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THE SCOTTISH MOUNTAINEERING CLUB JOURNAL.

EDITED BY

J. H. B. BELL



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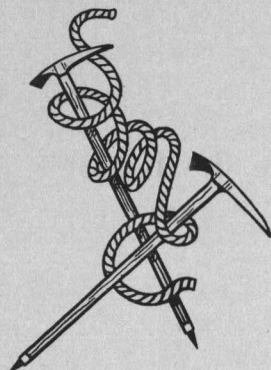
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THE Committee and the Hon. Editor beg to submit this proposed new cover for the consideration and approval of members. Comments are invited before and at the approaching Annual General Meeting. It has been felt that the printing of the Contents on the front page will be a convenience to readers and a help towards Sales of the Journal. In response to requests at the last Annual Meeting, the Rope and Axes design has been incorporated in a slightly modified and reduced form. The printing of the Contents on the outside front cover is, indeed, but a reversion to the practice in the earliest numbers of the Journal. The type heading is different and the word SCOTTISH now appears in bold type. Type headings of articles within the Journal would also appear in correspondingly bolder type. It is further proposed to print the Journal on a somewhat lighter, but equally opaque paper of the same quality as at present. The reduction in weight should be about 20 per cent. Complaints have been received of the excessive weight of bound volumes, and the question of running four instead of six numbers to a volume may have to be considered. Finally, it is proposed to supply an abbreviated but still adequate form of Index.

THE EDITOR.



24th April 1937

BEN MACDHUI

Hon. Mark Watson

A perfect south slope with "Spring Snow." Cairn Toul and Angels' Peak beyond

THE SCOTTISH Mountaineering Club Journal.

VOL. XXI.

NOVEMBER 1938

No. 126.

SCOTTISH MOUNTAINEERING AND ITS RELATION TO MOUNTAINEERING ABROAD.

VI.—SKI-RUNNING.

By H. MACROBERT.

ALTHOUGH the Scottish Ski Club was founded in 1907 it was not until comparatively recently that the sport became really popular in this country. The Club's activities had entirely ceased during the war, and its revival in 1929 was largely due to the enterprise and enthusiasm of those skiers who had learnt their craft in Switzerland. Whereas the original Club was modelled on Norwegian lines on a touring or cross-country basis, the modern Club was more Alpine in its ideas, and at first was rather inclined towards what is known as the "downhill only" method; that is, up by funicular, where available, and down on ski, thus cutting out all climbing and incidentally all wandering and exploring. The founders of the Club, among whom were Dr W. S. Bruce, the Antarctic Explorer, R. M. Rudmose Brown, our own member Sir Henry Alexander, and Dr J. H. Wigner, naturally were imbued with the Norwegian idea that ski were primarily for the purpose of travel over snowclad lands, not necessarily mountainous or even hilly country. The first honorary member of the Club was Nansen, and in the letter to him at the Norwegian Legation in London thanking him for accepting Honorary Membership occurs the following: "The formation of

the S.S.C. is the latest phase in the movement which was started by the publication of your book describing the 'First Crossing of Greenland.' " The technique of ski-ing on the level and up hill had been carefully studied and developed in Scandinavia, as it was here and not in the downhill parts that time was gained or lost in a cross-country race of, say, 50 kilometres. This type of race is known as a Langlauf, and the Norwegians, Swedes, and Finns are still unrivalled in this branch of the sport. The early skiers in Scotland, therefore, used their ski more as a means of transport than as a new form of tobogganing, and in this light it seemed to many of them that the conditions in Scotland were not such as to make the game worth the candle. In other words, one could cover the ground on foot as quickly and easily as on ski. Harold Raeburn, whose experience of ski dated back to 1892, was never enthusiastic as regards their use in Scotland. He first introduced me to ski-ing in 1905 on the Pentlands. The ski were long and narrow, with a thong binding, and our efforts were not very successful, although we created some surprise by ski-ing down the tramway lines to Morningside Station on our way home about midnight. He looked on them entirely from the Norwegian point of view and was not impressed. Naismith, on the other hand, had an eye for their use in the Alps amongst steep slopes where one was either laboriously climbing up or hilariously rushing down. In Vol. II. (1892) of the *Journal* he writes of his ski-ing on the Campsie Fells near Glasgow, and adds: "In the Alps it is not unlikely that the sport may eventually become popular." Again later, in 1909, he writes: "Will the younger members who have not yet tried ski-ing allow an old fogey to urge them to take up a sport which bids fair to become a formidable rival of the axe and rope during the winter months."

In the same year, in Vol. X., appeared an article by Allan Arthur, "Ski-Running in Scotland," in which the Swiss influence is distinctly seen, and the more modern or Alpine school clearly indicated. Notes on ski-ing in the Cairngorms also appear in that volume and well-

known names are mentioned—Henry Alexander, J. A. Parker, and the brothers Henry and A. M. Kellas. Reference should also be made to the amusing article by W. Rickmer Rickmers in Vol. VIII., "Aquatic Sport on Ben Nevis," which tells of attempts to ski at Easter, 1904, on the Ben in spite of continuous floods of rain. Although this missionary effort by Herr Rickmers was not very successful, he followed it up by presenting about twelve pairs of ski to the Club for the use of any member interested in this new development of mountain craft. These ski were on a new Alpine model, the Lillienfeldt, designed by Zdarsky, an Austrian, one of the pioneers of ski-ing in the Alps. They were short, rigid, and heavy, and the metal sole-plate hinged at the toe was controlled by a powerful steel spring imbedded in the ski! The idea was that short ski and a different technique were essential for dealing with the steep slopes in the Alps, and Zdarsky's school were certainly adept in a slow and clumsy style, which necessitated considerable dependence on a large pole when turning and stemming. This school had a short life, as some of our Scandinavian friends, on hearing reports, went to the Alps to investigate, and whilst skimming and swinging round the "Zdarskyites," had ample opportunity of studying their laborious efforts. One might say that by 1914 the Norwegian style had adapted itself to Alpine conditions, and since that date the Central European ski-ers have so perfected their methods as to become the finest downhill racers in the world.

In the old days the only snow worth ski-ing on was soft snow, and Raeburn regretfully points out that soft snow is seldom found in the Scottish mountains, except immediately after a snowfall. Nowadays very few of the winter sport enthusiasts in Switzerland can ski on soft snow. They perform marvels on all sorts of wind-blown, caked, and trampled snow, and even on what is practically ice, but deep, heavy snow completely ties them in knots. The reason is that at popular resorts the practice slopes after a fall of snow are at once beaten and trampled hard and firm by hundreds of ski. They learn

on this hard, smooth surface and they prefer to ski on it. The most popular and the easiest turn is the stem-christiania, and the easiest snow to do this on is hard snow. The christiania is a skid turn and ski skid more readily on hard snow.

It is easy to understand, therefore, how this change in style and outlook has favoured the development of skiing in Scotland. In pre-war days in Scotland very few of the ski-ers could really ski as we understand it now. They could run fast and straight in soft snow and some could do a telemark turn and some a stemming turn, but the modern hard-snow technique was, one may say, unknown. Hence most of the skiing consisted in cross-country tramps on ski over reasonably steep slopes down which, with the aid of sticks and stemming, one could run comparatively slowly even over the hard wind-blown crust usually found on our Scottish hills.

The Scottish Ski Club in 1907 had about 100 members, and in 1914, 228. Our members had played an important part in the development, and at the outbreak of war both the President and the Hon. Secretary were members of the S.M.C., while G. R. Donald was its first Secretary. I have a photograph of a group at Killin Hotel at the New Year Meet, 1909, in which are prominently displayed three pairs of ski. The ski-ers were W. W. Naismith, Raeburn, and a guest, C. W. J. Tennant. The weather was bad and the snow scarce, and very little skiing was done. At the Easter Meet, 1909, Naismith and Allan Arthur carried their ski up Ben Nevis from the arête and ran and crashed down the slopes of the Red Burn. Various excursions were done in 1911 and 1912 from Aberdeen, around Tyndrum and on the Monadh Liath at Newtonmore, but at Easter, 1913, the S.M.C. Meet at Aviemore had a very strong skiing flavour. Several members tried the new sport here for the first time in brilliant weather and perfect snow. One party crossed from Glenmore Lodge over Cairn Gorm and Ben Macdhui to Derry Lodge, returning next day by Carn Ban and Sgoran Dubh. Several parties were on the Drumochter Hills, and here were met members of the

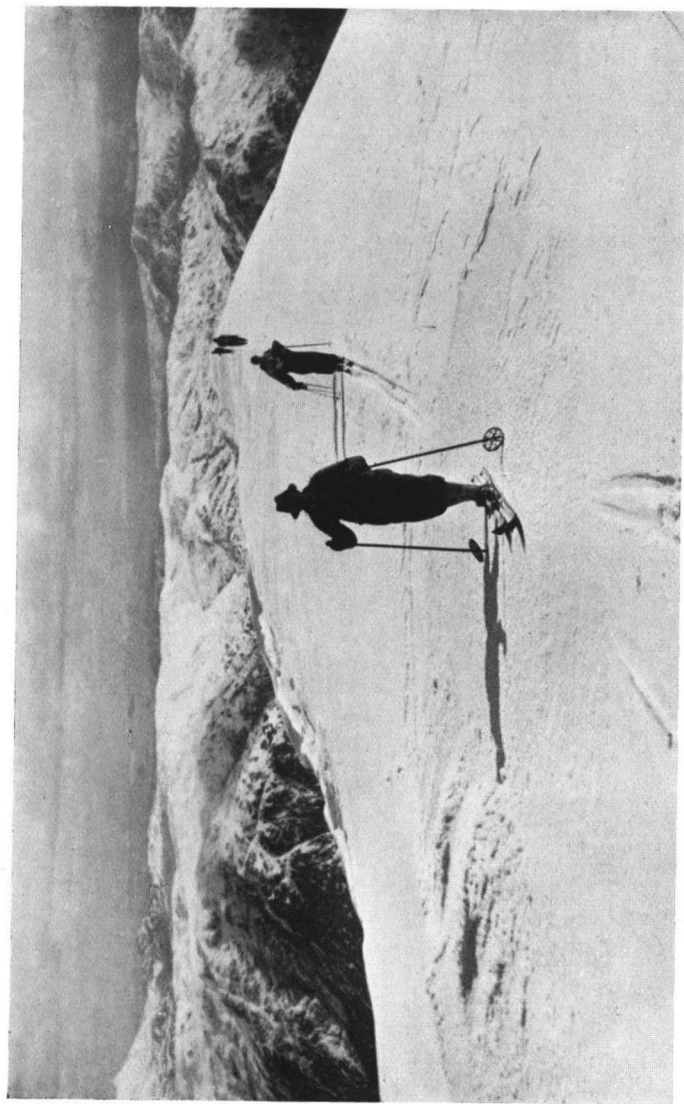


21st March 1937

ON STOB COIRE AN LOCHAN

H. MacRobert

Looking S.-E. across Balquhiddy to Ben Voirlich and Stuc a' Chroin. Easy powder snow on old hard crust



21st March 1937

ON STOB COIRE AN LOCHAN

A typical summit ridge with crusted, blown, and drifted snow, but quite skiable

S. Macgregor

Ski Club of Great Britain. All these excursions were cross-country expeditions, but more attention was now being paid to the technique of the sport. Tests were being held, and a ski jump was constructed near Dalwhinnie. Undoubtedly, but for the war, ski-ing would have taken a firm root in Scotland. As it was, a series of snowless winters after the war gave little encouragement to the few enthusiasts, but the tremendous development of winter sport in Switzerland was gradually building up a potential membership for the Club if ever it should be revived. At the Easter Meet at Aviemore in 1922 there were only two pairs of ski on view. The party distinguished itself by climbing Braeriach and Sgoran Dubh on the same day, both from the Lower Bothy, and walking home by Loch an Eilein in the evening. This was a poor show as compared with 1913! The snowless years continued till 1929, but thereafter matters improved, and as the Ski Club had been revived in November 1929 (largely owing to S.M.C. members), those responsible had evidently chosen the psychological moment. Dr Inglis Clark continued as President, but the Secretary, George Sang, retired, leaving two of our members as Secretary and Treasurer. The S.M.C. Easter Meet at Aviemore, 1930, was a great success from the ski-ing point of view. Several members had their ski with them, and once again we had several members of the Ski Club of Great Britain. Very fine running was had on Braeriach, and even the steep, hard slopes leading down to Loch Einich were tackled successfully. By October 1930 the new Club had a membership of 107, and since then it has increased steadily year by year until it now numbers about 400. The only really bad season until 1938 was 1932, the year of the "Come to Winter Sports in Scotland"! 1937 was perhaps the best and 1938 certainly the worst.

These last few years have shown that ski-ing is really worth while in Scotland, and I attribute the success of the sport in these years to two factors—first, the motor-car, and second, the greatly improved standard of ski-ing on hard, wind-swept or icy snow. The motor-car has

brought the ski-ing ground within easy access of our big cities, and the improved hard-snow technique has enabled average ski-ers to compete successfully with the average snow conditions found on our Scottish hills in the winter and spring months. From December to April every week-end crowds of ski-ers are to be found on the Pentlands, the Campsies, at Killin or Crianlarich, at Braemar and the Dee Valley, and as far afield as Dalwhinnie, Aviemore, and Fort William. The most popular resort is Killin, owing to the Lochan na Lairige road which rises to 1,800 feet as it crosses over to Glen Lyon. On Saturdays and Sundays forty to fifty cars may be found packed together on the Ski Club's parking grounds at the roadside at a height of 1,500 feet, with the Tarmachans to the west and Beinn Ghlas and Meall Corranaich to the east. In the corrie between these last two at a height of 2,500 feet is the Ski Club Hut, a simple wooden hut about 20 feet by 12 feet. This hut acts as a shelter and meeting-place, and has proved to be the focus of the Club's activities on the hills, apart from special Meets farther afield. Here will be found in all conditions of weather, from soaking rain to freezing blizzards, crowds of ski-ers of both sexes, sometimes groping their way through dense mists, sometimes fighting their way up under really foul conditions, and at other times scattered all over the slopes of Ghlas and Lawers enjoying the very best Swiss conditions. The great majority of these ski-ers have probably started under very different conditions at a Swiss winter sport resort. There they put on their ski at the hotel door, and in brilliant sunshine have spent their early days on the Nursery Slopes. From this they have graduated by way of a funicular or mountain railway to a small "expedition," which means running down some 2,000 feet on a well-beaten track, with a "pub" at the start and several at the finish! They have ski-ed in trousers and a light shirt, or even less, and they have never been bothered by a rucksack. And now what meets them when they have been prevailed on to try a day at, say, Killin? They rise early on a cold, dull morning; they

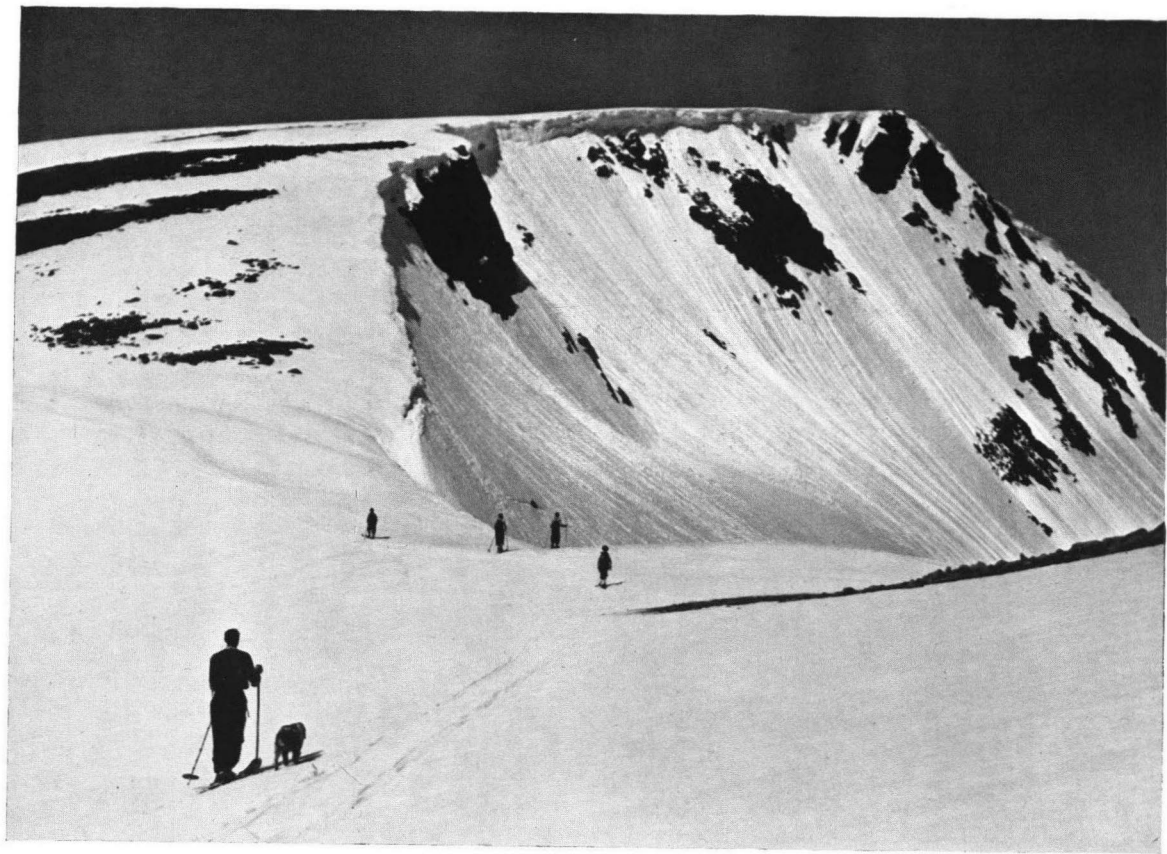
motor 70 or 80 miles over snowy, rutted, and muddy roads; they arrive chilled to the bone on a wind-swept moor. If they have been well-advised they will have with them their warmest clothes, and a rucksack full of spare gloves and woollies. With two heavy ski over their shoulders they will trail for an hour or two up interminable slopes of heather and snow. If the day is really bad they may lunch in the Hut; if it is only unpleasant the top of Beinn Ghlas may be the chosen spot. And then the exhausted and probably disillusioned enthusiast, after a hurried meal, is invited to follow the leader down what appears to be a precipitous scree slope with a few patches of snow glimmering forlornly through the mist. The snow, however, is hard and he likes the feel of it. He shoots down after the party and "christys" with some skill through a gap in the rocks, and finds to his surprise quite a large field of snow. Although the angle is horrid the snow is splendid, and his spirits rise rapidly as he finds his turns coming off and the lack of light not too troublesome. Then suddenly he crashes on a patch of ice, and recovers to find that his party have traversed to the right to avoid this nasty bit and are rapidly disappearing down a narrow lane of snow with fearsome rocks on either side. But now his blood is up, and down he shoots entering into the spirit of this new game. Now they are out of the mist and the lower moor is spread before them. The leader has chosen his route cunningly and is heading for a snow-filled water-course which stretches a mile or so across the moor. Then follows what is called "heather and grass" technique! Ski run quite well over sodden grass, and heather jumping is soon acquired, so that what appeared on the way up to be bare moorland now resolves itself into a series of snow patches which the ski-er has little difficulty in connecting up. And so back to the car again. That is a bad day.

