below, then the ugly ski-tows and finally reached a ski station. One of several hotels was actually open - we entered and found our soldier friends refreshing themselves inside. It was a good opportunity to thank them again. They would be taking the last cable car down to the town of Fiesch; we would sleep in the hotel lager (bunkhouse). The wind was moderating and it had stopped snowing as darkness took over. The walk had taken more than the ten hours which Hans had privately estimated, but the escape route had worked.

Days three to five. Next morning the mood at breakfast was cheerful but inevitably somewhat subdued. Snow was falling and we had to decide how to continue our walking holiday. The glacier walk was no longer possible,



but Hans was keen to get us back into glacier territory, if only for a day. Our best option was to use public transport to reach Fafleralp, and walk from there. According to the warden of the Mutthornhütte there was a metre of snow up on the Kanderfirn, and he was firmly discouraging climbers from trying to get there. However, Fafleralp proved an agreeable second-best and we enjoyed two days walking and managed a short trek up the Langgletscher in good weather.

As we walked out at the end of our final day the snow level was receding fast, the cows cautiously emerging from byres on to their high pastures, and the sound of their bells filled the valley. Summer was returning to the Alps, and we were on our way home.

Key to the map opposite:

THE GROSSER ALETSCHGLETSCHER AND ASSOCIATED ICEFIELDS, GLACIERS AND MOUNTAINS IN THE BERNESE OBERLAND

The route from the Jungfrauoch to Konkordiahütten and south to the escape route is shown by the line with arrows. The intended route west of Konkordiahütten is indicated by a dashed line.

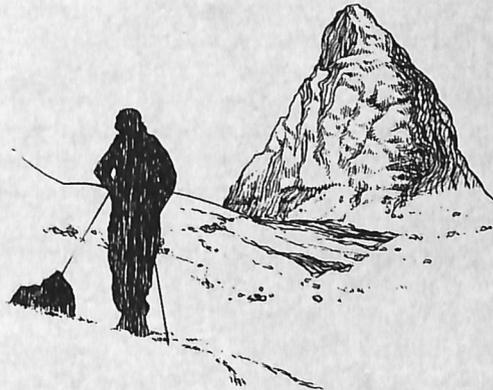
White - glaciers and ice fields.

1, Jungfrauoch; 11, Grünneggfirn; 111, Grosser Aletschgletscher; 1V, Ewigschneefeld; V, Wallis Fieserfirn; V1, Grosser Aletschfirn; V11, Langgletscher; V111, Kanderfirn; 1X, Tschingelfirn; X, Oberaletschgletscher; X1, Mittelaletschgletscher.

Stippled - mountains and high valleys.

A, Aletschorn; B, Breithorn; D, Drejeckhorn; E, Eiger; F, Fiescherhorn; G, Gletscherhorn; Gh, Ghuderhoren; J, Jungfrau; M, Mönch; Mi, Mittaghorn; S, Schithorn; Sn, Schinhorn; T, Tschingelhorn.

Buildings, from top clockwise; Jungfrauoch, Konkordiahütten, Lötschenhütte, Fafleralp, Mutthornhütte.



MOUNTAIN HYPOTHERMIA

Hypothermia is commonly defined as 'a decrease in core temperature to a level at which normal muscular and cerebral functions are impaired'. Core temperature refers to the 'vital organ' core of the body - the trunk and the head. Under normal circumstances the core temperature will be within one degree of 37 degrees C.

There are three types of hypothermia. The acute form happens when cold stress is so great and sudden that the body's resistance to cold is quickly over-ridden, as happens when a fisherman falls into the North Sea. Chronic hypothermia occurs when an elderly or infirm person is unable or unwilling to heat their surroundings adequately, and becomes less active as their temperature decreases. The third, sub-acute hypothermia is the type experienced by hillwalkers and mountaineers, and is characterised by exhaustion i.e. depletion of the body's energy stores. This article is concerned with mountain hypothermia only, and attempts to provide the reader with a greater understanding of the condition, and so be better able to recognise, prevent and manage it.

The body loses heat in four ways. Convection is the transfer of heat energy from the person to the air and is greatly increased by air movement (wind-chill). Radiation can be considerable in cold conditions if the skin is not covered and insulated. Conduction involves the loss of heat by transfer. It particularly applies to mountain casualties who are often lying down, so have a large surface area in contact with the ground. Evaporation occurs as sweat produced during exertion cools the body.

When cold, the body attempts to maintain heat by the following means. Shivering is an involuntary response by skeletal muscles to cold exposure. It increases muscle tone and metabolism, which may increase oxygen consumption. If cold exposure continues, considerable glycogen (energy) stores are used up with consequent water loss. Cold causes the small blood vessels in the skin to contract. This reduces blood flow to the skin and the extremities (hands and feet), which helps to maintain core temperature and minimise further heat loss. Body fat just under the skin has few blood vessels so is a poor conductor of heat. The more fat the better the insulation. Some of the body stores of fat can be activated to provide energy.

Heat production can be increased by conscious effort. Physical activity produces more body heat, but may not be an option in exhaustion or when injured. Eating and drinking help to increase body temperature by providing energy.

A person's ability to regulate body temperature can be impaired in several ways. Exhaustion reduces heat production, and food intake not only offsets that but also leads to a spurt of heat production during the ensuing digestive process. Trauma and loss of blood increase heat loss. Sleep decreases the basal metabolic rate by as much as 9% therefore lowering heat production.

This is why mountaineers bivouacking in extreme conditions, should keep each other awake to conserve heat. Alcohol can precipitate hypothermia in cold environments, due to an increase in blood flow to the skin and an associated decrease in blood glucose levels. The depressant effect of alcohol can also reduce the ability of climbers to assess danger, and leave them open to the risk of hypothermia and other potentially fatal situations.

There are two main factors involved in mountain hypothermia, environmental and individual.

Environmental factors

Low air temperature and high wind speed generate severe cooling effects often referred to as wind-chill. For any given air temperature the wind-chill factor increases rapidly with increases in wind speed. Even small changes in relatively low wind speeds have a significant effect on the level of cooling. Humid air is more effective in transposing heat from the body than dry air; the 'damp cold' of everyday speech has a real physical basis. Clothing loses a lot of its insulating efficiency when wet because the insulation (the barrier to heat loss) derives from pockets of static air trapped in the texture.

Individual factors

Clothing needs to be able to combat wind-chill and wet cold and therefore should be water and windproof. It should also be breathable to minimise internal condensation caused by sweating. Head covering is particularly important, and up to 70% of total heat production at -15 degrees C has been shown to be lost through the head. Failing to eat enough food to replace the energy used in heavy exercise renders the body unable to mobilise energy reserves to do further work, and generate heat to maintain a normal core body temperature. Dehydration is seriously under-rated. It leads to a decrease in physical and mental efficiency, lower resistance to exposure and significantly contributes to hypothermia. Walking in cold conditions causes the body to lose a lot of water through the humid air expired from the lungs. In high altitude climbing and polar travel, the problem of obtaining sufficient drinking water to offset this insidious water loss is a major practical problem. Females can tolerate exposure better than males due to their generally thicker layer of fat under the skin. However this may be offset by the capacity of males to expend greater levels of energy and thus produce more heat. The small bodies of children are particularly at risk, as are tall, lean men with a large surface area and little body fat.

Signs and symptoms of hypothermia

Most hillwalkers will feel cold and tired at times. It would be foolish to regard everyone in this situation as having hypothermia. These common complaints should however, alert other team members to look out for further symptoms associated with hypothermia. These include skin numbness,

shivering, cramps, a slow, stumbling pace, slurred speech, poor decision making, irrational behaviour and in advanced cases, muscular rigidity. The following table indicates how these may develop as core temperature decreases.

Core temperature	Signs and symptoms
37 to 36 degrees C	Normal temperature range. shivering may begin.
36 to 35 degrees C	Cold sensation, goose pimples. Unable to perform complex tasks. Mild to severe shivering.
35 to 34 degrees C	Intense shivering. Movement becomes slow and laboured. Mild confusion, stumbling pace.
34 to 32 degrees C	Violent shivering. Difficulty in speaking. Muscle movement becomes sluggish. Unable to use hands.
32 to 30 degrees C	Shivering stops. Confused and incoherent. Irrational behaviour. Onset of chronic hypothermia.
30 to 27 degrees C	Muscles become rigid. Pulse and respiration rate slows. Semiconscious.
27 to 25 degrees C	Unconscious. Heart beat becomes erratic. Tendon reflexes stop.
25 to 24 degrees C	Failure of cardiac and respiratory centres. Death.

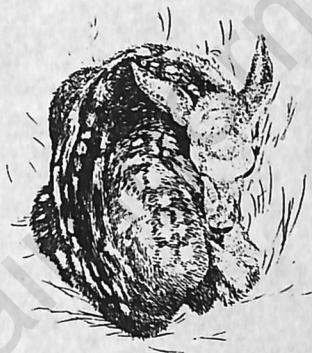
Prevention and management of hypothermia

Prevention is largely good planning and preparation. Make sure that you are adequately clad, eat little and often, drink plenty and stop before you become exhausted. If problems occur, seek shelter, conserve body heat and stay out of the wind.

Hypothermia in the mountains is quite common, and should be anticipated if you have a casualty to care for. Provide what shelter you can, out of the wind, rain or worse. Insulate him from the ground and provide him with

additional dry clothing. Body to body contact can minimise further heat loss. Give him hot drinks and food for heat and energy, and observe him closely for further signs and symptoms. Any injured person should be evacuated off the hill and to hospital as soon as possible, but bear in mind that expert help may be required to move him. Mountain Rescue teams are alert to the probability of hypothermia in all casualties, and have various means of re-warming them.

This article is based on research by Stephen Gauld, and advice and information from Alister MacDonald and Mario di Maio.



Burns Supper at Muir, 1995

FIONA CAMERON'S reply to the toast to the lasses.

Our love is like a great Munro that's newly climbed in June
Our love is like a break in mist - that navigator's boon
So once a year we gather here to celebrate such thrills
And toast the lads who share our love of Burns - and glens and hills.

Our love is like a stormy cloud that parts to show the moon
Our love is like a foaming pint that never comes too soon
So once a year we gather here to raise the drinking cup
To all those lads who share our feast, then do the washing up!

FIRST AID COURSE

MARLYN STRONACH

All day long reports came in about impending blizzards, as schools throughout Grampian closed to allow pupils to return home before the storms struck. Colleagues at work questioned my sanity at proposing to drive to Muir Cottage in the face of repeated news bulletins declaring the A93 closed at Braemar. Armed with a flask of coffee, shovel and sleeping bag, and the reassurance that the Shirreff twins were already on their way, I set off. I was relieved to discover the Braemar road closed beyond the village, allowing me an easy if not clear run to the cottage, where Judy had a fire blazing and the kettle on the boil. By ten o'clock, most of the eleven eager conscripts for the first aid course had arrived, and were swapping tales of what they had heard of it from the ten who took the qualification in May 1994. They didn't have 60 centimetres of snow and freezing conditions to contend with!

Next morning, just after breakfast, Mario's Merry Men arrived, amazed that everyone had turned up. Our instructors were introduced - Mario Di Maio, Charlie Hunter, Alan Crighton and Gordon Reilly from the Aberdeen Mountain Rescue Team - Phil and Mike would arrive the following day. We were issued with a very comprehensive handbook and told a bit about the HSE Emergency Aid Certificate, and how we would be assessed the following afternoon. What we had to learn between now and then seemed awesome. For someone who earns her living teaching children with learning difficulties, I suddenly developed a great empathy for how they felt.

So began two days of intensive instruction, demonstration and practical training. Lectures were interspersed with action, so time raced by. Every room at Muir was called into service as we were split into pairs to practise and develop skills. The tutors were marvellous, patiently demonstrating and repeating procedures, building up skills and encouraging us to be less self-conscious. I don't think any of us would have been awarded an Oscar for our performance in acting being first on the scene after an accident. We went around chanting A B C; not a sign we had reverted to the nursery - they stand for airway, breathing and circulation.

After lunch we were advised to wrap up well as we were going outside. I did wonder why Mario and Gordon appeared looking like Michelin men in several layers of clothing and soon discovered why. They were to be the 'victims' of hill accidents - our task to find them, work out what had happened (have you ever tried a body examination on someone dressed in a dozen layers of clothes?) and to respond as a first aider. By the time each member of our group of six had groped Mario and guessed where he might be injured according to his groans, the 'victim' looked very blue and was shivering uncontrollably - and he was not acting!

His final simulation was of a road crash, where the car was rammed against

one of the trees at the front of Muir with the bonnet open. It was while we were attempting to remove him from the vehicle, which was supposedly about to burst into flames, that we noticed a landrover pulled up at the gate and the occupants looking in anxiously. Fortunately they turned out to be our instructors for Sunday morning come to make our acquaintance. The evening was spent reading over the handbook - we 'oldies' were wishing our brains were more receptive to new information - and practising on Annie, the resuscitation model.

Next day was bandaging. We learned all the useful things you can do with a triangular bandage, a must now for the rucsac, and how to improvise in an emergency. We covered fractures, burns, hypothermia, asthma attacks, diabetes and epilepsy. As lunch approached we realised that time was running out. Soon we would be tested on all we had learned. We wanted to have another go with Annie at C.P.R. (cardiopulmonary resuscitation). We tried to cram the contents of the handbook into brains already on overload. It was little consolation that all ten of the May group had passed. What ignominy if we should fail.

Doctor Linda McKee (alias Mrs Di Maio) arrived and spent some time talking to us about what should be in our first aid kit. Her recommendations included plaster, wound dressing, crepe bandage, triangular bandage, roll of general purpose medical tape, painkillers, sharp scissors and a pair of rubber gloves. Before we knew it we were into the assessment. One at a time we were questioned by the doctor on some of the things we had learned. One by one we had to demonstrate our competence at C.P.R. In pairs we showed our expertise with a triangular bandage and our ability to improvise. While waiting our turn, we had a written question paper which covered all aspects, and which we were told later didn't count unless we were borderline fails.

What a relief when Mario told us we had passed and could be let loose on an unsuspecting world. Most of us wondered when, if ever, we would use our expertise. I'm sure the boy who tripped and fell down the stairs, landing at my feet first day back in school, was there to test my reactions. Fortunately the school nurse was only a shout away and I gratefully left her to do her stuff.

I was later extremely grateful to the Cairngorm Club for providing me with the opportunity to do this course, when a climbing companion stumbled on a greasy log at the end of a climb up Beinn Sgritheall, breaking her leg in three places. I was amazed at how quickly I visualised Phil and Mike demonstrating how to immobilise the damaged limb by strapping it to the good one on the table at Muir. And my triangular bandage was out of my first aid kit!

I would thoroughly recommend this course to all hill users, young and old, novice or experienced, for we never know when these skills might be called for. We must not forget too, that first aid skills are easily forgotten and the qualification lasts for only three years, so it is essential to re-train. There

are other first aid courses, but if you want one geared to walking on our hills, which is presented in a professional way and which is fun to do, then look no further.

Both First Aid courses were instigated and largely financed by the Club.



In December 1995, the Cairngorm Club donated £1,000 to the Braemar Mountain Rescue Centre Appeal. The picture shows Club President Eric Johnston on the right, presenting the cheque to Graham Macdonald, secretary of the Braemar Mountain Rescue Team, flanked by Club and Team members.



STANLEY BLACK BAGS A MUNRO

32 bar reel for four couples

Bars	Movement	End position
1 - 8	Chase to top. Man four casts up and, followed by lady four, passes behind man three, across the set, behind lady two, across the set, behind man one above the set to face each other on the opposite side.	
9 - 12	Couple four set twice.	
13 - 16	Man four with left hand leads his partner down the middle and across to their original positions, ending facing up ready for half reel of four on the side.	Original
17 - 20	Half reel of four on the side.	
21 - 24	Couple four set twice.	4 3 2 1
25 - 26	Couples four and three half wheel to right.	
27-28	Couple three set at top. Couples four and two half wheel to left.	
29 - 30	Couples four and one begin wheel to right. Couples two and three half wheel to right.	
30 - 32	Couples four and one continue wheel to right round one way. Man ends facing men's side ready to begin the chase. Couple two set at top.	2 3 4 1

John S. Black from Oregon has sent the Club this reel in memory of his late father Stanley, who died in 1995. He writes "Dad bagged Munros with the best of them, but he never could dance worth a damn. Please distribute this freely among Club members, or use it in any way the Club wishes."

AN EXPEDITION TO CAIRNGORM

This charming, and typically Victorian description of an early ascent of Cairngorm, was written by William Grant Stewart. It appeared in his (now rare) "Lectures on the Mountains" published in 1860. Stewart was a native of Strathspey who, following in a family tradition, became factor to the Earls of Seafield and latterly county Clerk of Inverness-shire. His "Popular superstitions... of the Highlanders" (1823 and 1851) and keen interest in ghosts and witchcraft earned him the title of 'Bogles'. SANDY ANTON

Among the fashionable crowds of amateurs, artists, and tourists, who lately wended their way to the Highland mountains, a gay party of tourists, bound for the far-famed mountain, Cairngorm, arrived opposite to it on the Highland road, on the forenoon of a fine summer day. A few straggling clouds hovered about on its sides; but the summit of the mountain was then clear, the sun shining brilliantly on its crowning peaks. The party, youthful, gay, and energetic, and of the order of English and Irish nobility, consisted of a gay colonel (Cadogan), a son of the emerald isle; a gallant major (Strutt), who had served with the colonel at Sebastopol, as their hirsute appendages indicated; and two lively and lovely young ladies, the Hon. Misses Juliet and Matilda Strutt, sisters of the major; with a lady's-maid and coachman or groom. The love of fame is as strong in the breast of woman as that of glory in the heart of man; and the ladies were seized with an eager desire to ascend Cairngorm, as a feat which might astonish and amuse the old governor and family at home, having along with them photographic and drawing apparatus for taking views, which would enable them to give graphic sketches of "the land of blue mountains, green forests, and heroes," and hoping to find, and take along with them a lot of the brilliant Cairngorm crystals, as trophies. And gillies and ponies accustomed to the expedition were in instant requisition. Two such men, with shelties sure and steadfast, were open to engagement for a "customary consideration"—a class of men far superior in respect of education and intelligence to the common gillies of other countries. "Pray," says the colonel, "how many miles do you count it from here to the top of the mountain?" "Cannot say exactly," answered the guide, "as the road is not measured; but it is a good many miles." "Half-a-dozen miles?" says the major. "Ay, it is all that, and a bittack" (Note: A Highlandman's bittack may be several miles, according to considerations). "How may the weather be on the mountain?" says Miss Juliet. "Oh, that is hard to say, Mattam, he is so near the clouds," says Donald. The ponies and saddles being provided and examined, and, along with the photographic apparatus, creature comforts such as could be supplied at the good little inn of Alvie, being packed into a basket, John the groom, a burly specimen of the English footman, full of beef and beer, was appointed the commissary; and the lady's-maid lively and frisky, volunteered to accompany John, who was not a married man, with

shawls, etc., for the ladies. Crossing the Spey in a boat, the ladies, with wide-rimmed hats on their heads, to protect them from the sun, mounted their ponies, and, under the guidance of their guides, took the way to wild Glenmore and Cairngorm. Arrived at Glenmore, its magnificent basin-like form attracted their artistic admiration. To quote the language of an eloquent author, Dr. McCulloch, which has been often quoted "Everywhere is seen rising young woods of various ages, promising, when centuries shall have passed away, to restore to the valley its former honours. But it is the wreck of the ancient forest which arrests all the attention, and which renders Glenmore a melancholy—more than a melancholy—a terrific spectacle. Trees of an enormous height, which have escaped alike the axe and the tempest, are still standing, stript by the winds even of their bark; and, like gigantic skeletons, throwing far and wide their white and bleached bones to the storms of heaven. While others, broken by the violence of the gales, lift their split and fractured trunks in a thousand shapes of destruction, or still display some knotted and tortuous branches, stretched out in sturdy and fantastic forms of defiance to the whirlwind and the winter. It is one wide image of death, as if the angel of destruction had passed over the valley." A scene of such picturesque grandeur, the party felt disposed to have photographically sketched; and the ladies called for their apparatus. But it appeared that John, and Martha, the lady's-maid, had already evinced symptoms of the fagging order. It was some time before they appeared; and when they did appear, their flushed faces and "heaving flanks" gave unmistakable signs of considerable distress. The rough outlines of a sketch of Glenmore having been taken, the parties lubricated, according to their needs and inclinations, from the contents of the basket; and new dispositions were made for ascending the mountain.



A stout staff, to assist in maintaining his vertical equilibrium, was cut for John the commissary, who, for various reasons of expediency, as well as humanity, was eased of the drawing apparatus and basket by the guides. "Jack Falstaff," as he was now facetiously designated by the colonel, and his companion Martha, whom the colonel designated Mrs. Ford, were cautioned, as likely to be in the rear, to mark and follow the newly-made tracks of the horses, from which they were not to diverge, for fear of swamps and precipices. The party, continuing to ascend about midway to the top, entered into a zone or belt of mist, which gradually ascended from the vale below. The phenomena

presented by this investiture were strikingly picturesque and beautiful. The cambric-like veil which enclosed them reflected prismatic colours like those of the rainbow, produced by the rays of the sun; while here and there, large rends, like tears in a large veil, occasioned by the action of currents of air in passing over air—producing gorges—disclosed, as it were, at a large window, a magnificent view of the winding silver Spey, the wooded cone of Kinrara, the rugged rock of Craig Ellachie, (the crest and ward-hill of the Clan of Grant) and, in the far west, Craigubhie, (the ward-hill of the Clan Chattan Macpherson) exhibiting a map-like view of the far-famed and romantic countries of Strathspey and Badenoch—“land of mountains, glens, and heroes.”

A view taken out of this “castle in the air” was deemed a valuable acquisition; and the delighted party held on, and soon alighted at the highest pinnacle of Cairngorm, where, as time was short and the day far spent, sketching operations were immediately entered on by all hands. Scarcely had they done so, however, when the sun was obscured by a dark, dense cloud, which hung over the north-west shoulder of the mountain; and the eyes of the guides and gentlemen were attracted towards another cloud, of a whitish, lurid colour and castellated form, the resemblance of which to various forts—such as Edinburgh and Stirling Castle—attracted the fancy of the warriors. The cloud, slowly moving from south to north, seemed to occasion to the gillies considerable anxiety and uneasiness; and when questioned on the subject, said that the white was a thunder-cloud, and the dark one in the rear was a rain-cloud, and that if the two met there would be dreadful thunder and rain. The officers, from their experience of tropical thunder, concurring with the gillies, and seeing the contingency, apprehended by the lads an imminent one warned the ladies of the coming calamity, and urged them to pack up their alls, and prepare for an immediate flight to the lower world. Just as the ladies were mounted, and the parties commenced their march, the foremost limb of the approaching lurid cloud came into contact with the dark cloud over the gully which divides Cairngorm from the Badenoch range of mountains, and suddenly a flash of lightning flared on the eyes of the party, instantly followed by a Grampian peal of thunder, which must be heard to be described. From the spectator’s proximity to the warring elements, his ear was assailed by a loud crash, of a metallic sound, as if a thousand hammers were simultaneously struck on a sheet of iron, in one awful crash—followed by a roar resembling the pouring of a torrent of water on a huge burning furnace—accompanied by rumbling and roaring, as if tearing to pieces the heavens and the earth; and this awful explosion finds echoes in the rocks, corries, and caverns of Glenavon, rolling and reverberating along, like a naval salute at a grand review (such as greeted our gracious sovereign at the French fort of Cherbourg), until the sound declines into growling groans at the extreme point of the mountain range. “By Jove,” says the colonel, “that is equal to Sebastopol, Harry.” “It is so,” says Harry. But this peal which we have

described was a slight one compared to the others which followed—for the said two clouds, having fully joined battle, like two giants or gladiators fighting in mortal strife—the lightning flew about in all directions; and the explosions and reverberated continuations thereof, for a time dwelt on the ear, in one continuous roar. Presently the rain, which, like a waterspout, poured down from the first point of action, had its area widely extended. Our party was soon overtaken; not by a shower of rain, for there was no wind or sufficient fall to disseminate the broken clouds into particles or drops—it was just a waterspout, in proof of which the ladies' stirrups and feet gushed water like the leaden spouts of a house under a heavy fall of rain. The water foamed gurgling out of the shoes of the officers and gillies; but, noble spirits all, not even the tenderly brought-up ladies gave way to useless fears or lamentations. Committing themselves to the Great Shepherd, who tempers the wind to the shorn lamb (presiding over the thunder-storm, and directing its bolts, so that not even a sparrow falls to the ground without Divine permission and consent), they trusted implicitly in Divine providence and protection, exhibiting, even in this extremity, an interest in the fate of the two servants. As they descended, the gentlemen kept singing out and reconnoitering, as well as they could, through the misty, dark atmosphere; and at last they heard a faint responsive shout, and soon they came on two objects resembling "two bundles of wet fish," as John Falstaff afterwards described himself and companion. "Halloa," says the colonel, "what made you and Maddy stop here?" "Oh," says John, "we thought we were both done for. Martha tumbled down and nearly broke her harm, and I busted my clothes a-helping her. Please God, master, if I get out of this 'orrid ills,' I shall never again try such a 'controversy.'" On a personal inspection, it was found that neither John or Martha could maintain a vertical position. Chilled with wet and fear, they were quite incapable of locomotion. In this perplexity, one of the gillies, fertile in expedients, and accustomed to such difficulties, suggested that the two ladies should allow themselves to be carried on the backs of Hemish and himself. That the "monkey" (meaning John, the "flunkey"), on whom he darted a contemptuous look, and the maid should be placed on the ponies, and that the gentlemen should keep them from falling off. That, by this plan, they would take a more abrupt and direct road to a farmer's house at Druiside, at no great distance. To this plan the ladies gently demurred, on the ground of cruelty to the gillies, and doubting the decency and propriety of the proposed mode of conveyance for themselves. But to the first objection, as to the "weights and measures" of the ladies, the gillies declared that "light ladies" were nothing to them; and the second objection was obviated on the part of the officers, by stating that Miss Nightingale, of Crimean celebrity, and others of the lady nurses, were carried on men's shoulders.