A good day on ski on the Scottish hills at Easter is quite a different matter. One may have to carry for an hour or so, but then old snow gullies or patches will be reached when ski can be put on, and with the help of

skins climbing is easier than on foot owing to the better rhythm. Naturally the big, rounded, grassy mountains are the best, and easily first come the Cairngorms, then the Drumochter Hills from Dalwhinnie, the Glas Maol group from the Devil's Elbow, Creag Meaghaidh and the Monadh Liadth, and farther south the Ben Lawers group. Individual hills are Aonach Mor from the north, Chno Dearg at Loch Treig from Fersit, Meall a'Bhuiridh of Clachlet, Stobinian and Stob Coire an Lochan from Loch Doine, and Ben Dubhchraig from Crianlarich.

The easiest snow to ski on is probably what we call "spring snow," *i.e.*, old snow almost *névé*, made wet on the surface by a hot sun or rain. This snow is like wet, coarse, granular sugar, and is astonishingly fast. Moreover ski skid and turn on it easily, and as it seldom varies in texture it is ideal for ski-ing. When unmelted on the surface owing to a cold north wind, it is still good to ski on, but very steep slopes should be treated with caution by the ski-runner, as it must be remembered he has no ice-axe to stop an involuntary slide. Now this spring snow is what one hopes to meet with during March and April, or April and May, according to the season. Sometimes it may be covered with a light coating of new snow, and this improves the surface if it otherwise would be the hard, unmelted *névé*. In any case the runner who can stem and has mastered the stem-christiania will be able to tackle all the mountains referred to above with ease if not always with grace.

Round about Easter, then, the climber who wants some ski-ing should go to the Cairngorms. The best approaches are by Glenmore Lodge in the north, the Feshie Valley in the west, and Derry Lodge in the south. The eastern Cairngorms can be approached by Braemar and Slugan Lodge, or by Lochbuie Lodge, but the ski-ing here is not so good as in the western group. Braeriach is, in fact, the finest ski-ing mountain in the country, but it is not so accessible as Cairn Gorm or Sgoran Dubh, as the private road to the Lower Bothy is not open to motor-car traffic. A car can usually be got up to Glenmore Lodge for Cairn Gorm, and the road



24th April 1937

STOB COIRE SPUTAN DEARG (BEN MACDHUI)
From above Sròn Riach, showing "Spring Snow" on south slopes

Hon. Mark Watson

up the right bank of the Feshie provides two approaches, one from just short of Balachroik up the Allt Ruadh and one from Achlean up to Carn Ban. One of the finest ski expeditions I have had was in April 1935, from Achlean up Carn Ban, down to Loch nan Cnapan, up Angels' Peak, back to Braeriach (south top) across the plateau to the north-west top (4,036 feet), and then the wonderful 2,000-foot run down to the Lower Bothy. The conditions were perfect all day. The snow, a light powder on old *névé*, was very fast and easy. We ran straight from Carn Ban to Loch nan Cnapan in a few minutes, and only threatened sunstroke to one of the party prevented our including Cairn Toul in the bag. Nothing finer or more satisfying could have been found in Switzerland.

At Easter, 1937, the conditions were again perfect, and runs were had from the Cairn on Sgoran Dubh down the western slopes to within a few hundred yards of the car, from Creag Meaghaidh down to the Loch Laggan road, and from A'Chailleach down past the Red Hut towards Newtonmore. All these runs were up to the best Swiss standard. The conditions on the ridges were, of course, unusually favourable, but it must be remembered that conditions on the Swiss ridges are quite unlike those met with on the frequented lower slopes. The greater part of the ski-ing done by the holiday crowds in Switzerland is among the sheltered slopes of the lower foot-hills. At a resort situated at, say, 4,500 feet the usual expeditions run up to about 7,000 feet. The belt is, of course, higher at places like Davos at 5,100 feet with the famous Weissfluhjoch at 8,800 feet, reached by railway in thirty minutes. In general, however, the ski-ing does not extend far above the tree limit, and then only for comparatively short distances. The wind-swept and icy conditions found on the summits and ridges of these foot-hills are therefore hardly ever experienced by the ordinary skier. In Scotland, however, practically all the ski-ing is done above the tree-line, and even in seasons when the snow-line is low it is still necessary to go to the high ridges to get runs of any length. In

Switzerland in a district where the hills run up to, say, 7,000 to 8,000 feet, it will be found that conditions on the tops and ridges are almost exactly the same as in the Cairngorms. On the higher tops also, up to, say, 11,000 feet, it is unusual to get good ski-ing, except in late spring when spring snow conditions may prevail. Although these high ridges may give poor ski-ing in January to March, they are well worth the visit, as after all in a 7,000-foot run 500 or even 1,000 feet of bad snow is merely an amusing and interesting interlude. Reducing these figures to a Scottish standard, we should not complain if a 2,000-foot run starts off with 300 feet of almost unskiable, wind-swept ice and frozen scree, or ends with a similar extent of "heather and grass."

By April, however, the snow on the high ridges in Scotland is at its best. It is no longer wind-swept and icy, but is hard, wet *névé*, patchy perhaps but continuous enough. For example, at the end of April 1937, on the urgent pleading of two London friends, we arranged, without guaranteeing snow, a day on Ben Macdhui. Cars met the train at Perth and soon we were careering down the slopes of Glas Maol above the Devil's Elbow. The conditions overhead were foul, mist and rain, but the snow was fast and easy, and the visitors were delighted. Next morning we started from Braemar under perfect conditions. It was an anxious moment as we rounded the slopes and looked up the Luibeg for a first sight of the south-east slopes of Macdhui. The snow was there all right, however, down to the burn at 1,850 feet. We had an easy climb on ski, some of us stripped to the waist, and apart from a carry over Sron Riach went right to the top on ski. The run down was magnificent. One of the party did a spectacular straight run off the summit plateau down into the corrie to the west of Sron Riach, about 700 feet; the rest of us a more or less straight run! We then climbed back on to and round the rocky Sron and finished with another straight run—1,500 feet—down the ridge to the Luibeg. Our friends, one of whom was a German, were most enthusiastic.

We dropped them at Perth Station in the evening to join the London train.

Again, on 12th May 1934, we had a very fast run from Ben Nevis down to near the Half-way Hut in glorious sunshine, and the following day an equally fast run down the same route in the most appalling conditions of sleet, rain, and a howling gale. Other good days have been over Stobinian from Loch Doine to Luib—a very good run down the north face of the peak, and a similar route, but only over Stob Coire an Lochan and down into the corrie below Stobinian.

But, as already stated, the centre of the Ski Club's activities is at the Hut on Beinn Ghlas, and here one should go if really anxious to learn to ski. Every climber should take it up, even if only for something less strenuous than rock-climbing to fall back on in old age! No member of the S.M.C. is too old to learn enough of the craft to enjoy ski-ing in Scotland. But, as I have tried to explain above, one must be able to ski on hard snow. For this the stem and the stem-christiania are necessary, and these a youngster can learn in a week or so, and an older man proportionately longer. The ideal way, of course, is to learn in comfort at a Swiss resort, but if this is not possible a regular attendance every week-end at Killin when snow, however sparse, is available during January to April should suffice. One could learn the whole technique of ski-ing in Scotland, but it is a much longer and more strenuous apprenticeship than in Switzerland. When I say the whole technique of ski-ing I do not mean the whole technique of ski-mountaineering, as this is 80 to 90 per cent. mountain-craft, and mountaineering above the snow-line can, at best, be only partly learnt in Scotland. In the Alps we have glaciers and vast accumulations of snow and ice subject to great extremes of temperature within very short periods; but the problems arising from these conditions are mountaineering not ski-ing problems. One can learn to ski on a rope in Scotland, and there is seldom any lack of rocks or scree patches to take the place of crevasses. Among our Highland Bens we find certainly much less snow and

only rarely ice slopes, but the avalanche danger is present, and personally I have never experienced Alpine snow whose counterpart could not be found when ski-ing at home. It is not within the scope of this article to discuss snow or ice craft, but a warning may be given as to the real danger of avalanches to ski-runners in Scotland who naturally frequent the great open snow-fields and shun the safer narrow ridges. Wind-slab and soft snow avalanches in the earlier months and wet snow avalanches (often caused by breaking cornices) in the later months are to be guarded against. Quite a small wind-slab avalanche near Cruach Ardran, broken off by my skis, knocked over and completely buried my companion who was about 100 feet below me. I saw the enormous wet snow avalanche on Ben More which carried away one of our members and spread out fan-wise over about 10,000 square yards to a depth of over 10 feet. These are, fortunately, the exception in Scotland, but the conditions which give rise to them are there, and thus provide a very good preliminary training for the Alps.

As regards snowfall in Scotland, it would appear that there are snowy cycles when every year has more or less snow, *e.g.*, the ten years before the war. Then there come a succession of snowless winters, *e.g.*, 1920-29. At present we seem to have more snow again, but this idea had rather a shock in the spring of 1938, which was, I should say, the worst since the start of the S.M.C. in 1889. Apart from that year, however, there has usually been *some* ski-ing possible *somewhere* every week-end in January to April since 1929.

If possible, of course, one should go to Switzerland to learn, and any of the recognised centres is good enough for the beginner, as they all have excellent ski schools and practise slopes. Places which would, however, appeal, specially to S.M.C. members would be districts where they could roam safely over the foot-hills when not working on the practice slopes, and the best of these are, I should say, Davos, Grindelwald, Saanenmöser, and Lenk. The best weather is usually in February and March. Later than this is not suitable for the foot-hills,



March 1936

SKI CLUB HUT ON BEINN GHLAS

N. L. Hird



28th March 1937

SGÒRAN DUBH MÒR

S. Musgrave

From Cairn looking across Glen Einich to Carn Eilrig and Rothiemurchus Forest



22nd March 1936

SCOTTISH SKI-ING COUNTRY

W. A. Shand

From Derry Cairngorm; Cairn Toul, Braeriach and in middle foreground S.-E. Ridge of Macdhuil with black rocks of Sròn Riach just showing



March 1925

SWISS SKI-ING COUNTRY

H. MacRobert

Western Oberland, Oldenhorn and Diablerets to Gumflüh from the Hornberg (6,300 ft.)

and glacier ski-ing should not be attempted even by a mountaineer until reasonable skill has been attained. At these places the beginner will find a wonderful mountain land not unlike our own Scotland at its best and snowiest. He will find the conditions not unfamiliar, except perhaps the brilliant sunshine and occasionally the vast fields of deep powder snow, and with a good companion will be quite safe wandering over them on ski.

In conclusion, I can really recommend our members to take up this sport which, as Wedderburn says in his "Alpine Climbing on Foot and with Ski," has "added a new and most delectable pleasure to mountain going."

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[This article concludes the series on "Scottish Mountaineering and its Relation to Mountaineering Abroad."]

COBBLER CALLING.

By B. H. HUMBLE.

“ COULD he not boast a bold open face, that undaunted would defy any but the stoutest cragsmen ? None need venture to attack his stalwart and upright sides ; and only a few at a time will he allow to crawl up and down his almost perpendicular back. But he is firm and sure ; no tricks does he play on those who seriously seek his solid acquaintance. Plant your foot firmly, hold tight, and he will deal fairly and squarely with you.” *

Thus did Maylard write of the mountain from which the first climbing Club in Scotland took its name, for did not the Cobbler Club function before our own Club and was not Professor G. G. Ramsay the founder of the one and the first President of the other ?

There are many references to the Cobbler in early issues of the Journal. H. C. Boyd contributed an article on the Cobbler climbs in 1899.† This was enlarged by Dr Inglis Clark in 1901.‡ Raeburn contributed brief notes in 1897 § and 1907 || ; and since then there has not been an article about the Cobbler in the Journal and no particulars of any new climbs. These writers and others found new routes, but why did not the “ stoutest cragsmen ” continue to storm the “ stalwart and upright sides ” ?

Clues were given then, and it is surprising that they were not followed long ago. In the original description of the North Peak we read “ the next portion of the face ” (to left of McLay’s Crack) “ consists of a sheer impracticable precipice. For about fifty yards no feasible routes present themselves.” This did not daunt Inglis Clark. He ventured on to this face. “ From the foot of the Ram’s Head Gully a snowy ledge leads to the right . . . at the extreme end a corner is reached overhanging a horrid gulf.

* Vol. 3, p. 272.

§ Vol. 4, p. 248.

† Vol. 5, p. 153.

|| Vol. 9, p. 54.

‡ Vol. 6, p. 174.

No means of getting into the steep chimney exist, but it is possible that with the aid of dry rocks and rubber shoes a passage may be forced up the angle of the rock above." *

Such a description was bound to attract Raeburn, so in 1904 his party "... after a short scramble reached the grass ledge. This leads into a steep and difficult crack or chimney at the top of which the route meets the finish of McLay's Crack. It might be possible to ascend by this grass and rock buttress from the foot."

No one seems to have taken notice of this ascent, and it was actually over twenty-five years before anyone tried to make the direct climb which Raeburn suggested from the lowest part of the rocks of the North Peak to the chimney. This now constitutes in its entirety the finest rock climb not only on the Cobbler but in the whole Arrochar district. Raeburn's grassy ledge is now known as the Half-way Terrace. He climbed one pitch above that (the most difficult pitch) then crossed to McLay's Crack. There are four pitches below this terrace and two above the chimney.

In the article already mentioned the north face of the South Peak is described as "so excessively difficult and forbidding that it has hitherto repelled all attempts to climb it, and on that side at least the peak will probably remain unclimbed." † No one climbed it for twenty-five years; now it is often climbed.

It is difficult to account for this neglect. Of course climbing was at a standstill in the war years and a period of recuperation followed. The new Glencoe road lured many climbers to the north, and books on Scottish rock-climbing made scathing (and quite unjustified) reference to the Cobbler rock. The J.M.C.S. held its inaugural Meet under Narnain Stone in 1926 but soon sought the delights of Glencoe instead. Possibly there would have been intensified climbing on the Cobbler had the "Southern Highlands Guide" been issued first instead of last.

* Vol. 6, p. 174.

† Vol. 5, p. 153.

Yet in spite of the calls of Glencoe and Nevis the Cobbler can always give a good day. I have climbed it in every month of the year, in all weather conditions, and from every direction. To me there is something magnetic about that mountain. Many times I have cycled up alone, meaning to climb the Brack, Ben Vane, or one of the other hills, but early afternoon would find me nearing the summit of the Cobbler, whether by the corrie, from Narnain, or from Glencroe.

On a perfect June night our party slept out near the Narnain Stone. Sometime after midnight I was nudged awake. It was a magic moment. In silence we watched the moonset. It gave out definite rays and lit up the whole corrie so that familiar slopes became ghostly and unreal; then, as it slowly disappeared beneath the ridge, darkness came once more. We were up with the dawn; by seven the leader had started on the first pitch. . . .

One Christmas Day MacKinnon, MacKenzie, and myself had a rollicking traverse over the South Peak. There was snow and ice, thick mist and a half gale. The easy route was a different proposition that day. In town it was "a raw, wet day"—for us a grand climb on the Cobbler.

Even when lazing the lochs and skylscapes give recompense. On a December afternoon we wandered along the hillside about 1,000 feet up. The sun was hidden by dark clouds while its rays, breaking through, struck Loch Long so that the water scintillated brilliantly. Now there would be one ray, now half a dozen; now they would be bunched up together, now spread out fanwise, and once a series of gleaming silvery circles stretched down the length of the loch. One ray, escaping, caused the snow on Ben Lomond's summit to sparkle diamond-like, while another struck the slates of the Arrochar houses so that they too reflected back the light. Then we cycled home by moonlight, with the loch glassy and calm and the Ben clear to its top.