In making arrangements for this new procession, there was much matter for the artist and the moralist. In respect of the dresses of the parties, the heavy rain had, as far as regarded the head-gear, levelled all distinctions. The

hats of the gentlemen had assumed the cut and figure of the steeple hats of Charles I. The broad-brimmed felt hats of the ladies had assumed the shape of a *sac-de-nuit*, or Canterbury bells, the rims hanging down to the tips of their noses, to the great detriment of their visual faculties; and as to the camp followers, their Golgothas were entirely fitted to the figures of their skulls; and it was observed that the personal habiliments of John and Martha had suffered much dilapidation at the parts used by persons walking "on all-fours." The party being now put in their respective positions—ladies strapped on gillies' backs by their plaids, and the monkey and the maid placed on horseback—reminding us forcibly of the revolution in the social order of things expressed in the tenth chapter of Ecclesiastes, verse 7 ("I have seen servants upon horses, and princes walking as servants on the earth")—the party, led by the sure-footed guides, followed by the goat-footed ponies, descended zig-zag, General Wade's kind of traverses, which evoked many squeaks from Martha, and exclamations from John, as the ponies sidled along, sagaciously following their master's footsteps. At length, from an eminence overlooking the Drui, those who could see, observed the signs of a human dwelling. This cheering sight revived the colonel's poetical and vocal powers, singing "I knew by the smoke which so gracefully curled," &c.

In view of the humble dwelling which must form for a night the ladies' quarters, they anxiously inquired of the gillies as to the landlady's character, manner, and habits; and they were well pleased to learn she had been for a long time a servant of the Duchess of Bedford, (a sister of the great and good Duke of Gordon), who for many years had resided at the Doune of Rothymurchus, and whose active benevolence, kind and charitable disposition, diffused habits of civilization and morality among the people of the place, so that, as Hemish said, she knew how to behave to "high ladies," being a cleanly, kindly, clever woman.

Arrived at the domicile, a peal of dogs announced the arrival of the strangers, summoning to the doors the inmates of the house. Donald and Heumas, led by the good wife into the best apartment of the house, deposited each his precious little burden in arm-chairs by the fire-place. Miss Matilda, who had been a silent sufferer from spasmodic pains, occasioned by her hydropathic treatment, suddenly became pale as a lily. Her heart, like a piece of over-strained mechanism relieved from the undue pressure, stopped its motions. Her head fell on her bosom in a fainting condition; but she was in the hands of a good physician. Producing a crystal bottle of whisky, full of lemons, cloves, and other cordials, the good wife insisted on the young ladies taking each a portion of the contents, which they, under cogent reasoning, consented to do. Committing the maid to the care of her girl, to be treated in a closet, the good wife proceeded to operate on the ladies. Raising a blazing fire of dry peats, and brushwood, she drew from a chest of drawers a pair of clean white blankets, which she toasted at the fire, placing them and clean pillowslips on the bed in the apartment. Barring out intruders and eaves-

droppers, she next proceeded to divest the ladies of their dripping habiliments, the drippings from which were flooding the apartment. With many ejaculations of pity and sympathy at the soaked state of the ladies' clothing, as "hoot—hoot—oich—oich—O the poor dear lambs"—and such like comments, she consigned those two blushing mortal angels "naked as to the earth they came," into the warm fleecy blankets, and in respect of Miss Matilda's internal pains, of which she got a hint from her sister, she next introduced from another chest a milk-white fleece of wool, which had lately been washed and dried by her own hands, and which, toasted to the fire, she wrapt around the loins of Miss M., who was neither able or willing to offer resistance to the landlady's salutary operations. Having then got the girl to hand in to her at the door of the "sanctus sanctorum" a kettle of boiling water, and other materials, she produced a canister of bohea and a black tea-pot, and by toasting the pot by the fire, to aid the process of infusion, she administered cup after cup of the reviving beverage to her patients, and all pains and penalties speedily gave place to pleasant feelings and sensations. In the but end of the house, the warriors, the gillies, and the monkey, as the gillies called him, were making merry over the remains of Falstaff's commissariat, consisting of a bottle of whiskey, some meat, and bread and cheese. Falstaff's reviving faculties favoured the company with his picture of the "great eruption and volcanar of the ill, which he said was like mount Hetna, of which he had seen a picture,—vomiting thunder, fire, and brimstone,—at the spot where he and Maddy lay." At length the colonel and his messmate, the major, presented themselves at the casement of the ladies' bower, to talk of war and glory. "Pray, ladies," says the gallant Hibernian, "may I take the liberty to ax if you are alive, of which Falstaff has great doubts." "O yes, and well," responded the piano voices within. "Well, by Jove," said the colonel, "you are bricks, as we say,—two noble brave-hearted heroines whose courageous conduct in the field to-day entitles you to the Victoria cross, and at any rate, in the mean time, Harry and I have conferred on you honorary titles, commemorative of this day's proceedings. Juliet is henceforth to be known and called by the style and title of Lady Glenmore, and Tilda by that of Lady Cairngorm, names in which you were baptized by holy water from heaven, by Jove." A burst of joy from the ladies expressed how much they appreciated those Highland honours—memorials of the most romantic incident in their lives, and which were hailed by them with joyful feelings of satisfaction. Both the colonel and major enjoined on them not to sleep in their Cairngorm sac-de-nuit, or any part of their mountain garbs; admonitions which the cherubs assured them had been fully attended to by the kind hostess. But they said nothing about the order of the Golden Fleece conferred by her on Miss Tilda. Promising to return to them early next morning, with ample supplies of outward and inward creature comforts, and wishing them a long sleep and pleasant dreams, the warriors, with many hearty cacchinations, evoked by colloquies betwixt the gillies and the monkey, (who, full of exclamations, expressive of pains and casualties,

was placed upon one of the shelties,) wended their way to the inn of Inverdrewrie, leaving it to the landlady to complete her operations in peace.

Her next process was to prepare her patients for a long sleep, by administering to them a sleeping potion, which she assured them was superior to any of Doctor O—d's medicines. A cup of "athole brose," composed of mountain honey lubricated with mountain dew—the Highlander's nectar, was prepared for each of the ladies, who were partly persuaded and partly compelled, to swallow the ambrosial food; and having combed and thoroughly dried the ladies' hair, and wrapping their heads in snow-white mutches, the landlady left her patients merry and amused in their place, to prepare the person of Martha, the maid, in her closet. Worthy Martha was a different patient from the ladies. From the crown of her head to the sole of her foot, she averred herself to be full of wounds and bruises, and putrefying sores, which the landlady proceeded to dress *secundum artem*, and having without objection, administered to her a large dose of the "ambrose," well lubricated with the mountain dew, the landlady next proceeded to her laundry operations to get the ladies dresses washed and got up for the morning.

It was long of the day next morning before the eyes of the ladies were opened to a sense of their situation; and when they did awaken, it was to a sense of lively buoyancy and refreshed feeling, with no achings or sense of mortality. A cup of bohea completed this agreeable sensation, and the dresses, got up to perfection by the hands of Mrs. M. and her sister, who had received beneficial lessons at the laundry of the Doune, were put on tables at their bedside, and Martha, having been made up by Mrs. M. and her sister, with many ejaculations, expressive of her personal ailments, proceeded to assist the young ladies at their toilet, presenting to them a lively personification of Kate Dalrymple, in the old song—A "wriggle in her walk had Kate Dalrymple," &c. As she with a hirple ambled along, she exclaimed,—“Glory to the Almighty, ladies, that I see you to-day both alive.” “That we are, and well, Martha; how do you do?” “Well,” responded Martha, “if my poor mother knowd what I suffered yesterday, I am sure the poor woman would have cried her bellyful. I am sure, my ladies, going to the top of them ‘orrid ‘ills is a temptation of Providence and evil spirits; and so John and I thought, for he said a volcaner had bust out, pouring out thunder-fire, like mountains in foreign parts, and so John and I got quite spifflicated at your being all swallowed up, and trying to escape down the ‘ill we got vast tumbles, and my knees and helbows, and other parts of me are scorified black and blue, and would have been mortified, had not the good woman rubbed them with honey and spirits, which she said would stop petrification. And then, all my pours (pores) shut up—I cannot draw my breath thro’ my nostrils. “O,” says Matilda, “take courage Mat; you will soon get over all that, and you will look back on your affair of yesterday as good sport.” “A jaunt of pleasure, indeed, Madam—very like a whale. Well, expected pleasure often turns out pains, and I suppose that is what prevents so many, high and low, from marrying.” “Well,” says

Juliet, "I suppose you and John talked a good deal on that subject yesterday, for you had a good opportunity." "O Lord, forgive you, Miss Juliet,—hih' hih' I think we soon got another subject to think on,—not where we was to be bedded, but where we was to be buried, for we thought we was to be buried among those 'orrid 'ighlanders," said Martha. "Aye, and 'buried' you would be," responded Juliet, with some ire, "if it were not for those noble Highlanders, who rescued you from a watery grave. But the Highlanders are so proud, you would not be buried among them, but in the strangers' corner, in the church-yard." "Marry-come-up," said Mat "what makes Highlanders better than other folk, I wonder; is it their kilts and brimstone?" "No," responds



Miss Juliet, "it is nature's gift, giving them courageous hearts and noble minds, brave as lions, and meek as lambs." "Well, well, ladies," says Mat, "you know better; it is no for me to argufy the pint in this place, but if I am spared to see my old mother, and Auldworth church, where I was christened, I will make a vow I will never leave old England again."

While their toilet operations and the foregoing conversation were going on, in the ladies' apartment, Mrs. M. was busy cooking the breakfast, the component parts of which were gathered at an early hour in the morning. Two tables of the cottage size were covered with spotless linen, on which were placed solids and liquids of a Highland breakfast in profusion, comprehending game, kippered salmon, fresh salmon, burn trouts, venison collops, eggs, honey, wild berry jelly, fruits from the mountains of various kinds, and on the side-table the morning bitters of three kinds waiting the field-officers. To breakfast the ladies addressed themselves, and had fared sumptuously, when a peal of the dogs brought out the inmates to witness the advent of the officers—Falstaff, the monkey, doing duty over piles of ladies' boxes, baskets, &c., and faithful Donald and Heumas, with their not less faithful quadrupeds. The gallant colonel's favourite song, "Lesbia has a beaming eye," prevailed over the canine salutations; and the officers and ladies met with a joyous and cordial embrace. There was no occasion for asking for healths; for the colonel declared the ladies' eyes, cheeks, and dimples never appeared so killing and bewitching. While this agreeable badinage was going on the party took side notice of a pantomimic scene going on between John and Martha, in which each by manual signs indicated the seats of their personal damages, both before and behind. Proud of their quarters, the ladies invited the warriors to inspect their canteen and their fare, of which Mrs. M., with many curtseys, begged of them to partake; but having breakfasted in their own quarters, they accepted only a bumper of Mrs. M.'s "Balm of Gilead" and some beautiful mountain berries, called averans, or cloudberries. Here the officers observing a fishing-rod, jocularly proposed to go and catch some fish and Cairngorm stones, till the ladies had

finished their toilets, and were ready for the march. "O, gentlemen," says Mrs. M., "you dare say a few could be got if you wish for them." "Oh, delightful," exclaimed Lady Cairngorm; "a few of them will make me a happy woman." Several of the natives in the neighbourhood having such to dispose of, soon found a ready market for them.

In the preparations for departing, the ladies were profuse in their thanks, and each pressed a sovereign on Mrs. M.'s acceptance, which she decidedly declined, saying she never took money from gentle or simple for any hospitality in her power to offer, adding that the pleasure of relieving the ladies in their predicament was to her a sufficient reward. The ladies, finding her resolute, took another way of effecting their ends. They each insisted, in spite of the sinister looks of Martha, to press upon her acceptance a valuable shawl as keepsake, which she reluctantly received, saying she was too highly honoured, and doubly rewarded. The officers freely distributed 'bucksheesh' among the natives and children; and Lady Glenmore having taken the address of Mrs. M., parted from Inchdruié with feelings of sincere gratitude and affection. Mounting the cart, the monkey and Martha took the road to Inverdruié. The ladies mounted their favourite shelties, and the party, crossing the Spey in boats, arrived at Alvie Inn, where the horses and carriage were in a state of readiness, and the luggage stowed. The gillies, over and above their stipulated wages, having received from each of the ladies a sovereign, protested they were paid too much by far. John and Martha took their places in the driver's box, and the officers and ladies in the open carriage, starting for Inverness amidst the cheers of the gillies and spectators. The day was clear, and Cairngorm clearly open for inspection. The colonel insisted upon John's pointing out the place of his own and Mat's misfortunes; but no persuasion could induce them even to look at the 'horrid 'ill,' to which the warriors, by hand and hat, paid a parting salutation, to the great amusement of the ladies, and the horror of the 'monkey' and his companion.



THE GRADE IV QUEST

STUART STRONACH

The winter of 1993-94 was a good one. For once, there was plenty of snow, and routes that hadn't been in a climbable condition for half a decade saw regular ascents.

My winter season began early, with the first snows in November. Nigel Eastmond and I had decided that this would be the year that we would crack grade IV, so why wait to warm up? Our first objective would be Look C Gully in Coire Fee, Glen Clova (or should that be Glen Doll?). Look C is a classic, given grade III, III/IV or IV,4 depending on which guide you read, and has an article to itself in 'Cold Climbs'. The time gained by an early start was negated by atrocious driving conditions with snowy roads the whole way. At the car park, Nigel realised he had placed his house keys on the roof of the car before leaving Aberdeen, and had left them there. Fortunately, it was so cold that they had frozen to the snow on the roof and were still there in Glen Clova! Wandering up into the coire, we were perturbed to find blood smeared all over the path, beside sledge tracks. We agreed it must have been a shot stag being taken to the road, but we couldn't help wondering if some dramatic mountain rescue operation had unfolded recently along our path.

So much for the approach. At the base of the climb, we geared up and Nigel rattled from side to side looking for the best place to start. He eventually selected a slabby, icy groove, and scabbled his way up to a large snowy bay thirty feet up. He was moaning that the ice was very thin, and the next bit looked more like a waterfall than an ice climb. I followed up and joined him at the bay for a conference. He was right. It hadn't been cold enough for long enough, and the climb wasn't in condition. I had been feeling apprehensive about the climb anyway (first route of the season, hardest climb yet attempted and all that!), and suggested we try B Gully, a grade II round to the right. Nigel agreed and off we went. Climbing solo, we stopped half way up B Gully for lunch. The snow was unconsolidated and not very deep, and just above us was a twenty foot step that usually banks out later in the season. I wandered off up it, first bridging up a 'V' groove, then swinging round onto one of the icy walls and front pointing up to the top. Nice. I was perhaps a hundred feet above this when there was a shout from Nigel. He had been front pointing up the wall, near the top, when the ice had sheared off at crampon level, leaving him hanging by his axes! A top rope was hastily lowered down, and he completed the pitch with great relief. Just above my high point was the main pitch of the gully, an easy angled fifty foot ice pitch. However, once again, the ice had not formed, and I retreated, disappointed, from ten feet up. The guide book did mention a dogleg traverse line to avoid the step, so off we went. Climb completed with no further incident, we descended to the car. First failure of the season.

The next attempt at something hard was made two days after Christmas. Hal Taylor and I felt the urge to work off some of the excesses of the festive season. However, it had been snowing a lot, and all the roads to the hills were blocked. There was an alternative though: Clachnaben had lots of summer climbing routes on its summit tor, but as far as I knew, no one had done anything on it in winter. We reckoned the road must be open at least as far as Glen Dye lodge, so off we went. Arriving at the tor, I immediately broke out the axes and crampons and launched myself at the rocks, expecting to be able to solo several of the easier summer lines. No chance! It was not as easy as I had imagined. We roped up and I led off up A Gully, or as it's now called, No. 1 Gully (research done for the new North East Outcrops guide published in March '94 unearthed some of the original names given to the routes. At the time, we were working off of the names given in the 1984 guide). Half way up this, I came to a halt. No amount of heaving, twisting or contorting could get me up the next section, and I had to lower off. A quick abseil to retrieve the gear, and we were off to find something else. We did manage to solo South West Gully, a moderate grassy summer scramble. By finishing artificially up a ledge system on the right, we felt it was worth grade II. At least we had climbed something! We then turned our attention to Divot Groove (or Eagle Buttress). Once again, I could get nowhere. This was becoming frustrating.

Finally, I examined the start of Shrew Rib (or Platform Climb). This looked more promising. Quickly, we roped up and I set off. Climbing up the steep, jaggy nose of the rib, first on the right side, then on the left, I gained a level section after about thirty feet, and brought Hal up. Above us was the rib of the summer climb, and a slabby groove on its right. I followed this to its end, where I was presented with a choice. A hand traverse on a good flake looked as if it might lead back left to the summer line, while an ascending traverse below an overhang headed right. I elected to follow the right hand line, because I wasn't sure what lay round the rib at the end of the hand traverse, while the right hand line at least took better holds. Shuffling round for twenty feet or so, I came to an S-shaped crack. The crack itself looked reasonable enough, but it was undercut at its base, and proved awkward to gain. At the top of the crack was a large ledge, so I belayed and Hal followed again. Now we were almost at the top. All that lay between us and level ground was a short, smooth wall, just on the friendly side of vertical. It looked desperate. There was no protection on it, but the ledge was big enough to land on and stop, rather than dropping further. The first attempt got about half way up it before gravity won and I jumped/fell off (i.e. I knew I was going and decided to pre-empt the inevitable). The second try was more successful. Horribly precarious, balancing on front points placed on rounded horizontal cracks, I teetered up. Success! Hal followed and we congratulated ourselves on a first winter ascent. But at what grade? We both felt that the crux was too short and safe for the climb to be anything other than grade III,

but with the newly introduced technical grading system, we felt a technical grade was appropriate to be added despite the climb being sub-grade IV. Our final opinion: grade III, 5. This climb is now recorded as a first winter ascent in the SMCJ 1994. Next year we want to go back for a bash at Cairngorm Club Crack! However, still no grade IV!

I didn't get out again until February. This time, I was with Simon Lock, a long serving member of the Tiso staff, and one of my regular summer partners. We went to Coire an t-Sneachda, on Cairngorm, with our eyes on Aladdin's Mirror Direct (grade IV, 4) and Pygmy Ridge (grade IV, 5). The weather looked superb, with clear skies, sunshine and low temperatures. However, when we got out of the car, we were nearly blown away. There was some wind! Arriving at the base of Aladdin's Mirror Direct, a thirty foot vertical frozen waterfall, I was very intimidated by its appearance. Even worse, the wind was causing regular spindrift avalanches to whistle down it. Even Simon agreed it was out of the question. We shifted our sights to the buttress immediately on the left, which wasn't in our guide book, but which I cleverly remembered to be called Wavelength, a grade III/IV. This was climbed without incident. It was never easy, but never desperate, and we felt pleased with ourselves. Unfortunately, it turned out that I wasn't as clever as I thought I was. We had just done Terms of Endearment, a grade III. Was I ever going to get onto something harder?

Less than a week later, I was back at the foot of Aladdin's Mirror Direct, this time with Mark Atkins. Mark is an Etchachan Club member, and a lot better a climber than me. We had set off for Lochnagar, only to find the Glen Muick road covered with fresh snow. We felt this would mean too high an avalanche risk on the 'Gar, so we turned round and headed to the northern coires.

"Shall we just solo this?" asked Mark, gesturing at the icefall.

"You're joking", I replied. "I've never even led something like this before!".

"Well then, off you go."

This was it. My bluff had been called. A second party chose this moment to arrive, so there was no time to lose if we were to avoid a wait. With heart somewhere in the vicinity of my sinuses, I started up the slab of ice that lay below the main wall. As the angle started to increase, I placed an ice screw. This was the first time I had used one, but I didn't feel it should be as loose in its placement as it was. Too psyched to worry about it, I launched onto the steep bit. The ice was really chewed up from other climbers ascents, but the axe placements felt solid enough, and I had nice sharp new crampons for front pointing. There was still spindrift coming down, but in much smaller quantities than my previous visit to the coire. The hardest section was moving left from a shallow groove onto a pillar of ice near the top. I was really enjoying the climbing, but I was glad that the face was short enough to make the placing of protection more trouble than it was worth (hanging round off

one axe to place an ice screw is very strenuous). And then I was up. The angle eased off to a snow gully, and I found a belay to bring Mark up. He cruised it, naturally, and slagged me off for a useless ice screw placement!

Next came Pygmy Ridge. This is a short, three pitch mixed climb that starts half way up the headwall of the coire. We traversed across to it in two pitches, so Mark had first lead. Pygmy Ridge was first climbed by Raeburn just after the turn of the century, and was given grade III for a long time (except in a McInnes guide where it was a mere II). With the recent introduction of the split winter grades, it was upgraded to a more realistic IV, 5. Nevertheless, the section that I could see, up a thirty foot corner looked easy enough, so I was surprised that Mark took his time over it. Even at the top of the corner, where the angle looked to ease as he disappeared from sight, progress was slow. A second rope joined me at the belay.

"Did you just do the Mirror Direct?", one of the climbers enquired as he arrived.

"Yes. How did you know?" I replied.

"Footfang crampons", he said, pointing at my feet.

This must be the first time I have been recognised by the soles of my feet! (Footfang crampons have a distinctive red plate to stop snow build up, plainly visible when front pointing.)

Finally, Mark reached a stance and shouted to me to follow. I set off, and immediately found why Mark was slow. This corner was deceptively hard. About fifteen feet up, I was pulling up on an axe placement when the axe and rock parted company. As I was attached to the axe, I was unceremoniously deposited back at the base of the climb on rope stretch. This got me riled up and I quickly fought my way back up to my high point, and beyond (the axe held second time round). The climbing just didn't get any easier. A steep slab with a crack running directly towards Mark beckoned. The climbing was delicate as I learned the technique of torquing (jamming the axe into a crack in order to pull up on it), whilst feet were placed flat on sloping ledges. I was depending on my weight concentrated onto the points of my crampons providing enough friction to keep me on! If this is McInnes' idea of grade II, I'd hate to see one of his grade V's! I was totally drained, mentally and physically, by the time I reached Mark's belay, and would happily have abbed off to safety. Mark had other ideas and told me it was my lead. The ground immediately above was a vertical ten foot step with a crack leading to a ledge half way up. It took a mixture of strenuous pulling on axes, and delicate shuffling on snow covered rock, but I got up it and headed off on easier ground to a level section where I belayed. Mark made short work of the top pitch, and we descended Aladdin's Couloir to get back to the car park, with a short stop in a Glenmore Lodge course snow hole for a bite to eat.

So that was that. I had led my first grade IV, but had fallen off my second. I don't know if this is an improvement or not. Time will tell.

Two winters have passed since this article was written, and I have only been out once. This was another Christmas trip to Clachnaben at the end of 1995 with Simon. We both soloed the easy gully I had done with Hal two years before, expecting it to be a simple warm-up. Wrong! There was less snow than previously, and the top slabby groove felt a bit hard and serious, 100 feet up without a rope. We felt that a grade of III,4 was more realistic than the easy grade II climbed before. After this, we spent the rest of the day bouldering out the bottom 20 feet of several routes and enjoying the sunshine.

As I sit writing this, it is mid-March and another storm is raging outside the window. Although the climbing gear stayed in the car for the duration of the Achnashellach weekend meet, as temperatures rose and the snow vanished, perhaps the winter is not over yet....



THE LURE OF THE HILLS

LOUIS FUSSELL

I was a keen hill walker while based in Aberdeen from 1965 to 1974, and missed the companionship and challenges of Cairngorm Club outings when work took me south of the border. Easter meets became my annual pilgrimage to the Scottish hills, but offered only a limited opportunity to enjoy the countryside. In 1992 the idea of cycling most of the way to and from Easter meets began to appeal, and has now become an enjoyable habit.

It is a long way from Bedford to Dornie. Having spent my fourth night in Stirling, I reached the Pass of Glen Ogle into Glen Dochart around lunch time, but took ages to reach Tyndrum against a headwind. The signpost to Glencoe, my objective, indicated another thirty miles. This would not be daunting on a good day, but with a heavily laden bike to push up the steeper, long hills, was quite a task. The desolation of Rannoch Moor was compounded by a snow storm, and by the time I reached the summit at 1,149 feet, felt as if I had climbed a Munro on the bike. A long run downhill through a hailstorm brought me to the safety of a bunkhouse, hot soup and a welcome chance to dry out. The following day I met three young cyclists near Spean Bridge on their way from Land's End to John O'Groats - a thirteen day tour for charity, but with a car to carry their gear. Some people have it easy! It was a long push up Glen Garry, then over the pass in more snow by Loch Cluanie to Glen Sheil and the reward of ten miles downhill to Ratagan Youth Hostel. Three of us climbed A'Ghlas-bheinn on the Sunday in superb conditions. One such day makes the whole trip worthwhile.

I cycled from Land's End to John O'Groats in the autumn of 1995, raising over £2,000 for Albania. This resulted in a request to participate in a sponsored tour to raise money for 'Wheels for All', so I combined usefulness with adventure on my journey to and from Lochinver. It was a sociable journey. A guest house owner in Melrose refused payment, asking me to give the money to charity. I attempted to visit friends in Edinburgh, but they were out and neighbours invited me to join a champagne party. The Perth to Aviemore stretch was the most challenging, but the well graded hills and smooth road surface of the A9 ease the path of the laden cyclist.

The journeys are not wholly by bike. I have appreciated a lift in a school bus, and enjoyed the scenery of Rannoch Moor and the Southern Uplands from the comfort of a train. Each Easter I've cycled around eight hundred miles in two or three weeks, enjoyed the company of friends en route, and been much fitter as a result. A case of personal 'urban renewal'.

HUTS, HOSTELS AND BUNKHOUSES

Bookings for huts belonging to other clubs are often only accepted through our Club Secretary.