I like to compare the climb we know now with one of the earliest recorded ascents. This was by Hugh Macdonald in 1850. He sailed to Garelochhead, walked



August 1934

SOUTH PEAK OF COBBLER

B. H. Humble

The Direct Route on North face goes approximately up the corner between light and shadow while the small white patch near summit indicates position of the sloping ledge.

to Arrochar, climbed the Cobbler, and walked back again. On the way he refreshed himself at Whistlefield Inn, where he could obtain "beverages varying from the pungent blood of barley to the wholesome produce of the animals that browse on the neighbouring pastures." In other words, he had the choice of whisky and milk, and he did not drink milk. He got to Arrochar and started up the mountain . . . "and anon, climbing almost on hands and knees over some swelling and precipitous acclivity." By dint of "scrambling, crawling, and gliding" he eventually got to the summit and described it thus: "One scraggy and precipitous projection seems ready to topple over . . . cliffs around of immense depth and the most harsh and jagged features, while projections of knarled repulsiveness shoot out on every side." *

Who would recognise the good old Cobbler from that description? With the Sunday excursions, the bus service, and the two youth hostels the Cobbler is very popular nowadays. I have seen a dozen on Macdonald's "precipitous projection" and it showed no tendency to topple over. Once there was a large mixed party by the cairn. One lad tried to ascend that vertical slit which goes direct up from the lower window to the summit rock. This is a route for a contortionist. He stuck tight, came down, took off his kilt and tried again. He deserved to get up after that.

One winter day in snow and thick mist we were returning down the corrie about 2.30 P.M. Just above the Narnain Stone we met a man on his way up. He was wearing flannel slacks and shoes and carried an attaché case and a stick. He asked us where the Cobbler was.

Once three of us ascended the Right Angled Gully by the orthodox route, watched by a gallery of hikers. When we reached the top we discovered one of them stuck half-way up the direct finish. He was mighty glad when we let down a rope and saw him safely up. He asked the price of the rope, "sixteen shillings—and it saved your life!"

* Hugh Macdonald, "Days at the Coast."

But there are also many serious climbers among those who seek the Cobbler nowadays, and the newer climbs have all been made by members of those younger Mountaineering Clubs—Ptarmigan, Creag Dhu, Lomond, and Tricouni—which have come into being within recent years. You will find their tents in Coire Sugach and by the Narnain Boulder; scarce a week-end in summer when some of them do not sleep under the Narnain Stone.

Once, while returning on the train, someone talked of a new climb with the fearsome name of "Hundred Feet Drop." There were rumours of others, but I paid little attention till the summer of 1937. Then, one afternoon in June when I was very busy, my thoughts far from the hills, a message was handed in, "Mr Murray wants to know where is the Recess Route of the Cobbler? How difficult is it? How many pitches has it?" How I laughed! Bill Murray's thoughts were on the hills night and day; he had only missed one week-end of climbing since the beginning of that year!

I did not know anything about the Recess Route, so made prompt inquiries. An August Saturday found Murray and myself trekking up to the Narnain Stone. Murray achieved the remarkable feat of carrying a carton of milk and a bottle of paraffin oil in the same Bergan. We erected the tent and I spilt the milk. It was wet and very windy; there did not seem to be a dry spot within miles. The pegs would not hold. If we had not piled stones on the top of them and kept the walls down in a similar way the tent would surely have been blown away during the night, but we slept well.

Our plan was to start at 7 A.M. and do all the Cobbler climbs. Actually it was 1 P.M. before we roped up. Then followed seven delightful hours of rock climbing, Murray leading splendidly throughout; up M'Lay's Crack, down the Great Gully, up the 100-foot chimney, down the Right Angled Gully, up the direct finish of same gully, round to the foot again and up the new Recess Route—all these on the North Peak. Then we climbed the Centre Peak Buttress, did the usual variations

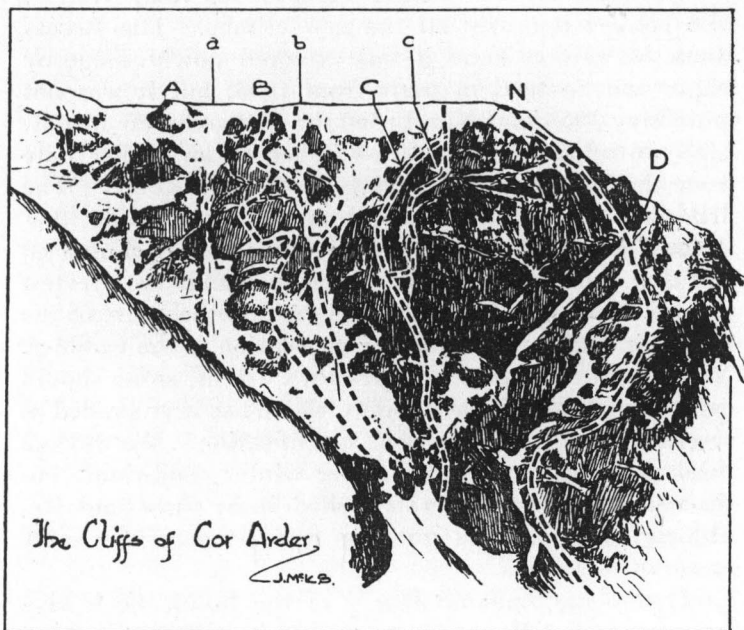
of the Centre Peak, descended the Centre Peak arête, climbed the South Peak by the Sloping Ledge Route, descended and climbed up by the Direct Route on the North Face, down and up once more by Jug-handle Route. We thought we had done well when we unroped at 8 P.M., but we missed out many climbs, and some new ones have been done since then. All will be fully described in the new "Guide Book."

How delighted I was to find the old Cobbler giving such wonderful climbing after all these years, while the day left me with a very sincere respect for John Nimlin, who pioneered nearly all the new climbs. The Recess Route as we now know it was explored slowly, stage by stage, and climbed in parts from 1933, but it was not until May 1935 that Nimlin led the first complete ascent. The two upper pitches were climbed at an earlier date from the mantelshelf on McLay's Crack Route. The first pitch is by balance holds on the wall; after that it could be described as a series of caves and chimneys, and that above the half-way terrace demands the greatest of care. The climb takes you right into the heart of the mountain and gives you a new conception of the Cobbler. Nimlin did not know of Raeburn's ascent, so he should get full credit for the new climb, which has been graded as severe according to the Nevis classification. We did not think it could be climbed under winter conditions, but the same leader has accomplished it in snow and ice, although he considers previous knowledge of the route essential to success.

That "unclimbable face" of the South Peak kept its secret well. We had a great surprise when we got out on to the north face. It consists of a series of very steep walls with ledges between them, and the route keeps near the north-west corner, which shows up so well in photographs. The holds are very fine throughout and the situations, especially in the upper part, are very exposed. One can finish on the sloping ledge or continue to the well-known semi-detached block on the summit. In both these splendid climbs the rock is absolutely sound.

There are many others, though some are very short.

There appear to be nine routes up the North Peak and at least twenty distinct climbs on the mountain varying from easy to very severe, one particular pitch delighting in the name of the "Cat Crawl." I trust I have shown that the good old Cobbler has come into his own again, and have obeyed the Editor's command to whet the appetite for the new "Southern Highlands Guide Book."



KEY.

A, B, C, the three Buttresses.

a, South Post; b, Centre Post; c, North Post.

N D, route north of the Posts.

L L, ledge between South and Centre Posts.

Each L is situate about the foot of the great pitch in the respective Post.

It should be noted that Buttress C really follows the dotted line round to the right somewhat and that Post c does not go to the top of the cliff but terminates on an overhang below where the dotted lines converge.

RECENT CLIMBS IN COIRE ARDAIR.

III. THE CENTRE POST.

By J. H. B. BELL.

TWO attempts on this formidable rift have been recorded in past numbers of our *Journal*. In both cases that renowned pioneer Harold Raeburn was a member of the party. In April 1896 Tough, Brown, and Raeburn were chased out of the Post by avalanches. In October 1903 Raeburn and C. W. Walker found the first 300 feet easy up to the remains of a trap dyke in the centre of the Post, which was at this point a shallow scoop. Half-way up, the gully was found to cut deeply into the mountain, forming a triple pitch. High above, the gully opened out into a great pot running with water and filled with spray. The party traversed out to the left on to B Buttress, over unpleasant scree and dirt slopes, and so reached the top in two and a half hours. The above is practically the brief summary which occurs on p. 143 of the "Central Highlands Guide," and the topography of the mountain face can be followed from the accompanying sketch and illustration.

Since 1903 the Posts of Coire Ardair have been neglected by climbing parties, not without good reason perhaps, as the prestige of Raeburn has cast an effective halo of inaccessibility over them. When I first visited the Centre Post on 1st April 1934 I had not yet read the account of Raeburn's experiences. C. M. Allan and I motored up from Dunkeld, and we only reached the lochan after 2 P.M. We made rapid progress up to the foot of the main difficulty, above which the gully was filled with a bare ice-fall of excessive steepness. A vertical rock face festooned with icicles effectively prevented any escape on the true left wall, although we imagined that further progress would be possible if only we could gain a snowy ledge about 50 feet higher. The bare ice-wall straight ahead was manifestly impossible. We tried to escape by a traverse to our left on to B Buttress, but even this proved very difficult under the prevailing conditions.

The wall was so steep that hand-holds had to be cut all the way. This led us to a corner on B Buttress where the ice-bound state of the rocks above us compelled a retreat. The hour was late, the weather was worsening, so we retraced our steps down the gully with great care and reached Aberarder in the dark. We felt that we had insulted the mountain with our casual familiarity in just strolling up for a little exercise on a Sunday afternoon. No doubt, as it was the first day of April, the mountain had taken our little joke in good part, and had been content to make "gowks" of us. We had at any rate learned respect.

Four weeks later we returned along with two English mountaineers, H. M. Kelly and Heaton Cooper. On that glorious day we lunched by the lochan and watched a stream of avalanches coming roaring down the Centre Post at frequent intervals. It was on this occasion that the photograph was taken which appears in the "Central Highlands Guide." Needless to say, we gave the Post a miss, and enjoyed a most exhilarating climb on the face to the north, as described in Mr Iain Ogilvie's article. A further visit on 27th May of the same year (Miss I. Keay, Mr C. M. Allan, and myself participating) was devoted to the ascent of B Buttress, but we found time to look round the corner into Raeburn's "great pot." Most of the snow had gone. The pot was filled with waterfall spray. The water shot into a deep cauldron, disappearing underneath the arches of the retreating winter snows. We were now convinced that the Post was unclimbable under summer conditions, and that Raeburn's subsequent neglect of the place was justified.

B BUTTRESS.

The ascent of B Buttress is interesting. In summer conditions it presents no serious difficulties. Below the level of the great pitch of the Centre Post all is turf and easy terraces. At the level of the foot of the pitch it is necessary to traverse obliquely downwards to the left on a turfey ledge. This is well marked (as seen from below) by a snowy arrow until quite late in the spring. Near the foot of this ledge the rocks above can be tackled direct. Good, reliable, steepish rock with a leftward trend leads to a higher point, from which

it is possible to climb back to the right on to the crest of the buttress, which forms a true arête. There is an interesting, but avoidable, section of steep rock just underneath the plateau.

SOUTH POST.

An excellent view of the great pitch of the South Post is obtainable from the lower left corner of the traverse across B Buttress. The foot of the pitch is at a lower altitude than the "pot" of the Centre Post. The pitch is a long, nearly vertical water-slide with no means of escape on either side. It is much more formidable than the pitch of the Centre Post, and is probably impossible under any conditions. There are other pitches above this, but on a smaller scale.

Only one possibility remained, and that a slender one. The Post might be climbable on a frosty day in early spring, following a winter with a heavy snowfall. Under such conditions it might prove to be possible to cut steps up the ice-fall, if the latter were crusted up with that marvellously tough Scottish *névé*, which yields such splendid climbing in the Nevis gullies. My next visit was in company with Messrs Spence, Martin, and Thomson, of the Grampian Club, on 21st March 1936. The conditions were anything but ideal, as it was a grey day, thawing somewhat, with a south-east wind. As we were ascending the lower section of the Post we were startled by a loud hissing, followed by a tremendous roar behind us. A magnificent wet-snow avalanche was pouring down the steep slope to the east of the Pinnacle Buttress.* The snow in our Post continued to be of excellent consistency, but we soon recognised that the ice-fall was quite impossible. Meanwhile the wind rose and whirled the spray of a small waterfall at least 300 feet up into the air and across B Buttress. On that occasion we traversed out to our left, descended obliquely down a snow ledge, and reached the plateau by the rocks of B Buttress.

On 21st March 1937 C. M. Allan and I returned to the attack on the Centre Post. The day was fine with a cold north-east wind. The going up the corrie was laborious owing to deep snow and breakable crust. At

* I should estimate the width of the avalanche as from 50 to 80 yards.

12.15 P.M. we started the steep climb from the lochan. We were able to kick steps in good snow right up to the shallow basin a little below the great pitch. As we ascended I made a few clinometer measurements of snow angles. Low down the slope the gradient was 42 degrees; for a long way below the basin it was 48 degrees; at the top of the basin, where we lunched, the angle had increased to 55 degrees, whereas a final measurement taken during our upward traverse to the right gave a gradient of 72 degrees.

After lunch the weather grew very dull and snow began to fall. The direct route was pronounced impracticable. Allan set off to effect an oblique upward traverse to the right, where it seemed that good snow at a more moderate angle would be reached after about 30 feet of severe difficulty. That 30 feet took us exactly one hour. Just before embarking on the 70-degree wall I was able to ensconce myself in a small scoop in the gully on good snow. We drove in the lower half of my compound ice-axe and used this as a belay, in addition to the top half of the axe separately driven in as a belay for the second man. A new technique was adopted by Allan. With his left hand he secured himself with his ice-axe, while his right arm wielded a small hatchet, a most adaptable step cutter in such a position of precarious balance. It proved equally useful for hammering in belays. Allan's lead was a magnificent piece of work. I myself got all the thrill I wanted when it came to my turn to follow along that thin line of icy notches, even although I knew that there was a strong man ahead, ready to field me from a firm anchorage in good snow. A slip by the leader would have been much more serious, as he would have had practically a clean drop down a vertical wall of green icicles to the hard *névé* of the basin—on to a surface inclined at an angle of 55 degrees!

All this must be taken into account when considering the possibilities of the direct route up the 150-foot ice-fall. It may be that a larger party, the use of crampons, and a liberal supply of ice ring spikes could render such an attempt a reasonable undertaking. It is likely that the

excessively steep part would not exceed 60 feet, but further progress would be both severe and exposed for a considerable way. Raeburn's triple pitch was probably under snow both in 1934 and in 1937. The floor of the "great pot" was also well filled in, more so in 1937 than in 1934. The extent and distribution of snow in the Post must vary considerably from year to year, but any attempt on the direct route must always be an extremely formidable undertaking.

Allan and I continued our oblique upward traverse to the right on good snow, then turned straight up, avoiding an outcrop of rock between the gully and ourselves. Above this point a careful traverse to the left on very steep snow returned us to the Post above the great pitch. Nothing remained but the ascent of a long, wide, shallow scoop of good hard snow, which soon led us to the plateau. There was no cornice at all. It was now late afternoon, a bitterly cold wind and snowing hard. Conditions were inhumanly arctic and visibility was almost *nil*. We had enough to do finding our way back to Aberarder, but we were both profoundly thankful that we had left that direct route severely alone.

IV. THE NORTH POST.

By IAIN H. OGILVIE.

The North Post of Coire Ardair was investigated on 21st June 1936 by C. M. Allan, J. H. B. Bell, C. C. Gorrie, and I. H. Ogilvie. It was a day of blue sky and sweltering heat, and we left the cool, clear waters of Loch Laggan with some regret, dressed, and started the long gradual ascent to Coire Ardair. We reached the lochan at last, wearing boots and carrying rucksacks. We almost ran the last few yards to the loch. There is a good rock for diving on the north side of the outfall, but the waters of the lochan are cold even in summer, and before long we were all glad to sit on the burning rocks and bask in the sun.

The North Post is steep and shallow, and carries little

snow even in winter. We approached it up a slope of easy rock and slippery grass to where the Post soon narrows at the foot of a short, difficult pitch. Our leader, Bell, was soon shouting for me to follow. The first 20 feet were steep and smooth; had there been anything to hold on to I am sure that it would have been loose. At any rate, the remarks from above about being as safe as a house, if they were true, must certainly have referred to jerry-building, so that I was glad to scramble up the last 40 feet to a good belay on the right wall. The climb continued for some way up the centre of the Post, until we reached a big overhang which was obviously quite hopeless up the centre. Here Allan took the lead and tried to reach a corner high up on the left wall, from where we hoped to reach the top of the overhang, but his way was barred by a loose block, so we reluctantly decided that the pitch would not "go." Allan then did a very difficult and sensational lead straight up the smooth left wall of the gully, and I was content enough to follow on easier rocks to the left.

Here we split the party. Allan and I traversed down by means of sloping ledges and over an interesting 4-foot gap until we reached the bed of the gully a little above the overhang. We scrambled up its water-worn bed for 100 feet to the foot of a huge wall of rock which blocked the head of the gully. We managed the first 60 feet and were then forced out along a sloping grass ledge to the right, from where we climbed good steep rocks to the buttress on the north. The climb ended over an easy arête.