	BH	Bunkhouse	OC	Outdoor Centre
	IH	Independent Hostel	SC	Self Catering
	+	Group bookings only	*	No cooking facilities
BIGGAR		Netherurd House, Biggar	+	IH 01968 682208
GLASGOW		Backpackers Hostel		IH 0141 332 5412
EDINBURGH		High Street Hostel		IH 0131 557 3984
		Backpackers, Royal Mile		IH 0131 557 6120
		Belford Youth Hostel		IH 0131 225 6209
		Princes Street Hostel		IH 0131 556 6894
		Cowgate Tourist Hostel		IH 0131 226 2153
		Backpackers Hostel		IH 0131 220 1717
FIFE		Anstruther Bunkhouse		IH 01333 310768
ARROCHAR		The Old Stables, East Kilbride M.C.		Hut
		Glen Croe, 8 Miles High M.C.		Hut 01592 714354
OBAN		Jeremy Inglis		IH 01631 565065
		Oban Backpackers		IH 01631 562107
CRIANLARICH		Ochils M.C.		Hut 01259 217123
CRIEFF		Braincroft Bunkhouse		BH 01764 670140
AUCH		MacDougalls Cottage, Clachaig M.C.		Hut 0141 334 8871
BRIDGE OF ORCHY		The Way Inn	*	BH 01838 400208/209
		Glencoe Ski Club Lodge		Hut 0141 623 5317
FOREST LODGE		Clashgour, Glasgow University M.C.		Hut 01360 311917
GLEN ETIVE		Inbhirfhaolain, Grampian Club		Hut via huts custodian
		The Smiddy, Forventure		Hut 0141 959 9965
GLENCOE		Black Rock Cottage, L.S.C.C.		Hut 0141 956 1201
		Kingshouse Hotel		BH 01855 851259
		Lagangarbh. S.M.C.		Hut 01389 731917
		Leacantium Farm		BH 01855 811256
		Clachaig Inn		BH 01855 811252
		Kyle M.C. Memorial		Hut
KINLOCHLEVEN		West Highland Lodge		BH 018554 831471
		Mamore Lodge	+	BH 01855 831213
		Rose Cottage		BH 01855 831471/396
ONICH		Manse Barn. Lomond M.C.		HUT 0141 339 8301
		Inchree Hostel and Chalets		BH 01855 821287
		Alex MacIntyre Memorial. B.M.C./M.C. of S.		HUT 01324 554452
MALLAIG		Sheena's Backpackers Lodge		IH 016874 62764
FORT WILLIAM		Fort William Backpackers		IH 01397 700711
		Mr Kimber, Calluna		BH 01397 700451

	Snowgoose Holidays	BH	01397 772467
	The Smiddy Lodge	BH	01397 772467
GLEN NEVIS	Steall. Lochaber J.M.C.S.	HUT	01397 772599
	Achriabhach	IH	via huts custodian
	Ben Nevis Bunkhouse, Achintee Farm	BH	01397 702240
BEN NEVIS	Allt a Mhuillin. C.I.C. Hut. S.M.C.	Hut	by letter only
ROY BRIDGE	Aite Cruinnichidh Lodge	IH	01397 712315
	Grey Corrie Lodge	IH	01397 712236
FERSIT	Ewen Smith, Fasgadh, Fersit, Roy Bridge, Lochaber. PH31 4AK	IH	no phone
CORROUR STATION	Morgan's Den	BH	01397 732236
LAGGAN	Jock's Spot. Edinburgh University M.C.	Hut	01383 732232
	Raeburn. S.M.C. (phone before 9 pm)	Hut	01505 842004
GLEN LOCHAY	Batavaime. Edinburgh University M.C.	Hut	via huts custodian
ABERFELDY	Dunolly House +	IH	01887 820298
MONTROSE	House of Dun Base Camp +	BH	01674 810264
GLEN ISLA	The Round House No SC	IH	01575 582238
GLEN CLOVA	The Clova Hotel	BH	01575 550222
	Carn Dearg M.C.	Hut	01575 550222
	Whitehaugh. Forfar DHC	Hut	01575 550222
BANCHORY	The Wolf's hearth, Tornaveen	IH	01339 883460
GLEN MUICK	Allt na Guibhsaich. Aberdeen University Lairig Club. Physical Education Dept.	Hut	via huts custodian
BRAEMAR	Braemar Bunkhouse	BH	01339 741242
	Morrone Lodge Outdoor Centre	OC	01569 762020
	Inverey Outdoor Centre	OC	01569 766960
	Guide Sheiling	Hut	01339 741632
	Muir of Inverey. Cairngorm Club	Hut	01569 730852
STRATHDON	Jenny's Bothy	IH	01975 651446/9
TOMINTOUL	Glen Avon Hotel	BH	01809 580218
CRAIGELLACHIE	Craigellachie Lodge	IH	01540 673360
BALLINDALLOCH	Ballindalloch Hostel	IH	01540 651272
CARRBRIDGE	Bunkhouse	BH	01479 841250
GRANTON ON SPEY	Ardenbeg Bunkhouse	BH	01479 872824
DULNAIN BRIDGE	The Old Schoolhouse	OC	01479 851246
NETHY BRIDGE	Nethy House +	IH	01479 821370
KINCRAIG	Kirkbeag Cabin	IH	01540 651298
(near Kingussie)	Insh Hall	IH	01540 651272
	Kincraig Bunkhouse	BH	01540 651207
	Badenoch Christian Centre	IH	01540 651373
	Mill Cottage (Bell Memorial) M.C. of S.	Hut	01540 661569/779
	Mile House. L.S.C.C.	Hut	01463 741531
KINGUSSIE	Bothan Airigh	BH	01540 661051
	The Laird's Bothy	IH	01540 661334
GLEN FESHIE	Glen Feshie Hostel	IH	01540 651323

	Independent Hostel	IH	01540 673360
NEWTONMORE	Craigower Lodge	OC	01540 673319
	Newtonmore Independent Hostel	IH	01540 673360
GLENMORE	Badaguish Centre		01479 861285
	Glenmore Lodge Chalets	SC	01479 861256
FORT AUGUSTUS	International Travellers Hostel, Book at Lock Inn Pub		
	Abbey Backpackers Lodge	IH	01320 366703
	Bothy Bite Bunkhouse	BH	01320 366710
FOYERS	Foyers House		01456 486405
DRUMNADROCHIT	Loch Ness Backpackers	IH	01456 450807
DORES	Stratherrick Hostel, Torness	IH	01463 75314
INVERNESS	Inverness Student Hostel	IH	01463 236556
	Bazpackers	IH	01463 717633
ELGIN	Saltine		01343 550624
TOMDOUN	Tomdoun Hotel Bunkhouse	BH	01809 511218
	Garrygaulach	IH	01809 511230
KNOYDART	Inverie	IH	01687 462331
	Doune	BH	01687 462667
	Barrisdale Bothy	Bothy	via huts custodian
	Torrie Sheiling	IH	01687 462669
	Loch Hourn	BH	via huts custodian
KINTAIL	Morvich Outdoor Centre +	OC	0131 243 9331
	Glen Lichd House, Edinburgh University M.C.	Hut	via huts custodian
STRATHGLASS	Cougie Lodge, Tomich, Strathglass	IH	01456 415212
GLEN AFFRIC	Glen Affric Backpackers, Cannich	IH	01456 415263
BALINTORE	The Stables, Balintore Hotel	IH	01862 832219
ROGART	Railway Carriage		01408 641343
GARVE	Aultguish Inn Bunkhouse *	BH	01997 455254
ACHASHELLACH	Gerry Howkin's	IH	01520 766232
ACHNASHEEN	Inver. Jacobite M.C.	Hut	01506 844815
KINLOCHEWE	Kinlochewe Bunkhouse	BH	01445 760253
TORRIDON	Ling Hut. S.M.C.	Hut	01463 871274
	Inveralligin Field Centre	IH	01445 791247
DUNDONNELL	Sail Mhor Croft	IH	01854 633224
	The Smiddy, Edinburgh University M.C.	Hut	01854 612354
GAIRLOCH	Badachro	BH	01445 741291
	Achercairn Hostel	IH	01445 712131
	Rua Reidh Lighthouse	IH	01445 771263
ACHILTIBUIE	Achiltibuie Bunkhouse	BH	01854 622215
BADRALLOCH	Kylesku Lodges		01971 502003
ELPHIN	Grampian Speleological Group	BH	via huts custodian
ASSYNT	Assynt Field Centre	IH	01571 822218
THURSO	Thurso Youth Club	IH	01847 892964
	Strathy Inn		01641 541205

ISLANDS**SKYE**

KYLEAKIN	Skye Backpackers	IH	01559 534510
PORTREE	Portree Independent Hostel	IH	01478 613737
	Portree Backpackers	IH	01478 613332
	Portree Backpackers Hostel	IH	01478 613641
	Fossil Bothy	IH	01471 822644/297
LOWER BREAKISH			
SLIGACHAN	Sligachan Hotel Bunkhouse	BH	01478 640254
PORTNALONG	Croft Bunkhouse	BH	01478 640254
	Skyewalker Independent Hostel	IH	01478 640250
GLEN BRITTLE	Glenbrittle Memorial B.M.C.	Hut	01357 300533
CORUIISK	Coruisk Memorial. Glasgow J.M.C.S.	Hut	01360 622541
DUNVEGAN	Uiginish Lodge	IH	01470 521445
STAFFIN	Dun Flodigarry Hostel	IH	01470 552212
	Lealt Falls Hostel, North Scorrybreck	IH	01470 562363
SNIZORT	Glen Hinnisdale Bothy	IH	01476 542293
STRATHAIRD	Blaven Bunkhouse	BH	01471 822397
SLEAT	Sabhal Mor Ostaig	IH	01471 844373
RAASAY	Raasay House	IH	01478 660266
NORTH UIST	Uist Outdoor Centre, Lochmaddy	IH	01876 500480
LEWIS	Bayable Bunkhouse, Point.	BH	01851 870863
	Ravenspoint	IH	01851 880236
	Stornaway Backpackers Hostel	IH	01851 703628
	Galston Farm	BH	01851 850492
	Drinishadder Hostel	IH	01859 511255
HARRIS			
RUM	The Hostel	IH	01687 462037
MULL	Craignure Sheiling Hostel	IH	01680 812496
MUCK	Isle of Muck Bunkhouse	BH	01687 462042
ISLAY	Kintra Bunkbarns Hostel	IH	01496 302051
JURA	Knochrome Bunkhouse	BH	01496 30232
ARRAN	Corrie Croft	IH	01770 302203
ORKNEY	Browns Hostel, Stromness	IH	01856 850661
	Evie Hostel	IH	01856 675208
	Herston Hikers Hostel, South Ronaldsay		
		IH	01856 831208
	Wheems Bothy, South Ronaldsay	IH	01856 831537
	Burray Hostel	IH	01856 873535
	Hoy Hostel	IH	01856 873535
Rousay Farm Hostel	IH	01856 821252	

This list incorporates the Independent Hostel Guide, Scotland 1996. It contains information on the cost and facilities of each hostel, and is updated annually in March. Free copies are available in hill walking equipment shops or direct from Pete Thomas, Croft Bunkhouse, Pornalong Isle of Skye IV47 8SL.

The Scottish Youth Hostel Association provides hostel accommodation in many areas, and they are marked on Ordnance Survey maps. Contact SYHA District Office at 11 Ashvale Place, Aberdeen for booking and further information. The Club has an SYHA Group card held by the Secretary.

The Mountain Bothies Association maintain unlocked bothies throughout Scotland. Contact their Information Officer, Ted Butcher, Deeping St. James, Peterborough PE6 8NY Tel 01778 345062.

The Mountaineering Club of Scotland produces a booklet describing their huts annually. It costs £2 and can be obtained from their National Officer, 4A St. Catherine's Road, Perth PH1 5SE Tel 01738 638227.

The Independent Hostel Guide - UK and Ireland, which contains details of 160 hostels and costs £3.95, is available from the Backpackers Press, 2 Rockview Cottages, Matlock Bath, Derbyshire DE4 3PG.



IN MEMORIAM

The Club records with regret the death of the following members :

Mr Robert Bain (OH 1934)	Mrs Isabel M. Mitchell (OL 1961)
Dr Stanley A.B. Black (O 1965)	Mrs Brenda Nisbet (O 1968)
Miss Jean A. Callendar (OH 1951)	Mr Ian F. Roberts (OL 1946)
Mr George F. Collie (OL 1929)	Dr Richard L.M. Syngé (O 1953)
Mr Kenneth W. Fraser (O 1965)	Mr Alexander R. Willox (OL 1954)
Miss Christian Merson (A 1968)	Mr Colin Wilson (O 1971)

ROBERT BAIN

Robert Bain was born in Crieff on 8th May 1903. He was educated at Morrison's Academy there and later at Glasgow University where he gained a BSc in Agriculture. On completion of his degree he worked for a short time as manager of a farm near Foyers in Inverness-shire, before moving into an estate management post at Chapel on Leader near Earlston in the Borders. He came to Aberdeen in 1931 to take up the post of Assistant Manager of Experiments at Craibstone where he spent the rest of his working life, rising to be head of the Crop Husbandry Department. He also lectured in crop husbandry at the Agriculture Department of the University of Aberdeen. During the war years he served as a captain in the Home Guard based at Stoneywood. On his retirement he moved back to his native Crieff where he spent the rest of his days.

He joined the Club in 1934 and became a regular participant in its activities. He was first appointed to the Committee in 1948, and a year later became the first ever Huts Custodian, the year that the Club obtained a lease of Muir. He continued in this office until 1959. When a further lease was obtained of Derry Lodge in 1951 he had two huts to look after. In addition to the normal duties of huts custodian he played his full part in the numerous work parties that were arranged in the early days to make both these properties more habitable. He also assisted with the reconstruction of Luibeg Bridge after it was damaged by the flood of August 1956. He was Vice-President from 1952 to 1955 and President from 1959 to 1962, and continued thereafter as an ordinary member of the committee from 1962 to 1964 and 1965 to 1968. Over the years he was a major contributor to the Club's journal writing at least seven major articles, most of them of a humorous nature. On his retirement to Crieff in 1968 he ceased to be an active member of the Club, although he did occasionally put in an appearance when we had meets to Perthshire. He was appointed Honorary President of the Club in 1989 and thereafter made a point of attending the Annual Dinner. His other interests included skiing and gardening. As a young man he played rugby for Glasgow University and later for the local Earlston team. He died on 18th June 1994.

G.E.

STANLEY A.B. BLACK

Born in 1909, Sandy graduated from Aberdeen University in 1931. He worked in the medical service in Nigeria, then became Medical Officer of Health in Shetland. He was a medical administrator with the North East Regional Hospital Board for twelve years before retiring in 1974, and it was during this time that his love of hillwalking fully developed. He served as Vice-President of the Club from 1970 to 1973, then as President the following three years. He was one of a group of enthusiastic 'Munro-baggers', including the late Kenneth Fraser, who thrived on the fellowship of shared interests and lively debate.

H.A.W.

JEAN A. CALLENDAR

Jean was a geography teacher who was able to say to her pupils, referring to many places in the world "I was there". She was an indefatigable traveller and had friends in several countries. She kept up an extensive correspondence with them, and a chance visit might well find her answering air mail letters, which were carefully filed in an old shoe box. A keen hill walker, she was a swift mover in the hills, but had to slow down after a heart attack. This did not deter her from giving the Club much needed and well appreciated service as librarian from 1970 to 1986. To quote from Sheila Murray's 1987 history of the Club 'This energetic lady soon set to work methodically checking the catalogue, disposing of out of date handbooks and other publications, selling surplus numbers of the Club Journal, having volumes of our own and other journals bound, and putting transparent covers on all new books. In an attempt to redress the marked drop in numbers of borrowings since the peak period in the 1950's, she began to take several boxes of selected or requested books to indoor meets in 1974. This service immediately increased the borrowings four-fold.'

J.C.A.

KENNETH W. FRASER

Kenneth Fraser was born in Coventry, descended from a family of Little Loch Broom. He worked for the Inland Revenue and ended his professional life as Inspector of Taxes. He had an immense fund of expert knowledge and was much loved and respected. He and his wife Isabella (Tibbie) joined the Cairngorm Club in 1965 and were regular and enthusiastic participants in Club bus meets and other events. They moved to near Perth in 1968, but maintained contact with the Club and rejoined its activities on return to Aberdeen when he retired. Kenneth took on the job of Huts Custodian in the days of the old Muir cottage, with its wooden annexe resembling Siberia.

Only he and Tibbie could have persuaded some of the younger Club members to sleep in the place after covering themselves with creosote, while trying to preserve both the annexe and the fuel shed. Kenneth was auditor of the Club's finances for a short period before moving to Perth. He was a good listener and became a voluntary visitor to Craiginches prison, an elder of the church and a keen bowler.

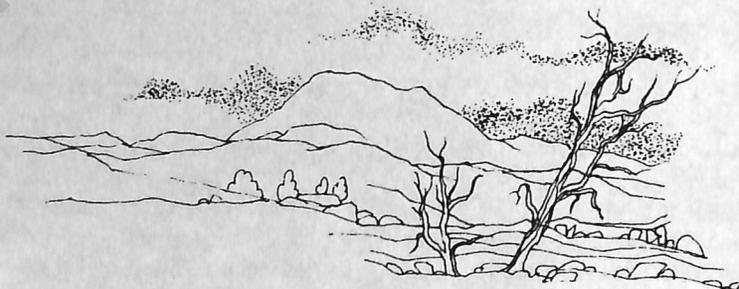
Many a Club member was made warmly welcome on their first meet by Kenneth and Tibbie, and will have happy memories of their good humour and kindly interest. They completed their Munro's together and celebrated the centenary of the Tables with other Club Munroists in 1991. Kenneth Fraser died in August 1995 after a short illness.

R.P.

CHRISTIAN MERSON

First memories of Cis are of a Ben Lawyers bus meet in May 1968. In those days the 'President's Party' did not exist and Cis asked if she could join our group. We were young then and saw her as a little old lady who would probably deter us from our intended exploits, but being good Club members we welcomed her. How wrong we were! Cis was a formidable walker and good company. She knew the hills intimately, particularly those of Don and Deeside and was happy to enjoy them on her own. In later years, when unable to come on bus meets, she was often seen awaiting a local bus after a shorter day out in her beloved hills. She died in February 1994 aged eighty one.

J.M.M.



PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB

GENERAL MEETINGS

The 1994 Annual General Meeting of the Club was held on 16 November. Judy Middleton was elected President in succession to Gillian Shirreffs, and John Gibson filled the vacant position of Vice-President. Eric Johnston was elected Honorary President following the death during the past year of Robert Bain.

The 1995 Annual General Meeting was held on 22 November. Fiona Cameron was elected to the vacant position of Vice-President.

ANNUAL DINNERS

The 1994 Annual Dinner was held at the Stakis Tree Tops Hotel, Aberdeen. The writer Irvine Butterfield was guest speaker, giving an illustrated talk entitled 'Writing a Book'.

The 1995 Annual Dinner saw a change of venue to the Elphinstone Hall at King's College, Old Aberdeen. Allen Fyffe of Glenmore Lodge gave an illustrated talk on a two-man expedition climbing Kalanka in the Nanda Devi Sanctuary, by a new route.

Richard Shirreffs

MEETS AND EXCURSIONS 1993 - 1996

The average attendance at excursions for the period covered by this journal was 27.4, a drop of 4.2 from the previous period. The attendance for each one is given in the list at the end of this report. The best turnout was 47 for the Lochnagar meet in January 1996 and the poorest 11 at Ben Chabhair in 1995.

Our first outing was advertised as 'Linn of Dee to Blair Atholl'. River levels on the day were so high that it was deemed inadvisable to attempt this route, with the necessity of fording the River Geldie and Bynack Burn, so all stayed in the bus round to Blair Atholl and did various walks from there. The next trip was from Auchallater to Glen Muick, and although it was very misty almost all the party went over Cairn Taggart and Lochnagar. We next went to the Steplar Pass. It was a frosty clear day and the whole party followed the right of way throughout, with some diverging to take in Cook's Cairn. The year finished off with a walk to Clachnaben.

The Lochnagar excursion in January 1994 was, like the year before, attended by very windy weather. Nobody reached the top though some did try. On the following outing to Loch Lee it was a sunny clear day accompanied by a very cold fierce wind. Little in the way of climbing took place. Those who ventured on to even the lower tops were soon driven off by the conditions. At Inverey the weather was better but misty on the tops. Carn Bhac seemed to be the main objective but some ventured on to An Socach. At Cockbridge we were back to gale force winds again and progress even in the valleys was very difficult. The main beneficiary of the conditions was definitely mine host at the Allargue Hotel.

The 1994 Easter Meet was held at the Loch Duich Hotel in Dornie. Those attending had to contend with snow on the road on the way over from Invergarry to Cluanie. The weather continued bad through to the Saturday with rain and northerly gales and no hills

climbed. The Sunday, however, was a beautiful day and several parties climbed A' Ghlas-bheinn where they encountered new snow on top. The hotel was very comfortable but the attendance disappointing.

After Easter the weather improved and we had quite a pleasant day at Glas Tulaichan. This was followed by an even better one at Schiehallion three weeks later. Our luck continued on the traverse from the Cairnwell to Inverey, with most people going over Carn a'Gheiodh and either Ben Iutharn Beag or An Socach. Our luck however did not continue for the overnight excursion which gave people the choice of either the Grey Corries or Creag Meagaidh. It was quite a wet start, and although the rain did stop it remained misty throughout. Nevertheless most of the party reached their objectives. One group managed to climb all the Grey Corries, Aonachs Beag and Mor and Carn Mor Dearg as well. The risk of having two different finishing points was well illustrated at the end, with one party quite late in Glen Nevis, leading to a delayed pick up for the Creag Meagaidh party and a late arrival for them at the hotel.

The autumn excursions started with a pleasant day on Jock's Road with most of the hills on either side being climbed. The Cairngorm Traverse had much poorer weather with the route across via the Shelter Stone being the most popular. A much better day was had between Glen Feshie and the Linn of Dee with about half the party going through the glen while the rest went over the hills from Achlean. It was wet on Ben Dorain with snow on the higher parts, but everybody managed to climb it, some doing Beinn an Dothaidh as well. The excursion to Mount Battock was a traverse from Millden Lodge to Glen Dye Lodge. It was a very fine day and the whole party climbed both Mount Battock and Clachnaben. The last outing of the year was to Culardoch and took the form of a traverse from Invercauld to Inver. It was not a particularly pleasant day but most of the party did go to the top of Culardoch while others bypassed the summit.

The winter meets of 1995 started off with the usual outing to Lochnagar. Unfortunately, for the third year running weather conditions were very poor and few attempted the climb. Of those who did, the maximum achievement was an ascent of the Meikle Tap. A large number opted for a walk to Ballater, one party doing a traverse of the Coyles of Muick. At Glen Clunie it was very foggy even at the car park, but despite this a wide variety of hills on both sides of the road were climbed. In contrast the excursion to Glen Clova had a brilliant sunny day but there was a heavy covering of soft snow which hampered progress. Most of the party attempted to go to Mayar via Corrie Fee but were forced to turn back as it was deemed too hazardous to attempt the climb out of the corrie. We also had a fairly bright day at the Linn of Dee although it was rather windy. The most popular route on this occasion was a traverse from north to south over Derry Cairngorm. Others did a more leisurely traverse over Creag Bhalg finishing at Allanaquoich and walking back to the Linn of Dee by the road.

The 1995 Easter Meet was held at Spean Bridge. On this occasion the weather was good to begin with on the Friday and Saturday, and quite a number of hills were climbed. The weather broke down on the Sunday with heavy rain and mist and several people went home. The hotel was reasonably comfortable but some of those attending thought that the meals were a bit meagre.

After Easter we had our first visit to Alltdourie since the new road was built there and had to park the bus in a new location behind the farm. Weatherwise it was quite a good day lower down but rather poor at a higher level, and this combined with soft snow conditions, prevented the main summit of Beinn a' Bhuidr being reached. Very few people attended the excursion to Beinn Chabhair which turned out to be a beautiful day, and everyone

reached the summit. One party also climbed An Caisteal. The one problem was that there was no suitable parking space for the bus at Inverarnan, so it had to go elsewhere and come back to meet us later. The excursion from Cockbridge to Tomintoul had reasonable weather, but there had been some heavy rain previously leading to high river levels. The main party had intended to climb Cnap Chaochan Aitinn and then to cross the Caiplich at the Castle, but were forced to change their plans and returned to Tomintoul via the ridge that runs northward between the valleys of the Avon and the Ailnack.

The 1995 overnighiter enjoyed the best weather of any in recent years. Approximately half the party got off the bus at the Cluanie Inn while the rest went on to Morvich. A wide variety of hills were climbed on both sides of Glen Affric. It was a beautiful night with the hills remaining clear while the valleys filled with mist. This event coincided with Aberdeen University's Quincentennial Challenge to climb all the Munros, and some of our members contributed substantially to that.

The autumn excursions of 1995 were all accompanied by rain in whole or in part. The first gave members the choice of doing either the Fungle or the Fir Mounth. This was a reasonably good day with clear views all around although there were a few nasty showers in the afternoon. The Cairngorm Traverse followed on immediately after some of the heaviest rain that any of us can remember. This might explain the ten last minute cancellations, making this quite the smallest group attending this excursion for a long time. Despite this the day was enjoyed by those who came. About half the party did the Lairig Ghru while the others went over Ben Macdhui and down Corrie Etchachan. There was about two hours of persistent rain during the afternoon but apart from this the day remained dry. River levels were still high three weeks later when we were due to go through Glen Tilt. The problem of fording the Geldie was avoided by setting out from the Linn of Dee along the south bank of the Dee. This avoided fording either the Geldie or the Bynack. The Allt an t-Seilich still had to be crossed but did not prove much of a problem. The excursion to Glen Lyon attracted a good crowd with about half climbing the Carn Maing group while the rest went to Stuc an Lochain. Glen Prosen to Glen Clova was also well attended but was unfortunately a rather misty day, if not quite as bad as on the previous time we did this route. On Ben Vrackie we had a very wet day but nevertheless everyone reached the top.

1996 began with Lochnagar and once again an unpleasant day. On this occasion however some members did reach the top, one of them by the Black Spout. At Morven we had a beautiful sunny day but had to contend with rather deep soft snow which made the going very difficult. Some members did reach the top while others contented themselves with more minor ascents such as Peters Hill. The following excursion to Inverey was also a good day with much less snow, at least on the lower slopes. On the Cairngorm outing four members had winter skills instruction from one of the Glenmore Lodge staff. Unfortunately this was a rather stormy day and those who attempted the higher tops were forced to turn back. At least one party did manage to climb Meall a' Bhuachaille, the Corbett to the north of Glenmore Lodge.

The 1996 Easter Meet was held at the Culaig Hotel in Lochinver. 26 people attended, most staying in the hotel with others in bed and breakfast establishments nearby. The weather was very windy for the whole weekend and this severely curtailed the amount of climbing done. One party did manage to climb Quinag. Other activities included exploring the caves at Inchnadamp and visiting the Falls of Kirkaig.

The first excursion after Easter was the Capel Mounth. It was a good day with members either following the watershed southwards as far as Loch Brandy or sticking to the right of

way route throughout. It was I am told, 250 years to the day since Lord Ogilvy's Regiment crossed here after the battle of Culloden, later to disband in Glen Clova. The outing to Glen Lochay was also attended by good weather and many hills were climbed on both sides of the glen, despite the rather short time available occasioned by a rather slow bus driver. The weather on the day of the Braeriach excursion was not so good with rain and mist, but despite this most of the party did climb the hill and had quite good views from the top.

The overnight walk was from Kinlochleven to Glen Nevis. It was a beautiful night with just a few patches of mist during the early morning when several parties saw brocken spectres. Everyone climbed at least one of the Mamores with at least one party climbing them all.

The drop in attendance mentioned in the first paragraph of this report has led to large losses being incurred. Out of 40 excursions, sixteen attracted less than 25 people and only three had more than forty (which used to be the average 20 years ago).