Meanwhile Bell and Gorrie continued up the buttress on the south side of the Post, first over a difficult pitch and then over an arête which offered good, rapid, and fairly interesting rock-climbing to the top, where it arched over to the right, joining the buttress on which we had finished.

The top of the Post is crowned by a huge overhang, far more terrible than the one below, and I don't think there is any doubt about its impossibility, even with the greatest stretch of imagination.



May 1934

THE CLIFFS OF COIRE ARDAIR

J. H. B. Bell

Pinnacle Buttress on left and Window on extreme right, Posts in Centre

We came down by the Window and enjoyed our third bathe in the lochan, and eventually our fourth in the River Pattack.

V. THE ROCKS NORTH OF THE POSTS.

By IAIN H. OGILVIE.

To the north of the Posts stands a very steep wall of rock, bounded on the left by the buttress on which, as already mentioned, Allan and I had finished our climb in the North Post, and on the right by the corner where the cliffs of Coire Ardair bend round towards the Window. This wall is very steep, but is crossed by an easy rake running from a point not far from the foot of the North Post diagonally up to meet the corner about two-thirds of the way up the cliff. At the top of the rake and almost on the corner is a steep little gully, and just round a rock-bulge to the right is another. The first of these was climbed on 29th April 1934 by C. M. Allan, J. H. B. Bell, Heaton Cooper, and H. M. Kelly. At the upper neck of the gully they found a difficult pitch requiring much step-cutting and careful balance. They then crossed an easy snow slope to the cornice. On 20th January 1935 Miss V. P. Roy and J. H. B. Bell found this gully impossibly festooned with ice, but traversing round into the next, they climbed a difficult chimney, followed by easy scrambling to the top. Beyond this corner the cliffs continue almost as far as the Window, and although they are now not so high they should give interesting climbs. They do not, however, seem to have been explored.

On 4th April 1936, unaware of the previous ascents on this part of the cliff, Gorrie and I made our way up the easy rake to the corner. During a visit to the corrie a year before we had been greeted by ice avalanches and sleet and had given the rocks a wide berth, but this was a day of hard frost and sunshine. We roped up, crossed a sharp little snow arête, and arrived at the foot of the left-hand gully. A few minutes were enough to convince

us that it was not practicable. It was full of loose ice which fell away when I tried to cut steps, and would have taken many hours to clear, so I tried to turn it by climbing the arête on the right. All went well for a bit, but 60 feet up the way was blocked by a loose boulder. After failing to get round it I came down to the snow on the other side of the arête. Gorrie joined me here and we cut steps up 30 feet of steep hard snow to the apparent foot of a gully pitch. How much of this was buried I do not know, but there was enough left to stop us again. Like the other gully, it was crammed full of ice. The only way appeared to be up the right wall, which overhung rather badly and had ice in all the holds. After a bit of hard work I got over the worst bit and climbed on very steep rock to a height of about 60 feet. From here I traversed slightly downwards to steep snow at the top of the pitch, where I enjoyed a short stretch of good step-cutting and showered the proof of my hard work on to Gorrie, who was soon quite cold enough to appreciate the difficulties of the overhang. The next pitch was similar and was turned on the right, but here all efforts to get back into the gully failed, and we completed the climb on the right wall. One hundred feet of rope ran out and there was still no suitable stance, but after a little manœuvring I reached a good ledge 10 feet higher up. Another 30 feet of steep rock and a short scramble led to hard snow, where Gorrie revived his frozen and much-showered-upon circulation by cutting 70 feet of steps. We had taken two and three-quarter hours to climb from the foot of the gully, little more than 400 feet below.

Still under a cloudless sky we walked over the crisp hard snow to the summit, and when the hills were red with sunset we followed our growing shadows down the ridge to Aberarder.

[*Note.*—There are probably three gullies near the bulging rock corner. The one short of the corner seems to be overhung and is unclimbed. The gully climbed by my party on 29th April 1934 seemed to be just beyond the corner, and that of January 1935 a little beyond this. The point of view alters things and the topography is somewhat difficult.—EDITOR.]

KEATS AND BEN NEVIS.

By WILLIAM GARDEN.

WE all know that the poets have been attracted by the mountains.

King David lifted his eyes to the hills. Lord Byron said that, to him, high mountains are a feeling, but the hum of human cities torture. Though handicapped by lameness, he climbed Lochnagar, and afterwards wrote his well-known poem, "Dark Lochnagar," in which he referred to its steep frowning glories, where the snow-flake reposes, and which he evidently much preferred to the "gay gardens and landscapes of roses" of sunny Italy, where he spent the latter days of his life.

John Keats made a grand tour of Scotland with his friend, Charles Brown, in 1818. On 3rd August of that year, he wrote a four-page letter to his brother Tom, giving a graphic account of his ascent of Ben Nevis with Brown and a local guide. That letter was purchased by the Rosenbach Company of New York, on 6th May 1936, at Messrs Sotheby's, London, for the large sum of £1,600. The letter contains the sonnet written on the top of the mountain, and the dialogue between Mrs Cameron and Ben Nevis, running to seventy-four lines. It has occurred to me that some of my fellow-members of the Club might be interested to read the contents of the letter, dialogue, and sonnet which are in the following terms:—

LETTER FINDLAY, *August 3rd.*

AN MIO BEN.

MY DEAR TOM,

We have made but poor progress lately, chiefly from bad weather, for my throat is in a fair way of getting quite well, so I have had nothing of consequence to tell you till yesterday when we went up Ben Nevis, the highest Mountain in Great Britain—On that account I will never ascend another in this empire—Skiddaw is nothing to it either in height or

in difficulty. It is above 4,300 feet from the Sea level and Fortwilliam stands at the head of a Salt water Lake, consequently we took it completely from that level. I am heartily glad it is done—it is almost like a fly crawling up a wainscoat—Imagine the task of mounting 10 Saint Pauls without the convenience of Stair cases. We set out about five in the morning with a Guide in the Tartan and Cap and soon arrived at the foot of the first ascent which we immediately began upon—after much fag and tug and a rest and a glass of whiskey apiece we gained the top of the first rise and saw then a tremendous chap above us which the guide said was still far from the top—After the first Rise our way lay along a heath valley in which there was a Loch—after about a Mile in this Valley we began upon the next ascent—more formidable by far than the last, and kept mounting with short intervals of rest untill we got above all vegetation, among nothing but loose Stones which lasted us to the very top—the Guide said we had three Miles of a stony ascent—we gained the first tolerable level after the valley to the height of what in the Valley we had thought the top and saw still above us another huge crag which still the Guide said was not the top—to that we made with an obstinate fag, and having gained it there came on a Mist, so that from that part to the very top we walked in a Mist. The whole immense head of the Mountain is composed of large loose stones—thousands of acres—Before we had got half way up we passed large patches of snow and near the top there is a chasm some hundred feet deep completely glutted with it—Talking of chasms they are the finest wonder of the whole—the(y) appear great rents in the very heart of the mountain though they are not, being at the side of it, but other huge crags arising round it give the appearance to Nevis of a shattered heart or Core in itself—These Chasms are 1,500 feet in depth and are the most tremendous places I have ever seen—they turn one giddy if you choose to give way to it—We tumbled in large stones and set the echoes at work in fine style. Sometimes these chasms are tolerably

clear, sometimes there is a misty cloud which seems to steam up and sometimes they are entirely smothered with clouds.

After a little time the Mist cleared away but still there were large Clouds about attracted by old Ben to a certain distance so as to form as it appear'd large dome curtains which kept sailing about, opening and shutting at intervals here and there and everywhere; so that although we did not see one vast wide extent of prospect all round we saw something perhaps finer—these cloud-veils opening with a dissolving motion and showing us the mountainous region beneath as through a loop hole—these cloudy loop holes ever varying and discovering fresh prospect east, west, north and South. Then it was misty again and again it was fair—then puff came a cold breeze of wind and bared a craggy chap we had not yet seen though in close neighbourhood—Every now and then we had over head blue Sky clear and the sun pretty warm. I do not know whether I can give you an Idea of the prospect from a large Mountain top—You are on a stony plain which of course makes you forget you are on any but low ground—the horison or rather edges of this plain being above 4,000 feet above the Sea hide all the Country immediately beneath you, so that the next objects you see all round next to the edges of the flat top are the Summits of Mountains of some distance off—as you move about on all side(s) you see more or less of the near neighbour country according as the Mountain you stand upon is in different parts steep or rounded—but the most new thing of all is the sudden leap of the eye from the extremity of what appears a plain into so vast a distance. On one part of the top there is a handsome pile of stones done pointedly by some soldiers of artillery, I clim(b)ed onto them and so got a little higher than old Ben himself. It was not so cold as I expected—yet cold enough for a glass of Whiskey now and then—There is not a more fickle thing than the top of a Mountain—what would a Lady give to change her headdress as often and with as little trouble!—There are a good

many red deer upon Ben Nevis, we did not see one—the dog we had with us keep (*for* kept) a very sharp look out and really languished for a bit of a worry—I have said nothing yet of out (*for* our) getting on among the loose stones large and small sometimes on two sometimes on three, sometimes four legs—sometimes two and stick, sometimes three and stick, then four again, then two, then a jump, so that we kept on ringing changes on foot, hand, stick, jump, boggle, s(t)umble, foot, hand, foot, (very gingerly) stick again, and then again a game at all fours. After all there was one Mrs Cameron of 50 years of age and the fattest woman in all invernness shire who got up this Mountain some few years ago—true she had her servants—but then she had her self—She ought to have hired Sysiphus—“Up the high hill he heaves a huge round—Mrs Cameron” ’Tis said a little conversation took place between the mountain and the Lady—After taking a glass of Wiskey as she was tolerably seated at ease she thus began—

MRS C.

Upon my Life Sir Nevis I am pique’d
That I have so far panted tugg’d and reek’d
To do an honour to your old bald pate
And now am sitting on you just to bate,
Without your paying me one compliment.
Alas ’tis so with all, when our intent
Is plain, and in the eye of all Mankind
We fair ones show a preference, too blind!
You Gentlemen immediat(e)ly turn tail—
O let me then my hapless fate bewail!
Ungrateful Baldpate have I not disdaind
The pleasant Valleys—have I not madbraind
Deserted all my Pickles and preserves
My China closet too—with wretched Nerves
To boot—say wretched ingrate have I not
Le(f)t my soft cushion chair and caudle pot.
’Tis true I had no corns—no! thank the fates
My Shoemaker was always Mr Bates.
And if not Mr Bates why I’m not old!
Still dumb ungrateful Nevis—still so cold!

Here the Lady took some more whiskey and was putting even more to her lips when she dashed (it) to the Ground for the Mountain began to grumble—which continued for a few Minutes before he thus began,

BEN NEVIS.

What whining bit of tongue and Mouth thus dares
Distur(b)'d my Slumber of a thousand years!
Even so long my sleep has been secure—
And to be so awaked I'll not endure.
Oh pain—for since the Eagle's earliest scream
I've had a dam'd confounded ugly dream

you ?

A Nightmare sure. What Madam was it ~~true~~
It cannot be! My old eyes are not true!
Red-Crag, My Spectacles! Now let me see!
Good Heavens Lady how the gemini
Did you get here ? O I shall split my sides!
I shall earthquake—

MRS C.

Sweet Nevis do not quake, for though I love
You(r) honest Countenance all things above
Truly I should not like to be convey'd
So far into your Bosom—gentle Maid
Loves not too rough a treatment gentle sir—
Pray thee be calm and do not quake nor stir
No not a Stone or I shall go in fits—

BEN NEVIS.

I must—I shall—I meet not such tit bits—
I meet not such sweet creatures every day—
By my old night cap night cap night and day
I must have one sweet Buss—I must and shall!
Red Crag!—What Madam can you then repent
Of all the toil and vigour you have spent
To see Ben Nevis and to touch his nose ?
Red Crag I say! O I must have you close!
Red Crag, there lies beneath my farthest toe
A vein of Sulphur—go dear Red Crag go—
And rub your flinty back against it—budge!
Dear Madam I must kiss you, faith I must!
I must Embrace you with my dearest gust!
Block-head, d'ye hear—Block-head I'll make her feel
There lies beneath my east leg's northern heel

A cave of young earth dragons—well my boy
 Go thither quick and so complete my joy
 Take you a bundle of the largest pines
 And where the sun on fiercest Phosphor shines
 Fire them and ram them in the Dragons' nest
 Then will the dragons fry and fizz their best
 Until ten thousand now no bigger than
 Poor Aligators poor things of one span
 Will each one swell to twice ten times the size
 Of northern whale—then for the tender prize—
 The moment then—for then will red Crag rub
 His flinty back and I shall kiss and snub
 And press my dainty morsel to my breast
 Blockhead make haste!

O Muses weep the rest—

The Lady fainted and he thought her dead
 So pulled the clouds again about his head
 And went to sleep again—soon she was rous'd
 By her affrigh(t)ed servants—next day hous'd
 Safe on the lowly ground she bless'd her fate
 That fainting fit was not delayed too late

But what surprises me above all is how this Lady got down again. I felt it horribly. 'Twas the most vile descent—shook me all to pieces—Over leaf you will find a Sonnet I wrote on the top of Ben Nevis. We have just entered Inverness. I have three Letters from you and one (from) Fanny—and one from Dilke. I would set about crossing this all over for you but I will first write to Fanny and Mrs Wilie. Then I will begin another to you and not before because I think it better you should have this as soon as possible—My Sore throat is not quite well and I intend stopping here a few days.

Read me a Lesson, muse, and speak it loud
 Upon the top of Nevis blind in Mist!
 I look into the Chasms and a Shroud
 Vaprous doth hide them; just so much I wist
 Mankind do know of Hell: I look o'erhead
 And there is sullen mist; even so much
 Mankind can tell of Heaven: Mist is spread
 Before the Earth beneath me—even such

Even so vague is Man's sight of himself.
Here are the craggy Stones beneath my feet ;
Thus much I know, that a poor witless elf
I tread on them ; that all my eye doth meet
Is mist and Crag—not only on this height,
But in the world of thought and mental might—

Good bye till tomorrow

Your most affectionate Brother

JOHN—

THE GREAT GULLY OF SGOR NAM FIANNAIDH, GLENCOE.

By W. H. MURRAY.

First Ascent.—1st May 1938.

Party.—W. H. Murray, W. G. Marskell, A. M. MacAlpine, and J. K. W. Dunn (all J.M.C.S.).

(The terms "left" and "right" are given throughout from the point of view of a climber looking up the gully.)

THIS gully, hitherto known as "The Unclimbed Gully at Clachaig," is the finest and longest climb of its kind in Scotland. The gully starts on the open hillside in front of Clachaig Inn, and splits the mountain from top to bottom. The walls are deeply cut, and for the main part vary in height from 100 to 300 feet. Unchecked readings by altimeter give the start as 400 feet, and the finish as approximately 2,500 feet. Surprisingly few climbers have any idea of the real character of the gully, although its history is a long one.

The Great Gully may be divided into two distinct sections:—

(a) The first 800 feet. A forest of small trees sprouts from the high walls amidst a profusion of luxuriant vegetation. It is a mistake to imagine that one climbs over such stuff. When the walls approach the bed of the gully they come fairly close together and the bare rock is exposed. Only a few of the pitches are vegetatious; for the main part the climber goes up on sound interesting rock through exotic jungle scenery. At about 1,200 feet lies the Great Cave pitch, which marks alike the limit of the tree zone and of previous exploration.

(b) The final 1,200 feet. Above the Great Cave the character of the gully completely changes. The walls become bare and narrower, the rock scenery stern and more majestic, and the climbing harder. At perhaps 1,700 feet the gully narrows to a rocky trough—one may touch both walls at once—and with a sharp double twist develops into a mere chimney before widening again.



May 1938

A. M. MacAlpine

JERICO WALL
Great Gully, Sgor nam Fiannaidh

This upper section harbours many fine pitches, and three of these approach the standard of the Great Cave.

One of the main difficulties of the gully is route-selection at stiff pitches. The climb is too long to allow much waste of time through misjudgment in this matter. The Great Cave pitch is a notable example, and our first visit there, on the previous week-end, was devoted solely to finding a possible line of attack. There is an escape below the pitch on the left wall, but higher up in the gully Jericho Wall (described below) presents a similar stumbling-block with no escape, and we were fortunate to solve the problem at the first attempt.

There is no pitch in the gully so fierce of aspect as the Devil's Cauldron in the Chasm. On the other hand, the standard of difficulty is greater than in the Chasm, and the climb is longer with fewer chances of escape. There are about 40 pitches, varying in height from 15 to 80 feet, with very few stretches of "walking" relative to the length of the gully. From the Great Cave onwards one pitch seems to follow hard after another, happily on good clean rock.

It is well to observe that the gully might be dangerous for a mediocre party with a good leader, for there are two severe traverses where the last man would have a long swing against slabs if he came off. Combined tactics are nowhere required, and the best size of party is two, or preferably four climbing on two 100-foot ropes, the ropes being joined only where necessary. Rubbers should be carried. The gully should always go after a fortnight of dry weather. The time for the first ascent was nine hours fifteen minutes.

The weather conditions on 1st May were excellent, and no rain had fallen for three weeks. A fair amount of water was running down the lower part of the gully, but only at one difficult place—the Red Chimney, which is placed high up before the water gathers in volume—does the route lie up the actual watercourse. We climbed on two ropes; Murray led the first and MacAlpine the second, the ropes being joined for each of the four main obstacles. A detailed list of pitches would fill the entire

Journal, and although many are noteworthy only the four most important and difficult ones are described below.