Graham Ewen

EXCURSIONS

1993

3 October	Linn of Dee to Blair Atholl (17)
24 October	Auchallater to Spital of Glenmuick (28)
13 November	Steplar Pass (23)
5 December	Clachnaben (28)

1994

9 January	Lochnagar (32)
30 January	Loch Lee (24)
19 February	Inverey (18)
13 March	Cockbridge (19)
24 April	Glas Tulaichan (30)
14 May	Schiehallion (33)
5 June	Cairnwell to Inverey (34)
25/26 June	Grey Corries/Creag Meagaidh (28)
28 August	Jocks Road (26)
17 September	Cairngorm Traverse (33)
9 October	Glen Feshie to Linn of Dee (32)
30 October	Ben Dorain (36)
26 November	Mount Battock (36)
11 December	Culardoch (28)

1995

15 January	Lochnagar (42)
5 February	Glen Clunie (27)
25 February	Glen Clova (18)
19 March	Linn of Dee (22)
23 April	Beinn a Bhuird (20)

13 May	Beinn Chabhair (11)
4 June	Cockbridge to Tomintoul (24)
24/25 June	Morvich to Affric (19)
27 August	Fungle or Fir Mounth (27)
10 September	Cairngorm Traverse (30)
1 October	Linn of Dee to Blair Atholl (22)
22 October	Glen Lyon (36)
11 November	Glen Prosen to Glen Clova (42)
3 December	Ben Vrackie (32)

1996

14 January	Lochnagar (47)
4 February	Morven (26)
25 February	Inverey (20)
16 March	Cairngorm (22)
21 April	Capel Mounth (32)
11 May	Glen Lochay (23)
1 June	Braeriach (27)
22/23 June	Mamores (22)

EASTER MEETS

1994	Dornie
1995	Spean Bridge
1996	Lochinver

WEEKENDS 1994 - 1996

This section of the Club's activities continues to flourish, but the fickleness of the weather experienced is only exceeded by the fickleness of numbers attending. The difficulties of booking the right amount of accommodation 12-18 months in advance has been mentioned before, and a policy requesting a sizeable deposit up front should help to reduce deficits from last minute cancellations. There were two major blips. A'Chuil Bothy failed to attract any takers in August 1994; are we becoming soft or does the (very) simple life not appeal any more? Carrbridge Bunkhouse had only three in March 1995, which in view of the toilet facilities was perhaps just as well. Craigellachie Lodge was a sell-out in March 1994.

Dundonnell/Sail Mhor in June 1995 was notable for the past lady President's final Munro. A group of loyal supporters entered the clouds at sea level, and continued to the requisite summits and back in continuous rain and minimal visibility. The current lady President's last Munro, Beinn Ime in August 1995, could not have been more of a contrast. A large gathering attended in tropical conditions - was it the prospect of a glass of champers at the top? Modesty forbids a full description of the degree of undress achieved.

Aite Cruinnichidh Backpackers Lodge, opposite Glen Spean Hotel (July 1994) can be recommended, even if it cannot be pronounced. It was a pity that a member wrote off his car on the switchback road alongside Loch Arkaig en route to Sgurr na Ciche; even there cars can come from the opposite direction. At Knockan in October 1994, we were indebted to the Grampian Speleological Group for accommodation, and relieved to discover that

this was above ground. Assynt is increasingly well provided for. We are booked into the new Inchnadamph Field Centre in October 1997, which is only 100 metres from licensed premises.

The Skywalker Independent Hostel at Portnalong also receives our recommendation. When we visited in May 1995 the weather was very variable - from light rain to continuous downpour. One useful tip is that the Sligachan Hotel will accept Visa or Access in payment of a pint of Murphy's if you leave your money at the hostel as I did. We filled the Coruisk Memorial Hut in July 1996. This outing was probably unique in as much as several normally stable Club members reported sighting a whale. So far no reports of pink elephants.

The end of the year outing has come by habit to be at Crianlarich Youth Hostel, chosen originally by certain members for its proximity to the charms of Inverarnan Hotel. 1996 and hopefully 1997 will be no exceptions. Join us later this year or in 1997, and be prepared to pay the deposit.

John Gibson

WEEKEND MEETS 1994 - 1996

1994

February	Muir
March	Newtonmore (Craigellachie Lodge)
May	Ossian YH
June	Dundonnell (Sail Mhor Croft)
July	Glen Spean (Aite Cruinnichidh Lodge)
August	A'Chuil Bothy
September	Morvich Outdoor Centre
October	Knockan
November	Crianlarich YH

1995

February	Muir
March	Carrbridge Bunkhouse
May	Skye (Skywalker Hostel, Portnalong)
June	Dundonnell (Sail Mhor Croft)
July	Knoydart (Inverie)
August	Arrochar
September	Arran
October	Ratagan YH
December	Crianlarich YH

1996

January	Muir
March	Achnashellach (Gerry Howkins Hostel)
May	Tongue YH
June	Culra Bothy
July	Skye (Coruisk Memorial Hut)
September	Torridon YH
December	Crianlarich YH

CLIMBING SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT

There were few official Club winter outings in 1994/95. However, individual members climbed several routes in the Cairngorms and further afield, covering a wide range of standards of difficulty. The summer of 1995, despite being one of the driest on record, saw little Club activity on the rock climbing front. Members who usually ran the weekly meets were unable to commit on a regular basis due to work commitments, although, once again, individual members managed to accomplish several worthwhile climbs.

This pattern continued through the winter of 1995/96, with no official Club winter climbing outings, but this summer has seen a much more satisfactory resurgence of interest. From the first week of May until the last week of July, members were active on the coast to the north of Cove, including those who had never climbed before, and those who needed reminding of former talents! These meets were highly successful, a factor which has been borne out by the number of times members have borrowed the Club climbing gear this year. At the start of the season, a new 11mm rope was purchased along with 2 quickdraws to aid the development of leading skills. These have been well used over the summer. Thanks must go to Graham Callander for his invaluable help in the running of these climbing sessions.

Stuart Stronach

THE LIBRARY

The library is now housed in Aberdeen University Library's Special Collections Department, the location of which is given along with a Catalogue elsewhere in this Journal. Whilst the move from 24 Albyn Place in May 1993 was not initially of the Club's choice, the new home has undoubtedly brought significant benefits to our collection. With the books now housed in a proper library we are in the fortunate position of benefiting from a location safe from the vagaries of the weather and people (!) where experienced staff, in particular Iain Beavan, are able to not only offer restoration advice but also to catalogue the entire collection. AUL staff were amazed at the breadth of our collection, which now stands at 793 individual books in addition to several Journals, pamphlets and old maps. Several of the older books are priceless not only in terms of their monetary value but also in their recording of Grampian's past.

An early priority after the initial settling-in was the conservation and restoration of some of these older books and it was particularly fitting that a bequest from our former Librarian, Jean Callendar was used to this end. AUL staff also offered advice on the binding of several extensive runs of other Clubs' journals and in the deposition of a collection of several hundred, vulnerable, glass photographic slides of views in Grampian and Scotland from earlier this century.

The recent cataloguing of the books into the AUL's computer system has greatly enhanced our knowledge of what the Club actually possesses and should any member wish a computer disk version (in Microsoft Word 6) of this it is available from the Librarian. It should be made clear that the whole Collection remains the property, and responsibility of the Club, that only Club members can borrow books, and that Aberdeen University only provide a place for the keeping of the books - though members of the University can refer to the books in the Library.

Ken Forbes

REMINISCENCES FROM THE PRESIDENT

I joined the Cairngorm Club in 1965 at the same time as Margaret Gauld, and Ken and Tibby Fraser. It was an awe inspiring occasion to attend a Club meet with senior members Messrs. Bothwell, Gerstenberg and Hay aboard. The gentlemen always changed at the rear of the bus after the day on the hill, emerging properly dressed with collar and tie. The bus then proceeded to the excellent Craighendaroch Hotel in Ballater for high tea. Those were the days!

Back then there were only Bus and Easter Meets. Later an annual Skye week occurred, probably the precursor of present Weekend meets. These were memorable not only for days spent on the Cuillins, but for Lizetta's apple pie beds, Shelagh's enormous carry-outs from Sligachan and Bill's 'Scrabble' in French. Nowadays we have regular weekend meets with varied venues, and have a week in Majorca planned for October 1996.

The Club decided to improve and enlarge Muir of Inverey, having given up the lease on Derry lodge. Peter Howgate, as Huts Custodian oversaw members assisting with many tasks to have Muir ready for it's re-opening ceremony in 1972. The present booking letter mentions 4 folding beds in the little sitting room, but during renovations slept many more! Happy family weeks swimming in the river and introducing the children to the hills came later. The work weekend/week instigated by Eddie Martin finds members displaying hidden talents from which Muir benefits.

A mariner came to the 1971 Skye week and changed my way of life. Up to this time all my weekends were spent in the hills walking or ski-ing, and I was well on the way to climbing all the Munros. However I was whisked off to sea for a few years, coming ashore only for leave and to have two children. I discovered it is possible to mix marriage, children and the hills. Club bus meets were a blessing and the children learned to ski. Past President Gillian Shirreffs started the mid-week walks to enable mums of school children to enjoy time in the hills. Now this has grown into a regular monthly Club meet superbly organised by Bill Alexander and sister Jean.

In 1987 when the centenary of the Club was celebrated, the overnight meet was to Ben Macdhuì, the Shelter Stone and Dairymaid's Field, returning to a buffet and barbecue for 300 at Muir. Terry and Mary recall Robbie overseeing the husking of thousands of strawberries. Gillian Shirreffs and I decided that although we would not climb Ben Macdhuì on the 150th anniversary, our children might, so they came with us (aged 9 and 11) to camp by Loch Etchachan and take part in the celebrations.

Nine years after our Centenary, results can be seen in Glen Ey, where Piper's Wood was enclosed by fencing to allow the silver birch wood to regenerate. Some trees are now two metres high and adders are plentiful.

Graham Ewen seems to have been organising Club bus meets in his quiet, efficient way for ever. Despite analysing figures from past years, he can find no valid reason for the fluctuating number of people attending. Lochnagar and the Cairngorm traverse are always popular meets, and members suggestions for others are always welcome.

I attended my first Easter meet this year, as for once I was not away ski-ing. The weather was not too good but the company was, and I would recommend the meet to all members. There is no need to stay in the hotel since there is usually budget accommodation nearby. See the updated Huts and Hostels list in this journal.

The Club is flourishing with all its various activities, and continues to be heavily involved in environmental matters. Most recently this has included draining the Coire Etchachan footpath and consultations with the National Trust for Scotland regarding the future of Mar Lodge estate.

Looking back over my years in the Cairngorm Club, they have been happy and memorable ones. I can only hope that others who join can derive as much pleasure from it as I have done, and that they will put their efforts in to the well being of our Club.

Judy Middleton

BOOK REVIEWS

On The Other Side Of Sorrow: Nature and People in the Scottish Highlands, James Hunter. Mainstream, 1996. £17.50

James Hunter is the author of *The Making of the Crofting Community* and several other books on the Highlands and its people. He was also the founding director of the Scottish Crofters Union. *On The Other Side Of Sorrow* looks at the roots of conflict between Highlanders and environmentalists - Highlanders whose Gaelic culture demonstrated a strong environmental awareness a thousand years ago and environmentalists whose ideas owe much to nineteenth century romanticism. Drawing on his wide knowledge of the history and literature of the Highlands in support of his argument, the author suggests that the interests of Highlander and environmentalist are not as diametrically opposed as is sometimes assumed and that revitalised Highland communities can offer the best hope of restoring biological diversity to a devastated countryside. "If it makes sense to reinstate Scots pines to settings from which Scots pines are today known to have been artificially stripped, might it not be equally acceptable...to restore people to some at least of the many glens from which human beings were removed...? Is there not as good a case for the social rehabilitation of our glens as for their ecological restoration?" Sensitive environments can only be sustained with the support and commitment of local communities. The challenge for environmentalists is to work with communities and not against them. *On The Other Side Of Sorrow* offers a vision that such a coming together could take place in the Highlands. The protection and nurturing of a unique but threatened environment could also be the vehicle to redress the historic injustices suffered by the indigenous population of the Highlands.

W.A.C.

The Voice of the Hills, The Story of Ben Humble MBE, Roy M Humble. Pentland Press, 1996. £17.50.

The Voice of the Hills is the remarkable story of Ben Humble who overcame total deafness to become one of the pioneers of Mountain Rescue in Scotland. The author, since his uncle's death in 1977, has had access to everything ever written by Ben, and has used his notes to such effect that the book is almost autobiographical. He served as one of the first voluntary instructors at the Scottish National Sports Centre at Glenmore Lodge in the Cairngorms, and my reason for approaching this book with such interest, was because this was where I met him. I was a teenager sent up by my school in Clackmannanshire for one of these new courses in the 1950's. I am only one of many who have him to thank for happy memories of bivouacking at the Shelter Stone and learning to hill walk, navigate and orienteer competently. He was a crusty character, his deafness a handicap which frustrated his bright mind. He refused to learn to lip read but, relying on his intuition and scribbled notes, was an able communicator.