(a) The Great Cave: at approx. 1,200 feet. The gully is fairly wide here and is barred by a wall of rock 50 feet high. The left-hand half of the wall is a shallow cave, which rises 40 feet and ends in a vertical 10-foot chimney. The chimney is the watercourse and is probably impossible. The right-hand half of the wall is a sheet of discouraging sleek slabs, leading up to a grass corner near the top. The corner is the key to the problem; it is bounded on the left by the slabs and on the right by an exceedingly steep wall. This wall is only 6 feet wide, and is in turn bounded by a steep rib. To reach the foot of the rib one climbs up to an enormous slab on the right wall and traverses leftward on its lower rim. Some delicate hand-balancing is required near the base of the rib in order to effect lodgment. Small holds then assist one upwards for a foot or so until it is possible to make a short but exhilarating traverse on exposed rock into the grass corner, which slopes steeply outwards and should never be used when damp. It is safe when dry and affords difficult access to the top of the pitch. The pitch is severe in rubbers and cannot be avoided. A steep and unpleasant escape may be found on the left wall of the gully.

(b) Jericho Wall: at approx. 1,500 feet. An immense shallow cave blocks the gully and looks more hopeless than (a). No direct route up the watercourse seems possible, the left wall overhangs, and there is no escape. The right flank appears at a first glance to be perpendicular, the lower part quite smooth and the upper deplorably loose—so loose that we imagined a loud shout might bring down the upper wall about our ears—and the place was named accordingly. The route goes up this wall by way of a very smooth corner that finally merges into the upper face. A steep upward traverse then goes leftward to the top, where there is some difficulty in finding a suitable stance in a wilderness of slabs. The upper part of the wall is quite safe when treated properly. Most of the loose rock was removed, revealing sound holds

underneath. We all found Jericho Wall severe in rubbers, but it may well prove less awkward for future climbers. 100 feet of rope is required by the leader.

(c) The Red Chimney: at approx. 2,000 feet. Here we have an excellent 70-foot pitch on dark-red rock. An imposing shallow cave rises to a height of 30 feet, and from the outside edge of the roof there springs a 20-foot chimney, which overhangs the base. The chimney leads to a steep 20-foot slab. One climbs up the right-hand wall of the cave on the outside, until one arrives at a small ledge level with the foot of the chimney and only one foot to its right. The crux of the pitch is the step into the chimney, an exposed movement on smooth wet rock with awkward holds. The rest of the chimney is strenuous. There are two small chock-stones; the upper one is loose and must be used cautiously. There is a good stance above the chimney from which to tackle the final difficult slab. The pitch as a whole is an amiable severe. (Climbed in boots.)

(d) The last pitch: at approx. 2,500 feet. The gully ends in grand style on good red rock. The last pitch of 30 feet is severe in boots, and is climbed on its right-hand side. The first 15 feet are obvious and easy; the last 15 feet call for a difficult movement towards the centre of the pitch up steep red slabs with minute footholds, which bring a thankful climber to the end of all further difficulty.

The best route of descent goes down the true right bank of the gully.

In Memoriam.

THOMAS FRASER STEUART CAMPBELL.

By the death of Thomas Fraser Steuart Campbell (81), which took place at Helensburgh on the 14th of March last, the Club has been deprived of one of its few original members; one who took a prominent and enthusiastic part in its formation, who never lost his interest in its doings, and who was regular in his attendance at the Annual Meetings. He belonged to a generation which is fast passing away, one of those who "pointed the way to the hills" before the Club was formed, and perhaps only among early members will memories of his characteristics survive. His activities during his membership are frequently recorded in the chronicles of the *Journal* and in his contributed Articles. These records deserve honourable mention without the impertinence of comment, and for other incidents, I plead that it is difficult to make selections from a crowd of recollections which to later members would be of minor interest. I will try rather to give a portrait of Campbell as I knew him during very many years of intimate friendship.

Both before and after his membership of the Club he was a walker of great endurance. This counted for much in the days when the rock-climbing phase was in comparative youth and for which I think he had no aspiration. His regard was more for the beauty of contour of a mountain than for crag and serrated outline. This, however, did not deter him from taking part in expeditions in which difficulties were anticipated, and if these were encountered he enjoyed being in his place. Any fireside account of these climbs was in the lighter vein which he so strongly possessed, and he was modest regarding his own endeavours, preferring to deal with them by merciless sarcasm.

To get to know Campbell it was almost necessary to be his companion under bad conditions on a hard climb or on a long expedition embracing hill and glen. It

was then that his two great characteristics—his imperturbable good temper and inexhaustible humour—were at their best. I have known him accept uncomplainingly gifts of bucketfuls of ice and snow from above and at the end come up with a smile and a quick satire on the skill of the donor. He had also in my personal experience that inestimable quality in the man behind—the quality of silent patience—and his really remarkable faculty for seeing the humorous side of a situation helped to dispel any irritations or regrets.

But his memories remained with the beloved "Tramps" in their long walks, some of which (daytime office duties compelling) took place in the blackness of winter evenings, others from a Highland inn by the soft grey light of a summer midnight, tempted perhaps on some rare occasion to wait for the hour when "jocund day stands tiptoe on the misty mountain tops"—and then to bed, followed by a rush, breakfast in hand, to catch the early train to town and work. These days and the friendships they forged were never forgotten. He loved to talk of them, and when writing on "Boulders" (Vol. 4) he took the opportunity of recording in the *Journal* the origin and the disintegration of the "Tramps."

Detaching Campbell from his mountaineering and pedestrianism he can be described as a man of quiet, cultured, and courteous habits with a versatility of talents, any one of which had he cultivated it might have carried him far in the direction to which it pointed. He was a writer with a good literary style. He was also an artist; the Club is indebted to him for the design of rope and crossed axes which it has adopted, and also for the adornments which graced the menu cards of many Annual Dinners. He was an excellent cartoonist, an inoffensive caricaturist, and clever in dashing off pen-and-ink sketches appropriate to an occasion, and his strong vein of humour was to be found in many of these. He wrote a large number of stanzas of grave and gay verse, some of which were published in the *Glasgow Herald* and *Helensburgh Press*, but only three appear

in the *Journal* (Vols. 8, 11, and 15). Probably only to his intimates was this talent in verses known, and a few years ago he had several typed for private circulation. He was an excellent raconteur, good to hear and good to read, and at his best in the vernacular. His "Avoir-dupois" in Vol. 16 is surely unforgettable. He was a good judge of wine and made it more comforting by his presence. During the War he did service as an inspecting officer of the visitors' registrations at the Glasgow Railway Station Hotels, and he would recount in his inimitable style the interviews with people who resented what they considered were his unauthorised and inquisitorial inquiries.

I feel that I cannot close this outline without a reference to Campbell's work when his active habits were curtailed. He then undertook laborious research into ancient records and historical memoranda relating to his branch of the Campbell Clan. This ultimately resolved into a volume of history of the Campbells of Lagganlochan, which was typed and bound for private circulation. His research took him back to 1130, from which date he traced his descent, dating the adoption of the name of "Lagganlochan" about 1590, when a settlement was made on the shores of Loch Craignish. Relative to this history he compiled two genealogical trees, one of which records that a Campbell of Lagganlochan married in 1756 Margaret Fraser, a grand-daughter of Charles, third son of Archibald, ninth Earl of Argyll, and ends by locating our friend as her great-grandson with a not too distant cousinship to the present House of Argyll. The other tree records that Margaret Fraser was of the Frasers of Ardachy, a branch of the family founded in 1544 by the marriage of the sixth Lord Lovat with a niece of the second Earl of Argyll. Our friend, therefore, had a double dose of Argyll blood and a drop or two of the Lovat, and recently I have been told that he had a greater affection for the Lovat and Fraser descent than for the Argyll. This purity and quality of his Highland descent, disclosed by his researches over a period of more than 800 years, was a source of pride to Campbell,

but of which I seldom heard him speak. He sent a copy of his Lagganlochan history and of the genealogical tree to the present Duke, with whom he had previously been in touch, and who in acknowledging these signed himself "Your affectionate Clansman and Chief."

When Jacob gathered his sons together towards the end of his days he addressed them and spoke of "the excellency of dignity." This Campbell had; with it he met the difficulties and adversities of life. But he will be remembered in the Club by his cheerful companionship and by his contributions to its anthology. He is survived by his sister who is some years older than he was. She is the last of this branch of Lagganlochans.

R. A. ROBERTSON.

JOSEPH GIBSON STOTT.

Every member of the Club will regret the passing of Joseph Gibson Stott, which took place at Melbourne on the 11th of June last, at the age of seventy-seven.

I understand that a short history of the *Journal* is likely to appear in the Jubilee Number. To all the original members and to many others Joe Stott *was* the *Journal*. Its history will be the finest memoir of him, and without trespassing on this it is fitting that in the present number something more than a mere intimation of his death should be noted.

Probably nine-tenths of the members never saw Joe, and these may wish to have a personal description of this "big chiel ayont the seas" over whom there was cast such a spell by the Bens and Glens of Scotland that he wrote of them year in and year out during nearly fifty years of exile. What was he like? He was of medium height, stoutly built, a well-made man with prodigious muscular strength and one of the cheeriest of companions. He was a man to go "tiger-hunting" with. You felt that he would be steadfast and true to the very end. He was a "salvationist," but of a sterner and more robust type than that pictured by Dr Hely Almond, who coined

that word. Hill-walking was his passion and the longest of days had no terror for him. Had he had the time and opportunity he would have made a good third to Munro and the Rev. A. E. Robertson in acquiring and dispersing knowledge of the Scottish hills. Perhaps of necessity he had a craze for walking during the night, and he was the ringleader in many mad walks which space forbids me from describing. To him "it was a pleasure sure in being mad which none but madmen know." Those who never knew Joe may understand that those who possessed his friendship have a most affectionate memory of him, and those who were in touch with him during his long exile can realise that his thoughts and dreams were in the heartbreak words of Robert Louis Stevenson :

" Blows the wind to-day, and the sun and the rain are flying,
Blows the wind on the moor, to-day and now.
Where about the graves of the martyrs the whaups are crying,
My heart remembers how."

R. A. ROBERTSON.

D. A. ARCHIE.

Few of our members reading the recent announcement of the death of Mr D. A. Archie, Uplawmoor, would have any thought of his association with the Club. He was, however, not only an original member but could claim to be one of the very earliest, as he was the joint author of the letter to the *Glasgow Herald* signed "Cairn," which had the honour of being the first to appear in support of Mr Naismith's suggestion. Most of his active business life was spent in the service of the Commercial Bank at its chief Glasgow office, and in days when facilities for visiting the mountains were much more limited than they are now he made full use of limited opportunities. Most of his climbing was done before the formation of the Club, and before winter climbing had been introduced to its members, but he had no hesitation in undertaking what would even now

be regarded as fairly big expeditions, and he was no fair-weather mountaineer. His work did not give much scope for climbing, and after his marriage his home ties were a further counter-attraction. Among his other activities he took an active part in Boys' Brigade work, in which for a considerable time he had command of a Company. His mountaineering and his Club membership dropped at a comparatively early date, but it seems fitting that in the Club annals his share in its formation should be recorded.

GILBERT THOMSON.

PERCY DONALD.

It is with sincere regret that we have to record the death of Percy Donald. He was a man of strong character, and few people who dealt with him could have remained indifferent to him.

He joined the Club in 1922 and served on the Committee from 1925 to 1928. During that time he acted as Custodian of Slides, in which capacity he made a complete reorganisation of the slide collection, and it is difficult to over-emphasise the extent of his work, the perfection of the detail, and the results obtained. He was an expert photographer, and when it was decided to republish the general number of the "Guide Book" he was asked to rewrite the article on Photography, which again he did in a masterly manner. He contributed many illustrations to the *Journal*. He was official photographer to the Edinburgh Boy Scouts. When the Charles Inglis Clark Hut was erected, Donald was given charge of equipment. Here again he showed his infinite capacity for detail.

Percy Donald had no great love for rock climbing. He was a regular attender of Meets, but his happiest hours were spent in hill-walking and exploring hill streams, either alone or with a few friends. It was appropriate that his end should have been amongst the hills which he loved so dearly.

A. HARRISON.

S. Pointon Taylor, W. Waddell, and J. M. Wordie (members), and R. L. Beveridge, M. Cooke, C. D. L. Murray, and C. M. Steven (guests).

EXPEDITIONS AND CLIMBS DONE.

Thursday, 14th April.—Unna and Wordie climbed A'Chailleach and Sgurr Breac from Loch a Bhraoin. Ainslie, Geddes, Murray, Cooke, and Campbell did Cul Mor, Ainslie, Geddes, and Cooke also doing Cul Beag. Dow, Andrews, and Beveridge did Cul Mor also, and except Dow, also did Cul Beag. The Stevens did Cul Beag by a buttress on the west face. Corbett did Ben Aonaclair.

Friday, 15th April.—J. and R. M. Gall Inglis did Meall a' Chrasgaidh. Fraser and Lindsay and also Geddes, Murray, and Campbell did Stack Polly. Elton, Ainslie, and Cooke did Ben Dearg, Cona Mheall, Meall nan Ceapraichean, and Eididh nan Clach Geala. Bartholomew and the Stevens did Ben Dearg and Cona Mheall. Ling, Glover, Allen, Taylor, and Gardner were on Seana Bhraigh, as were also Unna and Wordie, and also Baxter, Andrews, Dow, and Beveridge, who also tacked on Creag an Duine.

Saturday, 16th April.—Elton, Arthur, Waddell, and Bartholomew were on Seana Bhraigh. Dow, Andrews, and Beveridge climbed Stack Polly. Ainslie and Cooke did Suilven. Unna, Wordie, and Burt did Cul Mor. Ling, Glover, Allen, Taylor, and Gardner did Eididh nan Clach Geala, Meall nan Ceapraichean, and Ben Dearg, the last two doing Cona Meall as well. Jack, Geddes, Morris, Coats, Baxter, and Aikman traversed An Teallach, as did Fraser and Lindsay. R. M. G. Inglis and Corbett climbed Am Faochagach and Carn Gorm Loch. The latter was found to be under 3,000 feet!

Sunday, 17th April.—Glover, Allen, Taylor, Gardner, and Ling climbed Ben More Coigach. Arthur, Elton, and Waddell did Stack Polly; so did Bartholomew and Unna. R. M. G. Inglis, Dow, and Corbett did Cona Mheall and Ben Dearg. Andrews and Beveridge also Aikman and Coats did these along with Ceapraichean and Eididh nan Clach Geala. Burt, in the Fannaichs, did Ben Liath Mhor, Sgurr Mor, Carn na Criche, Sgurr nan Clach Geala, and Meall a' Chrasgaidh. Jack, Morris, and Baxter, as also Fraser and Lindsay, did Suilven.

Monday, 18th April.—Ling, Jack, Allen, Taylor, and Gardner did Burt's lot of yesterday. Unna, Bartholomew, and Burt did Sgur an Fhidleir and Ben More Coigach. Aikman, Andrews, Dow, and Beveridge from S.E. of Loch Lurgain also did these peaks and Garbh Coireachan Spidean Coinich.

Tuesday, 19th April.—Unna, Burt, and Bartholomew visited An Teallach from Toll an Lochain over Bidein a Ghlas Thuill and Glas Mheall Mor. This was the President's sixth consecutive day on the hills!

EASTER MEET, 1938—FORT WILLIAM.

Present.—N. L. Hird, R. Jeffrey, K. K. Hunter, A. J. Rusk, I. C. Munro, Alex. Harrison (members), and R. L. Gwilt and J. E. MacEwan (guests).

Probably for the first time in the history of the Club one of the members brought his golf clubs with him, and Munro reported that the golf course at Corpach was quite passable!

On Friday Hird, Harrison, and Jeffrey from Spean Bridge did Stob Coire Easain and Stob Choire Mheadoin. On Saturday they, together with Gwilt and MacEwan, did the Castle Ridge of Ben Nevis under perfect conditions. There was very little snow on Ben Nevis. It was a marked contrast to last year.

Hunter and Rusk, who came up for one night, went to Kinlochleven, and went up Stob Coire a' Chairn and An Garbhanach. On Saturday Harrison and MacEwan on their way home did the Crowberry Ridge, which was completely free of ice and snow. Hird and Jeffrey went to the head of Glenfinnan and went round the circle of Sgor Choileam and Sgor nan Coireachan, and on Monday on their way home traversed the Aonach Eagach. The weather was cold but clear, with some sunshine.

A. H.

Dr G. Graham Macphee and G. C. Williams were in the C.I.C. Hut along with eight guests—Messrs A. M. MacAlpine (J.M.C.S.), A. E. Wood (Wayfarers' Club), D. Shaw (Y.R.C.), and R. R. Porter, R. Ashley, H. R. Shepherd, C. H. Oates, R. W. Lovel (Liverpool Univ. M.C.).

CLIMBS DONE.—*Thursday, 14th April.*—Macphee, Lovel, and Porter up Tower Gully and down No. 3. *15th April.*—Williams, Route 1, Carn Dearg, first part; Ashley and Oates, Raeburn's Buttress; Porter, Macphee, Shepherd, Staircase and down No. 4, followed by MacAlpine and Lovel. *16th April.*—Williams, Shaw, and Lovel ascended Jubilee Climb; MacAlpine, Porter, and Shepherd attempted Gardyloo.

NEW CLIMB.

Macphee, Ashley, and Oates ascended the intermediate gully to the left of Raeburn's Buttress of Carn Dearg. Instead of crossing on to the crest of Raeburn's Buttress after passing the two "slightly overhanging right walls,"

THOMAS J. GIBSON.

The Club has lost a good friend and member in Thomas J. Gibson, who died in Glasgow on 2nd October. For it was he who with his own skilled hands was largely responsible for the erecting of the C.I.C. Hut on Ben Nevis. It was no small feat of endurance which he and his helpers accomplished, when in the summer of 1928 they camped for five months in the Allt a' Mhuillin Corrie while the stout little hut rose stone by stone and timber by timber.

I had known Tom Gibson ever since he was a boy, and it was a privilege and a joy to see and to foster his innate love of the hills. I took him on his first rock climb—the traverse of the Cobbler. Thereafter we had some great days together—the Tower Ridge, the Castle Ridge, the Buachaille. I soon saw that he had the making of a good climber in him, alike on rock and snow, steady, sure-footed, quiet, alert, never exceeding his limit of safety—fine qualities in anyone at any time, and especially on a rock ridge or a snow slope.

About this time (1927-28) Dr Inglis Clark had made us the splendid gift of our Hut. Preliminaries had been dealt with and plans drawn up, but the actual erection was a big problem. I had every confidence in the ultimate results when I suggested Messrs Hugh Gibson & Son, of Glasgow, with Tom as resident foreman. It was a labour of love, and his inherited skill and pride of craftsmanship will speak for itself as long as the C.I.C. Memorial Hut stands four-square to the winds of the Allt a' Mhuillin Corrie.

Gibson was a singularly cultured and gentle spirit, one of Nature's true gentlemen, a deep lover of the hills and of the literature and poetry of the hills. Those of us who knew him will miss him, and we will remember him sometimes when we are among the high tops that he loved.

A. E. ROBERTSON.

the gully thereby attained was continued to the top. Its general standard was slightly harder than the crest of Raeburn's Buttress, but the final exit from a cave at the top was much easier than the final pitch on Raeburn's Buttress. This appears to be a first ascent, as no record of an earlier one has been found. A descent of Castle Ridge was made.

Sunday, 17th April.—The whole party, plus Sisson, attempted Gardyloo. Even assisted by J. R. Jenkins, of Caucasian fame, the ascent was deemed impracticable under the prevailing conditions and in the limited time available. Nevis summit was attained by Tower Gully, and descent made by this and by the arête. *On 18th April* Williams, Porter, Wood, and M'Kinnon attempted Glover's Chimney and finished up No. 2 Gully, which afforded steep ice for step cutting.

LIBRARY AND CLUB ROOM.

IN addition to the books reviewed the following have been added to the Library recently:—

“Ailsa Craig,” by R. Lawson, presented by Mr J. A. Parker.
Alpine Journal, Index to Vols. 16-38, presented by the
 Alpine Club.

Various back numbers of *Journals* to complete sets have been presented by Messrs George Anderson, E. W. Hodge, R. G. Plint, F. S. Goggs, and the Tricouni Club. The Librarian has given a number of climbers' guide books and books on the technical aspect of climbing.

A programme of meetings for the winter is being drawn up and may be completed in time to be circulated with this *Journal*.

NOTES AND EXCURSIONS.

The Editor will be glad to receive brief notices of any noteworthy expeditions. These are not meant to supersede longer articles, but many members who may not care to undertake the one will have no difficulty in imparting information in the other form.



SEA MOUNTAINEERING.

In June E. W. Hodge made a further "sea-mountaineering" expedition in a 36-foot motor boat, with a party consisting largely of Rucksack Club members. Rounding the Mull of Galloway, the Bens of Jura were ascended. The party then went through the Gulf of Coirebhreacain, after watching the whirlpools from the Jura shore. The roughest patch of breakers observed was on the Scarba side, off the next cove to the westward of Bágħ Bán. On this south side of Scarba rocky ribs run somewhat awkwardly down to the sea, but neither this nor the west or other sides of Scarba observed were specially impressive. A call was made at Eilean na Naiomh, one of the Garvelloch group. It was found much more verdant and pleasant than anticipated, the vegetation being of the inland or meadow type. The ruins were in splendid order and well worth a visit. Ben More of Mull was ascended by night from the head of Loch Scridain. The compass was found unreliable, particularly at the summit. This is not really the most interesting way up, as the fine ridge to 'A Chioch is rather out of the way by this route.

Landings were made on Staffa and Lunga, of the Treshnish Islands. The latter had no basaltic pillars, but in other respects was the finer of the two, and, of course, a great place for sea-birds, though fulmars, eiders, and gannets were not present. The stack Dùn Cruit, adjoining Lunga, offered no real prospect of being climbed from its base, although it would be quite practicable to bridge across from the main island by a ladder of 20 feet or less, at a height of 80 or 100 feet above the sea. Above this there is no difficulty, and in fact little incentive to climb the stack beyond the remark in the "Guide" that it has not been done. Anyone considering camping on small uninhabited islands like Staffa, Garvelloch, Lunga, etc., should remember that although there may be small rivulets, they are very likely to be found completely fouled by sea-birds or bullocks.

After a voyage to Castlebay an attempt to visit Barra Head and Mingulay was defeated by several days' bad weather. Hekla (S. Uist) was ascended from the north side. There appeared to be no cliff worth climbing on this side, though the map indicates some crag. Hyskeir, or Oighskeir (a satellite of Canna), is composed of hexagonal basaltic pillars and goes straight down into deep water all round,

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

EASTER MEET, 1938—ULLAPOOL.

THE main part of the Easter Meet was held at Ullapool, which proved to be a delightful change from the more-frequented climbing centres. We stayed at the Royal Hotel, and are grateful to the proprietrix, Mrs Mackenzie, and also to her staff for looking after us so well.

Most of our hardy annuals were at the Meet, and also one hearty triennial in the person of Jack Ainslie, whom we were glad to meet again, back on leave from darkest Africa. We were indeed sorry that Harry MacRobert was not able to be with us.

There was an almost complete absence of snow on the hills. During our visit the rain held off, though there was not much blue sky to be seen.

It is reported that some members marched over the hills at a rather excessive speed, and it is even suggested that Elton is training for the Lakeland Fell Race. However, be that as it may, there can be little doubt that everyone enjoyed the Ullapool Meet.

I. M. CAMPBELL.

PRESENT AT THE MEET.

Twenty-eight members and four guests were present at the Meet. They were: The President, Mr P. J. H. Unna, and Messrs J. L. Aikman, W. J. C. Ainslie, F. D. Campbell Allen, C. G. Andrews, G. Arthur, L. St. C. Bartholomew, J. H. Baxter, J. F. A. Burt, I. M. Campbell, W. L. Coats, J. R. Corbett, J. Dow, R. R. Elton, D. J. Fraser, H. Gardner, A. Geddes, G. T. Glover, J. Gall Inglis, R. M. G. Inglis, J. S. Jack, W. G. P. Lindsay, W. N. Ling, R. W. B. Morris, C. R. Steven,

although its greatest height is only 27 feet. Considering its rather elusive visibility from the Cuillin, a viewpoint quite high enough to rule out the effect of earth-curvature, it is quite a big island. Half a dozen sheep are occasionally wintered on it, although it is rather difficult to see how they live unless they eat flags, thrift, etc., as well as grass. They are said to do very well. Eider ducks are found here, as also at Loch Scresort, and are very tame, or at least unwilling to be scared off their nests. One call was made at Soay, a sheltered, relatively fertile, and convenient island from which the inhabitants had lately been demanding to be evacuated, like the St Kildans, to "civilisation." Another call was at the exceedingly wild and rough but rather beautiful island of South Rona, on which for more than a dozen years a single crofting family have been the only inhabitants.

A few days of indifferent weather were spent in north-west Harris. Long climbs were enjoyed by Messrs Solari and Irens on Strone Scourst and Strone Ulladale, of which particulars will probably be given by them in the *Rucksack Club Journal*. Many other crags were noticed capable of giving splendid climbs, although Hushnish (mentioned in the "Guide") did not promise much beyond scenery. The party was delighted with this district, which is ever so much finer than, say, Jura, for example, despite the moderate height of its hills.

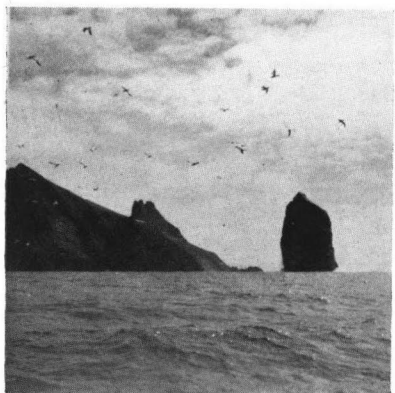
Strone Ulladale was approached both from Amhuinnsuidhe and from Loch Resort. Of the two ways the former is preferable, though, as there is a good track, much longer. Shepherds told us the crag had once been climbed by Germans before the war, unroped. The great gully and the "recess" are both obviously impossible; a long leftward rising traverse being the only way.

From Loch Resort a night passage was made to St Kilda, where a day of fine weather was the reward. Only three other yachts had visited the isle in three years. It was confirmed that Conachair really does fall 1,300 feet almost unbrokenly into the sea, the sheerest drop being not on a headland but at a slight re-entrant. Altogether landings were made at some twenty-eight different places, at most of which the highest hill in the neighbourhood or on the island was climbed.

E. W. HODGE.

THE WATER-PIPE GULLY—SKYE.

On 10th August 1938, after ten days of unbroken weather, a party of three made a direct ascent of the Water-pipe Gully. The first pitch was begun at 9.2 A.M. and the party emerged at the top at 1.50 P.M., so that it can be seen that the climb was, apart from atrocious rock on the first of the four recognised crues, in excellent condition. The



STAC LII



ST KILDA ; VILLAGE



CONACHAIR



WESTERN HORIZONS

Photos by E. W. Hodge, June 1938

party consisted of Percy Robson (Preston Mountaineering Club), L. S. Powell (Climbers' Club), and J. L. Farnworth (Preston Mountaineering Club). In the course of the climb a new pitch was done, in the direct line, and in the opinion of the party the climb cannot in future be done direct without the inclusion of the pitch.

The pitch occurs at about 600 to 650 feet up and is half-way between the waterfall crux and the pitch at 850 feet, where the gully is divided by a stack of rock. The gully is divided by a "boss of rock," which is mentioned in an account of the gully in the "Sligachan Book," where a party records looking at the pitch and abandoning it. The usual route goes up a broad chimney on the right, but partly through ignorance of the exact line of the direct route at this point the party attacked the very thin chimney on the left. The leader made the first assault up the overhang to the right but found it intransigent, and while he rested from his labours No. 2 attacked the chimney itself. The initial overhang yields to bridging (facing right) and leads to somewhat easier ground for perhaps 20 feet. The chimney then narrows considerably, and an increasing rarity of already small footholds, combined with a sudden steepening in the last 20 feet, makes the exit very hard. The pitch is 60 to 70 feet high; no half-way stage exists. The back wall is mossy and wet throughout but takes pressure well enough. The usual waterfall spouts over the top. The rock is sound. Technically the pitch impressed the party as being harder than any of the other four main difficulties and the standard was assessed at very severe (or by S.M.C. valuation 4a). After Powell had led this ascent he unroped and Robson led up the pitch.

L. S. POWELL.

LIATHACH.

South Arête of Mullach an Rathain, 19th April 1938.

Straight above the village of Torridon, starting just east of the Annat road junction, a serrated bluff runs right up to the summit of Mullach an Rathain (3,358 feet) of Liathach. It is so conspicuous to anyone staying in Torridon that it is surprising that the "Northern Highlands Guide Book" does not suggest it as quite one of the most attractive ways of ascending the west end of Liathach. There were clear indications that we were by no means the first people to choose it as a line of ascent, at any rate as far as the summit arête. Except for the top 500 feet, it is simply a matter of walking steeply uphill, although at least two interesting pitches of about 100 feet each can be found if the sandstone escarpments are climbed direct. The summit rocks can also be easily avoided by walking up a wide grass gully to the east, but if they are followed up the skyline along the obvious

crest of the ridge, an unexpectedly narrow and exposed arête is found, which is somewhat reminiscent of the easy way up the In-accessible Pinnacle in Skye.

M. B. NETTLETON.

BIDEAN AN EÒIN DEIRG.

The east ridge of this fine but remote mountain (3,430 feet) in Ross-shire at the head of Loch Monar develops for a short distance into a knife-edge of rock, quite sharp to bestride and very inconvenient to avoid. Since the same phenomenon on the Saddle (3,317 feet) to the south of Loch Duich receives its due tribute in the "Western Highlands Guide Book," the same recognition should be claimed for the no less exciting arête of this more inaccessible mountain.

M. B. N.

AONACH EAGACH.

The "Central Highlands Guide Book" might prove dangerously misleading about the gully that runs down the south face of Aonach Eagach from the col immediately east of Stob Coire Leith, the 3,080-foot summit just west of the narrow part of the ridge. It is called an easy way of escape, but on its descent with two tired beginners on 3rd April 1936 two pitches were encountered near the bottom. The first, a small overhang, was most quickly passed by the last man unroping, after lowering the others, and climbing round it on the west side of the gully. The bottom pitch seemed quite impossible from above, but an escape involving some climbing of a vegetable nature was available also on the west. It seems certainly unwise to suggest that this gully is a simple walk off, though it is in other ways a good short cut.

M. B. N.

THE BUACHAILLE ETIVE MOR.

On 28th August 1938 Messrs J. K. W. Dunn, A. M. MacAlpine, W. H. Murray, and J. B. Russell (all J.M.C.S.) made what may be, for all that is known to the contrary, the first ascent of a gully lying several hundred feet south of the Chasm. No rope was used. This gully is some 500 feet long, contains about eight pitches, and is moderately difficult. The two final pitches might almost be called difficult. All the lower ones are easy and are separated by long stretches of walking; some might readily be varied to severe standard. The gully lies about ten minutes' walk from the road, and is recommended as an interesting off-day's scrambling on clean rock.

W. H. MURRAY.

CLIMBS ON AONACH DUBH, WEST FACE.

Compare "*Central Highlands Guide*," p. 85.

1. *D Buttress*.—The bottom tier of this buttress, like the lower parts of all the buttresses on the face, is grassy and loose, and is best avoided by the prominent ledge cutting across the face below the steeper rock part of the cliff. The start on D Buttress proper is about 6 yards beyond the bounding gully on the left (*i.e.*, gully between Buttresses C and D), up a corner. A short overhang follows to a grass shelf sloping up and back into the bounding gully. A traverse to the right across an easy wall leads to the crest of the buttress, and this is followed directly upwards to the summit on easy but pleasant rock.

2. High up on the west side of Aonach Dubh, where the gully (No. 2) opens out above Bell's Buttress and the Dinner-Time, there is a steep mass of rock some 200 feet high. In A. E. Robertson's photograph in the "*Guide*" it is seen as a small dark patch at the top of the gully. Half-way up it is crossed horizontally by a grass shelf. The climb is started at the lowest point of the rocks with a short pitch with two mantelshelf ledges leading round into a shallow gully. Actually this point is easier to reach by means of the gully itself. A few feet up the gully a small pinnacle (really a block of rock resting on a narrow ledge) is climbed on the right to a stance on top. Belay in crack at back. There follows an exposed and difficult movement to the right, up and round a corner, to a small stance on the true crest of the buttress, from whence it is possible to look almost vertically down to the foot of the climb. Forty feet of steep but easier rock lead to the grass ledge mentioned above, and which offers an easy way off.

The upper part of the buttress awaits exploration and should yield a good climb. The first 15 feet above the grass ledge overhang and are trying on the arms.

Above climbs done on 10th September 1938 by W. A. Gilmour and J. D. B. Wilson, J.M.C.S.

BEN NEVIS—SOUTH TRIDENT BUTTRESS.

On 18th September Mr E. A. M. Wedderburn and the writer ascended the original route on the lower crag, as described by Dr Macphée in the new "*Nevis Guide*." As compared with the route by the writer and described on p. 136 of this volume of the *Journal* there seems little if any difference in length or difficulty. The two routes converge above the difficulties. In the top section of the buttress a short vertical crack pitch up a centrally placed wall of good rock gave an excellent difficult finish.

J. H. B. BELL.

BEN NEVIS—RUBICON WALL.

On the same day, 18th September, the starts and finishes of the original route and that described on p. 202 of this volume of the *Journal* were re-examined during a descent of Observatory Buttress. The routes appear to be quite distinct throughout, and the second route would probably be better described as a Left Edge Route on Rubicon Wall, as it seems unlikely that one can go farther to the left.

J. H. B. B.

BIDEAN NAM BIAN—CRYPT ROUTE.

This route goes up the central chimney below the arch of the Church Door, and is largely inside the mountain, in a twisted chimney. It is not possible to emerge directly upwards through a hole in the roof, but by another exit so as to join the ordinary way before the arch is reached. The writer climbed this alone in August 1934 and once again since. Others have also reported this as a new discovery since then. It is certain, however, that it was first climbed before 1934, and any information as to the first ascent would be welcomed.

J. H. B. B.

BRAERIACH PINNACLES.