This book describes his early life in Dunbarton and his first career in dentistry. I was surprised, as a fellow dentist, to read of his significant contribution to early dental radiology and forensic dentistry. In spite of his success in this field, he gradually turned to journalism, photography and books of which he wrote six, including a now classic history of mountaineering in Skye. His whole life had turned on a trip to that island in 1929 when by

chance he met John MacKenzie, a pioneer of climbing in the Cuillin. His tales of way-faring (he disliked the modern word 'hiking') and howffing make amusing reading, and he was an early advocate of Scottish Youth Hostels. His true legacy is his contribution to safety in the hills. He was involved in the Mountain Safety Committee from its inception in 1936 and played a large role in the formation of the Mountain Rescue Committee of Scotland, foreseeing the rise in climbers numbers even then. He was their accident recorder for many years, creating an invaluable fund of safety and rescue data.

This book is for anyone who loves the hills of Scotland. To see them through the eyes of this gritty and independent Scot whose life was a response to the challenge of deafness, is an inspiring story. The only voice he could hear, the voice of the hills, will be familiar to all Cairngorm Club members too.

E.M.M.

The Joy of Hillwalking, Ralph Storer. Luath Press, 1994. £6.95.

Another very readable volume of short stories from the publishers who gave us the unforgettable 'Mountain Days and Bothy Nights'. It is just as inspiring and is an encouraging departure from the usual R. Storer format of the guide book. There is a subject here for everyone, be it camping, the elements, flora and fauna, scrambling or accidents. Even food and sex, they are all there. In 'Snow' he observes 'You're going to find this hard to believe, but there are actually people out there, fellow human beings who don't like snow'. He then goes on to suggest that a genetic defect may be to blame. Always asking questions, he made me sit up and consider my own attitude to the stuff, and this book is constantly doing that. Whether you agree or not, his often very humorous politics are always there. His mileage is never in doubt.

If you like the hills but have not been out for a while, this book should inspire you. If not there's always the Brookside omnibus or cleaning out the toaster. The Titcomb Basin, Curved Ridge, avoiding groves of succulent berries, it's all in this excellent well priced volume. The Luath Press strikes again.

D.H.B.

Exploring the Highlands of Scotland, Stephen Whitehorn. Wardlock, 1995. £16.99.

Well here it is, yet another Guide to help you explore the Scottish Highlands. Having said that, this is a high quality volume and some of the photographs within its 190 pages are quite superb. Whether you fancy Sandwood Bay or Ben Hope in the far north, Lochnagar by the Staic Buttress nearer home, Ben Venue or a rugged lochside walk on the Isle of Skye, there is something here for all in the 32 walks. The book employs a grading system based on conditions from late spring to autumn, with no allowance given for significant snow cover.

I really expected not to like this book, with its 'walk 200yds, turn sharp R' approach, but it appears very well researched. There are useful pieces of information in the Overview/Interest sections which accompany each route. Duration times and relevant rail, bus and postbus services are given along with expected underfoot conditions. I'd borrow it rather than buy, or recommend it to those who appreciate having their walks planned for them.

D.H.B.

Burn on the Hill. The Story of the first 'Compleat Munroist, Elizabeth Allan. Bidean Books, 1995. £17.80.

Many of us are aware that the Rev. A.E. Robertson was the first 'Munroist', but who knows the first person to have visited all the 500 or so tops over 3,000 feet listed in 'The Tables'? This was the Rev. Ronald Burn who accomplished the feat in 1923 when he was 36 years old. He has been rescued from somewhat undeserved obscurity by means of this entertaining mini-biography written and published in limited edition by Elizabeth Allan, herself a hill walker. His obituary in the SMC Journal says he was 'a most interesting and striking personality', though perhaps a more accurate description would be eccentric. This book is based largely on a set of his recently discovered diaries, describing his hill walking exploits between 1914 and 1927. Despite being of small stature, with a permanently bent back and handicapped by what seems to have been poor diet and equipment, it is clear that he possessed prodigious energy and stamina, and could cover ground at amazing speed. However, I found the most interesting aspect of his diaries is their description of the country people he met on his walks. He was in the habit of overnighing at remote, still inhabited cottages. Since he had the Gaelic and was intensely interested in folklore and place names, he established a close relationship with many keepers, shepherds, estate workers and their families. Thus place names such as Pait, Camban, Dessary, Alltbeithe, Lochivraon and Corrou, which are now ruins, bothies, hostels or submerged, come vividly to life. Elizabeth adds considerably to this by assembling a nice group of photographs which illustrate several of the people and places mentioned. As you progress through the book, you glimpse much harder, more self-reliant and more slowly placed communities than exist today. I was intrigued to learn that even up to around 1920 the postie walked twice a week from Morvich to Altbeithe (Glen Affric) via Glen Lichd and the Bealach an Sgairne - a round trip of 18 miles!

Being laced with social history and character portrayal, this is a mountain book with a difference. Although Elizabeth leaves us wondering about meanings and chronology at a few places, her book is a good read (note her punning title) and is recommended. It has local interest as well: Ronald was born at Old Deer, though he spent most of his life in England, and Elizabeth lives at Westhill.

J.J.C.

Mountain Footfalls: a Calendar of the Scottish Hills, Ian Mitchell, Mercat Press. 1996. £8.99

From a Burns Supper (with exploding haggis) in Corryhully to Hogmanay at the Slugain Howff, the Scottish hills and their bothies feature again in a month by month account of hill-going adventure (and sometimes misadventure) which is Ian Mitchell's latest contribution to mountain literature. Strenuous days and convivial nights are once again the order of the day - with Corbetts appearing more often than in previous books. Perhaps the most interesting aspect of *Mountain Footfalls*, however, is the sub-theme - what the author describes as 'echoes'. The Highlands, which the great ecologist Frank Fraser Darling described as 'a devastated landscape', were not always as empty of people as they are today. Although the destruction of the Gaelic culture of the Highlands and the systematic removal of the bulk of its population took place largely in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, pockets of population remained until relatively recent times. The 'echoes' of the

past which run parallel with the doings of Mitchell and his friends explore the memories of some of the last survivors of these communities - as well as focusing on some better-known figures such as Maggie Gruer of Inverey and Bob Scott of Luibeg. Access and ownership issues, too, come in for attention. In his consideration of the 'Battle of Glen Tilt' and the far-sighted attempts of Cairngorm Club President James Bryce to get his 'Access to Moors and Mountain Bill' through Parliament at the beginning of this century, or of the Letterewe Accord and the involvement of the great Scottish socialist John Maclean with the Lewis land raids of 1920, Mitchell has given this book a context which is much wider than that of his earlier works.

W.A.C.

Storms of Silence, Joe Simpson. Cape, 1995. £17.99.

Joe Simpson first came to public prominence following publication of his book 'Touching the Void' - a highly compelling account of an escape from the clutches of death. What appears in this book as the focused nature of the man, is central to the story and to his survival. The reader admires the man if not necessarily the author. Simpson's next book 'A Game of Ghosts' is autobiographical in nature - a succession of amazing escapes from positions of danger. The reader visualises a young daredevil climber who has long since used up any cat-like allocation of nine lives. The exploits go well beyond the average person's experience. Recognising that such will to survive requires an impressive degree of egocentricity the reader can excuse it.

What then of 'Storms of Silence'? This is a book divided into two parts: one long, one short. In the first Simpson describes trips to Gangchempo and Cho Oyo in Nepal. In the second he describes a trip to Peru as a guide on a commercial expedition. In part one, Simpson by now the notorious victim of numerous broken bones, fails to make either summit and indeed in both cases goes only a very little way beyond base camp. The reader, no longer carried along by triumph over adversity, gets a closer look at the man. Stripped of the glamour of adventure he appeared, in my opinion, wanting. Part one left me with an impression of a book padded out to fill the requisite number of pages, written by one who recognised his self-centred attitude but could no longer find either outlet or escape from it. Frankly I found it irritating. In this section Simpson describes pubs, an encounter with an attractive female school teacher, drunks in Llanberis and the ethics of chess. Deprived of the summits he so clearly craves, he seeks to find himself among the burning Ghats of India and passing Tibetan refugees. Change is difficult to achieve. The character which I found so evident in this book remains to the fore. Simpson, on a glacier below Cho Oy, dismisses a collapsed Tibetan with the words "we're climbers not baby sitters". He is clear that a climber does need to be selfish to succeed. Simpson's book demonstrates the problems faced by climbers when physical limitations restrict their ability to succeed.

Part two of the book is more hopeful. Simpson moderates his ambitions and those who pick up this type of book to read of ascents and summits can enjoy the description of the ascent of Ranrapalca. Simpson's female encounter in this section (with a Belgian woman whose husband had recently disappeared on a climbing trip) shows a softening of the hard and frustrated image of the earlier pages. I could have done without his musings on the problems of the world at large, but that aside, found the second part of the book much less annoying than the first.

These days there is so much mountain literature. 'Storms of Silence' does stand out

because it is different. I would not say, however, that I enjoyed it. Deprived of his climbing exploits I was not left with a picture of a person or an author I could admire.

M.G.

Scotland's Mountains: an Agenda for Sustainable Development, Andy Wightman. Scottish Wildlife and Countryside Link, 1996. £4.00 (Available from SWCL at PO Box 64, Perth PH2 0TE)

Commissioned by SWCL on behalf of a number of conservation and recreation agencies with an interest in the ongoing debate over the future management of Scotland's mountain areas, this booklet was produced to coincide with the meeting of the European Intergovernmental Consultation on Sustainable Mountain Development which took place in Aviemore in April 1996. In his introduction, SWCL Chairman Michael Scott says "We hope that this report will help to inform guests in Scotland for this meeting about the special qualities of the Scottish mountains, and also remind all who care for these mountains that, although Scotland may be geographically peripheral, we can and must have a central role in driving forward sustainable policies for all mountain development." Andy Wightman provides an excellent summary of the issues facing Scotland's mountain areas and one which is beautifully illustrated. He is keenly aware of the failures of policy under successive governments, which have led conservation agencies to become landowners themselves in order to protect and sustain threatened environments and species, and he is not overcome by enthusiasm for the present government's adoption of the 'voluntary principle' as the solution to these problems. The closing pages offer a 'Scottish Agenda for Sustainable Development' with eight specific proposals which address such issues as land use, public ownership, involvement of mountain communities and strategic planning, but the most telling comment comes at the very end when Wightman writes "We have the opportunity to transform Scotland's mountain country into an area capable of standing scrutiny against international environmental standards, and one which can also provide a high quality environment for economic development, wildlife and unrivalled recreation. All that is needed is political will."

W.A.C.



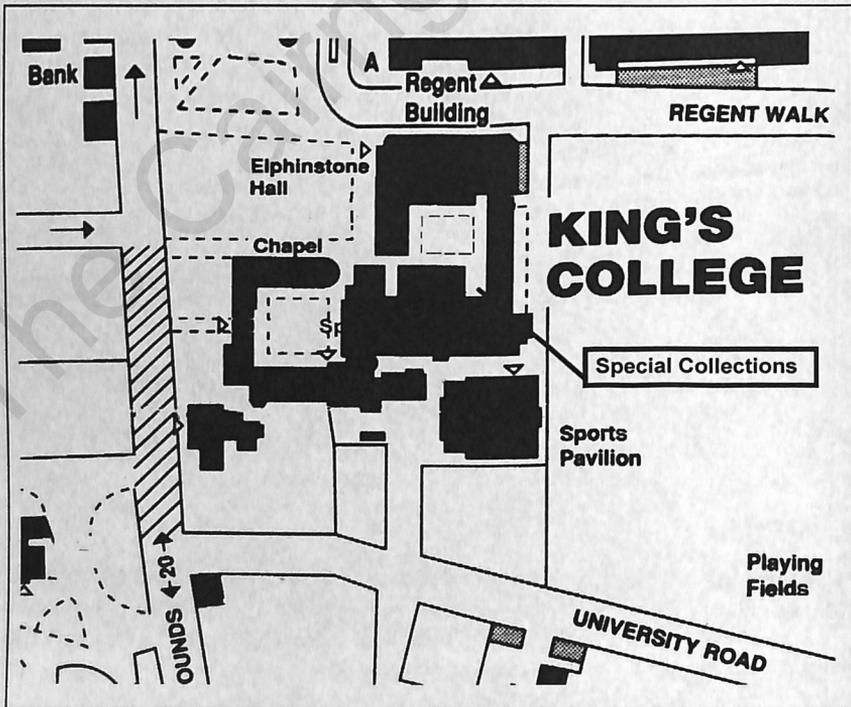
CONTRIBUTIONS

All contributions will be considered for the Journal, and the Editor reserves the right to edit, abridge or omit material submitted for publication. Main articles should be between 1,500 and 3,000 words in length and shorter ones are welcome. Articles on computer disk are particularly appreciated, and contributors should contact the editor in advance, so that computer formats are compatible.

THE CAIRNGORM CLUB LIBRARY

Catalogue of books arranged by author as at May 1996.

The Cairngorm Club library is held in the Special Collections Department of Aberdeen University Library which is adjacent to Elphinstone Hall in Old Aberdeen. It is generally open from 9.30am until 4.30pm on weekdays. Books are held in two areas. Those books published after 1960 and complete runs of CCJ and the SMCJ are to be found on 'open shelving' and can be borrowed immediately. Books published before 1930 and other journals and pamphlets are held in a restricted area but can also be viewed and borrowed if prior warning is given to the Special Collections Department (☎: 272929). Those books of intermediate date could be held in either area though with greater likelihood of their being in the area holding books nearest to their publication date, and with popular books being held in the 'open area'. Books can only be borrowed by members on production of a current membership card and should be returned within two months either to the Special Collections Department, at Club indoor meets, or to the Club librarian.



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