On 19th June I spent a day alone, starting from and returning to White Bridge, on Braeriach and Cairn Toul. I climbed Black Pinnacle from the floor of Coire Bhrochain by what may be a new route in its upper section. Here the Pinnacle overhangs on the left side, and is impossible of ascent near the left edge, where the formation is slabby like the roof tiles of a house. A yard or two to the right I climbed a steep, narrow crack about 40 feet long. This was somewhat difficult, but the holds were adequate. Easier rocks led back to the crest and so to the first tooth, then easily across the main summit to the gap in about forty-five minutes from the corrie. From here I viewed Braeriach Pinnacle above the gully bed. It has a sort of neck a few yards back from the outer point and along a level ridge, which I thought might be attained by a short, hard climb from the upper gully. The sharp vertical edge descending from the outer point appears impossible. I descended the gully well below this and below the pitch in the gully, and then climbed up the outer face or wall of the Braeriach Pinnacle on good slabs, several variations possible, finishing in about thirty minutes at the little neck previously mentioned on the narrow, level summit ridge.

J. H. B. B.

THE MUNROS.

Mr G. G. Elliott has now, after twelve years, completed the ascent of the 277 Munros which appear in the 1933 Edition of the "General Guide Book." This includes the extra Munro Beinn Tarsuinn, north of Kinlochewe. We wish to congratulate Mr Elliott, but hear a disquieting rumour that Mr A. L. Cram has done likewise and is now engaged in repeating the performance with the object of including all the tops this time. The Editor climbed his one hundredth Munro on New Year's Day, 1938. There is still time!

THE EDITOR.

THE COMPASS—A WARNING TO PHOTOGRAPHERS.

It is not generally known that modern photo-electric exposure meters, such as are commonly carried by photographers nowadays, contain a small but powerful permanent magnet, which has a much more disturbing effect on a compass than a mere mass of iron. The actual deviation depends partly on the distance and partly on the relative orientation of compass and magnet. The following table, based on experiments with a prismatic compass and an "ombrux" meter, shows the *maximum* deviation which the writer was able to obtain at the stated distances. For comparison the results of similar experiments with two ice-axes are recorded as well. It should be remembered that a compass in use would probably be held at a distance of between 1 and 2 feet from any article in the pocket or rucksack. Further comment is unnecessary.

Distance.	2 feet.	1 foot.	6 inches.
" Ombrux meter " . . .	1°	10°	65°
Ice-axe " A " . . .	0°	0°	1°
Ice-axe " B " . . .	0°	0°	2°

J. Y. MACDONALD.

MARINE CLIMBING.

A most enjoyable and unusual holiday in which cruising, climbing, fishing, and bathing could be mixed in the desired proportions can be obtained by chartering a boat on the west coast. Sailing from the Clyde one could, without undue haste, climb in Glencoe, on Ben Nevis, in Torridon, Skye, and Mull all inside a fortnight.

Anyone interested in this type of holiday should write to the Rev. H. Chalmers, M.A., 26 Whitfield Road, Stockton Heath,

Warrington, Lancs. Mr Chalmers owns the motor yacht "Evadne," which provides comfortable accommodation for a crew and ten passengers, six in two-berth cabins and four in the deck-house. He is able to arrange for cruises of a fortnight at the price of £10 per head for parties of ten (rather more for smaller parties). This cost includes all food, fuel, etc., and the services of a skilled navigator, whose wife cooks and caters. As cruises are arranged to suit the requirements of the party this obviously offers a fine opportunity of climbing on otherwise inaccessible hills.

E. A. M. WEDDERBURN.

GOLDEN EAGLES IN ARRAN.

With reference to notes which have appeared in the *Journal* and the "Guide Book" regarding the disappearance of the golden eagle from Arran, a correspondent writes to say that a pair have been nesting in Glen Iorsa for the last few seasons. H. MACROBERT.

S.M.C. ABROAD.

W. N. Ling was in the Maderanerthal and at Göschener Alp for the latter part of July and beginning of August with the President, P. J. H. Unna, and two other members, R. Corry and J. M. Davidson. They were favoured with mostly good weather, and successfully scaled five peaks. Beginning with the Oberalpstock, they next climbed the Scheerhorn, from which they had admirable views. Later they had a nice climb on the Dössistock. The best climb was the Grosse Windgälle. The glacier is receding, and it is not easy to get a lodgment on the rocks. At the only point where this is possible a difficult chimney with smooth rocks and scanty holds has to be climbed, and there were one or two other sporting pitches. From Göschener Alp the Sustenhorn with its impressive cornices was climbed, and some very fine views of the Oberland peaks obtained. The weather was now showing signs of breaking, and after a visit to the Damma Hut and some walks the party returned home.

G. Graham Macphee spent a few days in the Alps and, with various climbing companions, made the following ascents—28th July: Lenzspitze, 4,300 metres; Nadelhorn, 4,330 metres; Ulrichshorn, 3,929 metres. 29th July: Ulrichshorn, again 3,929 metres. 31st July: Schwarzries; Jäghorn by the Jägiwand, 3,209 metres. 1st August: Fletschhorn, 4,001 metres; Laquinhorn, 4,005 metres. 2nd August: Weissries, 4,031 metres. 3rd August:

Portjengrat, 3,657 metres. 6th August: Egginergrat, 3,370 metres. 7th August: Allalinhorn, 4,030 metres; Feekopf, 3,912 metres. Traversed to Alphubeljoch from Britannia Hut to Taesch.

C. R. Steven and C. M. Steven (J.M.C.S.) were in the Saas Fee and Zermatt districts from 28th July till 13th August. They met Dr G. Graham Macphee at the Mischabel Hut and with him climbed the Ulrichshorn prior to going to the Weissmies Hut to join the meet of the Diablerets Section of the S.A.C. Also taking part in this were T. D. Mackinnon and J. A. Brown (J.M.C.S.). During the Club week they took part in the following expeditions: Schwarzmies, Fletschhorn and Laquinhorn, Weissmies traverse, Rimpfischhorn, Egginergrat, Strahlhorn. After the conclusion of the Meet they climbed the Dufourspitze of Monte Rosa from the Bétemps Hut in company with Mackinnon and Brown, but a later attempt to cross from the Schönbühl Hut to the Mountet Hut was frustrated by bad weather on the Col Durand.

Extract from a letter from W. J. Bannister, c/o Saudi Arabian Mining Syndicate, Jeddah, Hejaz, Saudi Arabia: "I have discovered some very fine rock-climbing in Arabia Deserta, almost equal to the best at home, but my activities are limited to the scope of a one-man party. Also to restricted hours as the temperature is 100 and more in the shade these days and the rocks get hottish, even more than the Skye gabbro in 1933. Our local Ben is a miniature Coolin, 600 feet above us but 3,820 feet in all, and I climbed it yesterday by the 'Pinnacle Ridge.'"

J. H. B. Bell was in the Chamonix district in August. The weather was mixed, and the rather meagre bag of ascents, in company with Mr F. G. Stangle, included the Aiguille du Tour by its west ridge, which was well iced and sporting, the traverse of the Aiguille du Chardonnet up the west shoulder and down the Arête Forbes, the Aiguille Adams Reilly, the Tour Noire, and the opening day on the Petit Charmoz, the M and the Pic Albert. A few things were also learned of the difficulties of an ill-directed route up the Mont Mallet icefall and a presumptuous attempt on the icy defences of the Brèche de l'Amone during a defeated attempt on Mont Dolent from the Argentièrre glacier.

E. A. M. Wedderburn was in the Chamonix district and ascended the Dent du Réquin, the Aiguille du Géant, and ascended from the Argentièrre glacier to the Epaule Ouest of the Chardonnet, only to be nearly bombarded out of an upper couloir by a fusillade of rocks. An attempt on Mont Blanc was defeated by high wind.

G. A. Collie, J. D. B. Wilson (J.M.C.S.), with W. A. Gilmour and M. Da Fano, were in the Mont Blanc region for the latter part

of July and the first week in August. Two days were spent training at Trêlatête. From the Cabane Albert Premier, the Aig. de Purtscheller was climbed by crossing the col of that name and using the south-east ridge. Ski-ing was indulged in the next day on the Glacier du Tour, and the Aiguille du Chardonnet traversed the day following, in marvellous weather, by the Arête Forbes and down by the normal route. An ascent was later made to the Réquin Hut from which the Aiguille du Plan was climbed and an abortive attempt on the Dent du Réquin made. Two days later, from the Couvercle Hut, Les Courtes were traversed via the Col des Courtes and the Col des Cristaux.

Mr B. H. Humble writes :—

There was a large Scottish party at Riffelberg for the second fortnight of July, including B. H. Humble (S.M.C.), I. G. Charleson, J. N. Ledingham, and W. M. MacLellan (J.M.C.S.), M. Morrison (Cairngorm Club), and J. and G. Paterson. They arrived on the 17th, and during the first week, with two Swiss members of the S.A.C., climbed Cima di Jazzi, Breithorn, and Klein Matterhorn from the Gandegg Hut, with many bouts of forenoon and afternoon rock-climbing on the Riffelhorn and much grand bathing in the Riffelsee. The weather broke down on the 23rd, and the return 3,000 feet from Zermatt up to Riffelberg in the early hours of the 24th, in darkness and pouring rain after a dance at the Zermatterhof, might well be classified as an ascent. On the 25th Humble and Charleson with Miss J. F. Figgis climbed on the glacier face of the Riffelhorn in the forenoon and on the Riffelsee face in the afternoon, being joined then by J. Paterson and Morrison. On the 26th one party did the Stockhorn, while another visited the Belvedere. On the 28th Ledingham, MacLellan, and others climbed Dufourspitze of Monte Rosa from the Bétemps Hut.

On the same day Humble and the Patersons went up to the Belvedere, while Charleson and Morrison (who had gone up the previous day) traversed the Matterhorn with guides. They left at 3 A.M., were on the summit by 7 A.M., descended the Italian Ridge, and returned over the Furgg Joch, reaching the Schwarzsee by 3 P.M. in excellent weather throughout. On the 29th Humble and the Patersons left the Belvedere at 2.15 A.M. with William Truffer and Emil Perrin, and led the procession up the Swiss Ridge, reaching the summit at 6.35 A.M. It was misty on the upper part and conditions not so good as the previous day. They descended by the Italian Ridge, expecting some peace after the crowded condition of the Swiss Ridge. Instead of peace it was war. From within a few hundred feet of the summit till well below the Col du Lion they met what seemed to be the whole Italian army toiling up these interminable ropes. They were in parties of three and four, carrying guns, bayonets, and ice-axes, and some of them did not seem to be

liking it much. Now and then the descending party gave them a friendly haul up. They had hoped to rest at the upper hut, but it too was in the hands of soldiery with wireless apparatus and all. Owing to the congested state of the ropes the two parties lost touch with each other. Humble and Truffer returned over the Furgg Joch to the Schwarzsee by 2.15 P.M. Humble crossed the glacier to Riffelberg later in the afternoon and the Patersons got in an hour or two later. The Meet then broke up.

REVIEWS.

Blank on the Map. By Eric Shipton. Hodder & Stoughton. 18s. 289 pages, 50 illustrations, and 3 maps.

This is a fascinating account of the exploration of about 1,800 square miles of unknown mountainous country in the Karakorams between Hansa and the Yarkand River. The expedition lasted about five months, and for most of that time had to live on its own food supplies in uninhabited country. There were four white men, Shipton and Tilman (climbers), Spender (surveyor), and Auden (geologist), with a force of Sherpa and Balti porters. Personal luggage was cut down drastically to a small minimum, and even so, very heavy relaying was necessary over many passes. The main object was exploration and survey work, the results of which are seen in the map at the end. The peak K2 was the only fixed point available for this. River fording was often very difficult, and great difficulties were met in following rivers enclosed between zigzag lines of conglomerate cliff many thousands of feet high. The glaciers always presented a middle section of pinnacled ice of fantastic appearance and difficulty. But the joy of exploration in that marvellous country runs throughout the book, and the interest is aroused early by a graphic account of Younghusband's first crossing of the Mustagh Pass in 1887. Several peaks of 20,000 feet and over were climbed almost incidentally.

J. H. B. B.

Himalayan Assault, being an account of the French Himalayan Expedition of 1936, translated by Nea E. Morin. Published by Methuen & Co. Ltd., London. Price, 15s. 203 pages, 48 illustrations.

The reason for the organisation of the expedition to Gasherbrum I. or the Hidden Peak in the Karakoram was that although the British, Americans, and Germans had all had several Himalayan expeditions,

there had been no French national expedition, and the Hidden Peak was selected as a suitable objective. None of the ten members of the party had any previous Himalayan experience, and it was a wonderful achievement that they should have mastered the difficult portion of the climb before an unusually early monsoon compelled them to abandon the attempt.

The story is told simply and modestly, and the highest praise which can be given to the translator is to say that the book reads as if it had been written originally in English. There are the usual appendices, including such subjects as diet, geology, equipment, and photography, and three maps. The illustrations do not approach the perfection of some recent publications, but they are good and illustrate the text adequately. It is a book well worth reading.

A. H.

Peaks and Valleys. By F. S. Smythe. A. & C. Black. 12s. 6d. 129 pages, 76 illustrations.

This is a companion volume to "The Mountain Scene" and contains a selection of Mr Smythe's beautiful mountain photographs, the majority of which are of Himalayan views and one of which is in colour, and each is accompanied by a commentary on the picture explaining both topographical and photographic details of interest.

E. A. M. W.

Songs for Climbers. Edited by B. H. Humble and W. M. M'Lellan. Published by W. M'Lellan & Co. Ltd., 240 Hope Street, Glasgow, C.2. Price, 1s. 3d.

This little book containing in all thirty-two songs is similar in general atmosphere to that successful compilation by John Hirst, "Songs of the Mountaineers," which many of us remember well. It is, of course, shorter and the attention is more directed to Scottish climbing. In some cases, no doubt, songs, like verse, lose greatly by being parodied; but climbing does not yet possess a store of verse and song peculiarly its own, while climbers are sociable mortals who occasionally revel in the heated and jovial atmosphere of the post-prandial concert. There this little book will come into its own.

Meanwhile it is gratifying that some English clubs as well as our own are supporting the venture. All profits, if any, are to go to the maintenance of the Scottish first-aid centres for climbers, so it is hoped that everyone will help.

J. H. B. B.

Alpine Journal. May 1938.

In this number there are three articles about climbing in the Himalayas. The first of these describes the expedition made by Shipton, Tilman, Spender, and Auden to the country in the region of the Shaksgam River. The party explored and mapped hitherto more or less unknown districts, including the north-west glaciers of K2. F. S. Smythe writes of his visit to Garhwal last year, and John Hunt describes how a small party had a very sporting time in the Sikkim Himalayas and climbed the south-west summit of Nepal Peak. There is an excellent account by J. R. Jenkins of the Oxford University expedition to the Caucasus last year. An interesting account of an American party's ascent of Mount Lucania in Alaska, a very entertaining article by L. S. Amery written round a visit to the Eastern Limestone Alps, and a comprehensive Valedictory Address by the retiring President and Editor, Lieutenant-Colonel E. L. Strutt, complete the list of articles. The usual notes, reviews, and obituaries are as varied and stimulating as ever. The S.M.C. welcomes its member, Mr H. E. G. Tyndale, to the Editorship of the *Alpine Journal* and congratulates him upon the honour and wide opportunities which have been conferred on him. May we hope that his new duties will not keep him away from *our* hills?

E. A. M. W.

The Journal of the Fell and Rock Climbing Club, Vol. XII.,
No. 32. Price, 4s. 187 pages, 48 illustrations.

This is an excellent number. Pride of place is given to an admirably succinct description of the opening of the new Club Hut at Brackenclose, illustrated by photographs showing that the building conforms to the sound Lake District policy—now, alas, so dishonoured in most parts—of making full use of the local stone. Space does not permit of reference to each individual item of contents, all of which are of high merit, as also are the numerous illustrative plates; but particularly good are “Horizons,” a philosophic study of simultaneous happenings, mountaineering and political; “A Dream of the English Lakeland,” including a charming sketch of Derwentwater, with an appreciation in the original Chinese all by Chiang Yee; a brief sketch of the author of “John Peel”; a knowledgeable article on “Art in Mountain Photography”; a heretofore unpublished description of an early ascent of Mont Blanc; and a racy account of a holiday in a little-visited corner of the Carpathians. Descriptions of several new climbs are given, mostly severe or worse! The Notes of the very capable Editor refer to Dr Lapage's useful article on

"First Aid on British Mountains" as covering Scotland as well as the Lake District and Wales, though only the latter two areas are really dealt with therein. The Reviews are separately indexed—a useful feature. J. Dow.

Rucksack Club Journal, 1938, Vol. IX., No. 1.

This is an excellent number of varied interest and well illustrated. The reviewer found G. Alan Deane's long article on Lofoten most fascinating. Although the main peaks in that region have been climbed, there are innumerable possibilities for new and difficult ascents on perfect rock faces and ridges with wonderful prospects all around. In good weather one can climb all night on the peaks surrounding the Vestfjord in 68° N. latitude on peaks ranging up to 5,000 feet in height, with unbroken walls of smooth cliff over 2,000 feet in height. What a rock-climbers' paradise, but rather distant! A vivid account of the travails of the 1937 O.U.M.C. Caucasian Expedition, "Towards Ushba," comes from the pen of J. R. Jenkins. "Third Time Lucky," by Frank Kiernan, is a candid and delightful confession of the miseries of first and over-strenuous expeditions to the Alps by British climbers. There are other interesting short articles on the Alps, Dolomites, and Corsica, while our own member, E. W. Hodge, discourses on winter colourings in Scotland. J. H. B. B.

Yorkshire Ramblers' Club Journal, 1938, Vol. VII., No. 23.

This number opens with a thrilling article on an ascent of the Aiguille du Géant in 1909 during a thunderstorm. There follows a description of some little-known Alpine peaks near the sources of the Rhone glacier. Mr Botterill resumes his interrupted yachting memoirs, which usually take him amidst the Western Isles. There is a beautiful illustration of the "Molly" riding peacefully on the summer seas. Then we have an account of a holiday in Lochs Morar, Nevis, and Hourn in an 18-foot-long canvas canoe. The idea might appeal to some of our own members bent on exploring the crags of Ladhar Bheinn. The rest of an interesting number is taken up with caving and with Club activities. The illustrations are excellent, full page with a very narrow margin. In some cases at least, but hardly always, is this an advantage. J. H. B. B.

Cairngorm Club Journal, No. 79, July 1938.

This is an excellent and varied number. R. Park Yunnies, in "Eilean a Cheo," gives a delightful appreciation of Skye which perfectly recalls its magic atmosphere. Other Scottish articles are: "Echoes from the Corries," H. D. Welsh; "Ross-shire Ridge," R. Mitchell; "Round Applecross," Ruth Jackson. J. A. Parker describes ascents on Mont Blanc and the Eastern Graians, the latter in the company of Gilbert Thomson and Dr Inglis Clark. There are other foreign articles. Finally, we congratulate the Club on its fiftieth anniversary celebration at the Shelter Stone at midnight on 19th June.

J. H. B. B.

American Alpine Journal, 1938.

"Ascent of Mount Lucania in Yukon." "Expedition (unsuccessful) to Mount Hayes in Alaska." "Devil's Tower, Wyoming." "Shiva Temple and Wotan's Throne" ("Lost World Expedition"), Grand Canyon. "Lloyd George Mountains, British Columbia." "Second Ascent of Mount Bryce, British Columbia." "Ascent of Mount Bell, British Columbia." Two articles on New Zealand climbing. "Third American Ascent of Mont Blanc, 1855."

Canadian Alpine Journal, 1937.

"The Harry Snyder Canadian Expedition" (to Snyder Mountains which are part of the main Yukon-Mackenzie Rivers' watershed). "Canadian Climbs, 1937." "Carpathian Interlude." "Mountain Walking," by W. H. Lewin. Four excellent articles on Canadian ski-mountaineering. Two articles on glaciology and one on geology.

Appalachia, June 1938.

"New York Rock Climbs" (with excellent action photos). "Avez-vous fait le Tour de Gaspé?" (an expedition in pictures). "Map Reading and the Use of the Compass." "Across the Peruvian Andes." Notes on equipment, notably a variation of

the Tricouni nail which seems to be the "Hargreaves" nail reinvented.

New Zealand Alpine Journal, 1938.

"Underwood at Last—First Ascent." "Colour Film Photography." "Minarets from the North." "Green from the West." "Mount Cook—A New Route" (east ridge). "First Dampier Traverse." A most impressive list of "First Ascents and Explorations."

Himalayan Journal, 1938.

"Sources of the Subansiri and Siyorn." "Shaksgam Expedition." "Winter Visit to Zemu Glacier." "Ascent of Nanda Kot." "Ascent of Chomolhari." "Nanga Parbat, 1937." "Future of Climbing in Tibet" (with suggestions).

Journal of Mountain Club of South Africa, 1938.

"The Search for New Rock Routes." "Rescue Work." "Zeebasberg, Waboomsriver." "The Little Winterhoek, Frontal Route." "Hottentots-Holland: Pisgah North Wall." "Kilimanjaro." "Table Mountain—Three New Climbs."

Mazama, December 1937.

"Climbs on Grand and Middle Teton." "Lightning Strikes Mount Moran." "Climbing from the Yoho Valley." "First Ascent of Bonanza Peak."

Sierra Club Bulletin, April 1938.

"Excerpts from John Muir's Diary." "Climbers' Guide to the High Sierra." "Prolegomena to a Philosophy of Mountaineering." "Unforgettable Meals." "California's Grizzly Bears."

The Climbers' Club Journal, 1938.

An Index number with well-assorted literary fare—the best being “Two Caucasus Climbs,” by R. A. Hodgkin and R. L. Beaumont, the climb on Ushba being particularly noteworthy. “Snowdon in the Seventies” is both historical and daft, while “On Losing the Way” and “Helyg Week-end” differ in not being historical. The Cambridge night climbers are dealt with, and good advice is given in “Rock-climbing Photography,” in which the illustrations are excellent, as are all the plates. Welsh climbing in 1937 is reviewed. “Traverse of les Ecrins,” by J. C. Ryle, and “The Cornish Cliffs” will interest many, and under “Accidents and First Aid” important information is given.

A note suggests the reclassification of the Skye climbs, characterising the present classification as both “dangerous and boring” from lack of uniformity. New variations in Skye climbs are noted—the Coruisk face of Sgurr a Greadaidh and Sron Na Ciche, Coir a' Ghrunnda face.

D. MYLES.

EDITORIAL AND LATE NOTES.

THE Club desires to extend a hearty welcome to the following gentlemen who have been admitted to membership at the Committee Meeting on 22nd October: Messrs J. E. Bothwell, I. G. Charleson, M. H. Cooke, J. W. Glen, W. Lawson, Jun., G. Peat, C. M. Steven, J. M'K. Stewart.

The revised “Cairngorms Guide,” a handsome volume with a large appendix on new climbs and many new illustrations, has just been issued. It is hoped that members will buy copies and try out the new climbs. It is hoped that the “Southern Highlands Guide” will be published in spring.

Owing to pressure of space the New Climbs Section of the Journal and some other matter have been held over until the April number. This will be an enlarged Jubilee Number and will be mainly historical in character.

The Editor again wishes to convey the thanks of the Club to those contributors who have presented illustration blocks.

THE JUNIOR MOUNTAINEERING CLUB OF SCOTLAND.

GLASGOW SECTION.

EASTER MEET, 1938—AVIEMORE,
21ST TO 23RD MARCH.

Members.—W. M'Lellan, J. N. Ledingham, A. P. Stewart, W. C. Murray, W. Murray, A. Moritz, Rodgers, Edwards, Kay, R. D. Walton, W. G. Marskell, W. Hawthorne, Higgins, A. Laidlaw, D. Laidlaw, Cranston, and J. A. Brown. *S.M.C.*—W. C. Watson. *Inverness Section.*—Sturrock, Groves, and Corsie. *Guests.*—Astbury, Bryson, and Porter.

This was the second year in succession that the Meet was held at Aviemore, and judging by the numbers attending, a popular choice. Typical Easter weather, very cold, strong winds and driving snow was experienced throughout the Meet.

Friday.—Messrs Rodger, Astbury, Bryson, and Edwards climbed Carn an Lochan and Macdhuì from Loch Morlich.

Saturday.—M'Lellan, Ledingham, Watson (S.M.C.), Stewart, Moritz, and Brown did Carn an Lochan by north ridge, Brown by Snow Gully, then on to Macdhuì and back by Larig Ghru. W. C. Murray, Kay, and Walton did Cairn Gorm and Macdhuì.

Sunday.—W. C. Murray, Walton, Kay, M'Lellan, and Ledingham did Angel's Peak and Cairn Toul, cycling to Lower Bothy. Marskell, Hawthorne, and Higgins did Braeriach (1st top) and Cairn Toul. Stewart and Watson (S.M.C.) did Sgoran Dubh. Wm. Murray and J. A. Brown did West Gully of Braeriach and top by Larig Ghru. Rodger, Astbury, Bryson, Porter, and Edwards, by cycle to Lower Bothy and then via Snow Gully to Carn Lochan. Sturrock, Groves, and Corsie (Inverness) did No. 5 Buttress of Sgoran Dubh.

Monday.—A large party climbed Sgoran Dubh, some with the aid of a cycle to the Lower Bothy. This Meet will be remembered for the large number who disappeared every morning on cycle to the disgust of the other hardy members who couldn't obtain one.

Messrs A. Laidlaw, D. Laidlaw, and Cranston spent the Friday night at the Shelter Stone. On Saturday climbed Shelter Stone Crag and on to Corrou Bothy; on Sunday through the Larig Ghru and camped in Rothiemurchus Forest.

The very fine weather and good spirits of all made this again one of the most successful of Meets.

INFORMAL MEETS, 1938.

GLENCOE, 21ST TO 23RD MAY.

Members.—D. Aitken, J. Campbell, W. Cranston, J. T. Dunlop, J. Dunn, J. Ewart, I. Kay, O. Kerrick, A. M'Alpine, D. M'Culloch, J. Marskell, W. H. Murray, A. D. Stewart, D. Waddell. *S.M.C.*—T. M'Kinnon. *Guest.*—D. Laidlaw.

Saturday, 21st.—A. Laidlaw, D. Laidlaw, Cranston, and Kerrick : Ordinary route on Crowberry Ridge.

Sunday, 22nd.—A. & D. Laidlaw, Cranston, Kay, and Kerrick : North Buttress. Murray and Dunlop also M'Alpine and Dunn : Crowberry Ridge (Hyphen Rib). Waddell, Campbell, and Ewart : Crowberry Ridge by Greig's Ledge.

Monday, 23rd.—M'Kinnon, Campbell, Waddell, and Dunlop traversed Aonach Eagach in thick mist and downpour.

ARROCHAR, 12TH JUNE.

Members.—Laidlaw, Kerrick, Cranston, Waddell, Macpherson, J. Campbell, Dunlop, Ewart, M'Alpine, Dunn, Cameron, Zentharn, Walton, Banford.

In good weather various parties climbed on the Spear Head Arête, Cobbler, and on Sugach Buttress.

FAIR MEET, 1938—C.I.C. HUT, BEN NEVIS,
15TH TO 18TH JULY.

Members.—M'Culloch, Marskell, Kay, and R. D. Walton.

Saturday, 16th.—M'Culloch and Marskell : North-East Buttress. Kay and Walton : Raeburn's Route and variation.

Sunday, 17th.—M'Culloch and Marskell : Observatory Ridge. Kay and Walton : Ledge Route of Carn Dearg.

Monday, 18th.—Kay, M'Culloch, and Marskell : Tower Ridge. Weather wet and dull.

PERTH SECTION.

INFORMAL MEETS, 1938.

October 1937.—Creag Mhor and Beinn Heasgarnich. *November 1937.*—Ben More and Stobinian. *December 1937.*—Vorlich and Stuc a Chroin. *January 1938.*—Glen Clova (rock-climbing).

February 1938.—Ben Lui (snow-climbing). *March 1938.*—Tarmachans. *April 1938.*—Stob Ghabhar. *May 1938.*—Lochnagar. *June 1938.*—Cairngorms, joint Meet with Inverness. *July 1938.*—Carn Gorm, Meall Garbh, Carn Mairg. *August 1938.*—Lochnagar (rock-climbing). *September 1938.*—Buachaille Etive Mor (rock-climbing).

INVERNESS SECTION.

MIDSUMMER HOLIDAY MEET—C.I.C. HUT, BEN NEVIS, 9TH TO 11TH JULY.

Members.—T. C. Corsie, R. B. Frere, B. E. Grove, N. S. Kiernan, A. MacPhee, H. M. Morrison, C. Spencer, J. D. Sturrock, and A. E. Thurgood.

Weather conditions during the Meet were vile. As each member arrived a further array of sodden garments was hoisted in the Hut, and even successful negotiations with the stove with a resultant fog-like inferno failed to dispel the dripping dampness. On Sunday, 10th, all present, in three parties of three, climbed the Tower Ridge, commencing with the East Ridge of the Douglas Boulder. Frere, Grove, and MacPhee attained the Tower by the Recess Route, while the others followed the Tunnel. The rocks were streaming, there was cold, lashing rain and thick mist. The weather was even worse on Monday. Frere climbed the Douglas Boulder by the West Ridge. Notwithstanding the elements the Meet was thoroughly enjoyed.

INFORMAL MEETS.

27th March 1938.—Meet at Kilfinnan for climbing Sron à Choire Gairbh. Present, 9.

10th April 1938.—What was to have been a joint Meet with the Edinburgh Section was precluded owing to lack of accommodation at the Hut, and an informal Meet was held instead. Frere, Corsie, and Gunn did Castle Direct. Sturrock, Kiernan, Morrison, Burnett, and Grove did Tower Gully on good snow. Others rambled. Perfect weather. Present, 12, including 1 guest.

15th May 1938.—Meet at Aultguish Inn. Climbed Ben Dearg. Filthy weather. Present, 12, including 4 guests.

12th June 1938.—Joint Meet with Perth Section at Aviemore. Climbed Bynack Mor and Cairn Gorm. Again filthy weather. Present, 4 Inverness members and 1 guest.

31st July 1938.—Meet at Kinlochewe. Climbed Slioch. Still again filthy weather. Present, 11.

14th August 1938.—Meet at Aviemore. Climbed No. 1 Buttress of Sgoran Dubh. Mild, sunny weather. Present, 7.

8th September 1938.—Frere, Spencer, and Corsie did Crowberry Ridge direct, including traverse from Abraham's Ledge.

18th September 1938.—Meet at Fort William. North-East Buttress of Ben Nevis climbed via Raeburn's 18-minute route to first platform. Dull weather. Present, 5.

EDINBURGH SECTION.

EASTER MEET, 1938—C.I.C. HUT, BEN NEVIS, 9TH TO 11TH APRIL.

Members.—J. K. Annand, J. S.-B. Caldicott, T. C. Dow, A. F. Down, J. Down, R. O. H. Down, P. M. Fea, A. H. Hendry, F. Kohler, C. Macfarlane, L. M. Middleton, G. Peat, J. M'K. Stewart, F. Yeaman. *S.M.C.*—I. H. Ogilvie, R. N. Traquair. *Guest.*—Franz Kreuter.

Saturday, 9th April.—Hendry, followed by Middleton and J. S.-B. Caldicott, arrived early. Traquair, R. Down, Kohler, and Stewart arrived about lunch-time. Dow and Macfarlane spent the afternoon on the Castle Ridge, whilst the others enjoyed good sport on steep snow slopes below the Tridents.

Sunday, 10th April.—Caldicott, Middleton, and Traquair climbed the Douglas Boulder by the west arête and continued up the Tower Ridge to the summit. R. O. H. Down, Hendry, Peat, and Stewart set out for the North-East Buttress, climbing in two parties. They made an unsuccessful attempt on the "eastern climb," and after 500 feet of climbing retreated to the first platform and ascended the buttress by the ordinary route. Annand and Yeaman visited Carn Mor Dearg and the Aonachs. Ogilvie, A. F. Down, J. Down, and Franz Kreuter arrived at the Hut shortly after breakfast and set out for the Gardyloo Gully, and after fourteen hours' hard work returned to the Hut at midnight. They experienced severe ice conditions and had to abandon the climb on reaching a point about 40 feet above the Chockstone. Macfarlane and Dow climbed No. 3 Gully. Seventeen slept in the Hut that night, eight in comfort and the remainder on the floor!

Monday, 11th April.—Annand and Hendry spent a fine day on the Tower Ridge, returning by Corrie Leas. Caldicott and Middleton ascended Carn Mor Dearg by the arête. R. O. H. Down and Ogilvie made a climb on the east side of the Tower Ridge up to a point below the Echo Wall. All but three left in the afternoon. The Meet was a record one for attendance and for weather, certainly the most enjoyable held for many years.

J. M'K. S.

SUMMER MEET—GLEN BRITTLE, ISLE OF SKYE.
SEPTEMBER 1938.

Members.—G. Peat, R. O. H. Down, F. C. Yeaman, L. Middleton, P. Fea, J. Russell (Glasgow).

A very enjoyable fortnight was had by the whole party, which confined itself to No. 3 climbs. The weather was not very kind to us, but we managed to get in nine days of very enjoyable climbing, including one in which we joined up with three members of the S.M.C.
R. O. H. D.

AUTUMN MEET—CLACHAIG.

Members.—G. Peat, T. Dow, F. E. O'Riordan, J. R. Down, R. O. H. Down, J. Russell (Glasgow), I. H. Ogilvie (Hon. President), and J. Home.

Sunday, 18th September.—Ogilvie, Dow, Down, and O'Riordan ascended Stob Coire nam Beith by the Cracks Climb, and then went on to Bidean nam Bian and Stob Coire nan Lochan.

Monday, 19th.—Ogilvie, Home, and J. R. Down climbed Buachaille Etive Mor by the Lagangarbh Chimney.

R. O. H. D.

INFORMAL MEETS.

Several informal Meets were held during the summer at Clachaig and at Coupal Bridge, climbs being carried out on Bidean nam Bian, Stob Corrie nan Lochan, and Buachaille Etive.

PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION.

The winner of the first Photographic Competition held by the Edinburgh Section was M. H. Cooke, for his excellent print of "The Weisshorn." The following were specially commended for their good work: L. M. Middleton, "Looking East from Bidean nam Bian"; J. R. Hewit, "On the Castle Ridge, Ben Nevis." The competition was judged by Mr D. J. Fraser (S.M.C.) and Mr J. B. Home (S.M.C.).

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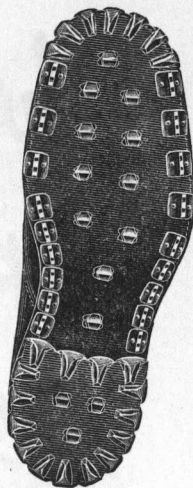
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