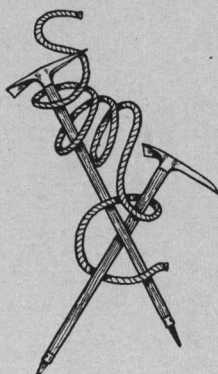


THE SCOTTISH MOUNTAINEERING CLUB JOURNAL

EDITED BY J. H. B. BELL



| | PAGE |
|--|------|
| Foreword | 97 |
| A Short History of Scottish Climbing—II. E. A. M. Wedderburn | 98 |
| The Monadh Liath "Munros." J. Gall Inglis | 109 |
| The Geology of Glen Coe. E. B. Bailey | 116 |
| A New-Year Camp. G. G. Elliot | 120 |
| The Conquest of Buachaille Etive. Aodh Macbaph | 123 |
| The Cuillin Ridge and Blaven. Ian G. Charleson | 127 |
| New Climbs | 134 |
| In Memoriam—J. G. Inglis; F. Greig; A. Harker; R. E. Osborne | 140 |
| Proceedings—Notes—S.M.C. Abroad—Reviews—J.M.C.S. | |

THE SCOTTISH MOUNTAINEERING CLUB
SYNOD HALL, CASTLE TERRACE, EDINBURGH, 1

Agents: EDINBURGH, Douglas & Foulis; GLASGOW, Wm. Porteous & Co.

EDITORIAL NOTE.

THE Committee, having decided to carry on the *Journal* as usual, but in a slightly reduced form in order to meet the rising cost of paper and printing, as long as this is reasonably possible, the Editor foresees some degree of shortage of fresh material in the form of articles, photographs, and notes. This is certain to be the case sooner or later, and he appeals to members to go over their past records and photograph albums and to offer any hitherto unpublished accounts of expeditions which may be of sufficient interest to maintain a live *Journal* during this difficult period. Many of our members, as well as those of the J.M.C.S., who are now serving with H.M. Forces, have already written to say that they are looking forward to receiving this number and expressing the hope that the *Journal* will be able to carry on.

All Notices for April Number should be sent to the Hon. Editor, DR J. H. B. BELL, THE KNOWE, CLACKMANNAN, as soon as possible, and not later than 1st March 1940.

Copies of the *Journal* can be obtained from the Agents or through any Bookseller.

BOOKS FOR SALE.

About forty books on mountaineering subjects, which formed part of the library of the late Mr James Rose, who was a member of the Club, are for sale. Inquiries should be made to Mrs James Rose, 29 Beechgrove Avenue, Aberdeen. The books are in first-class condition and the following are the most important :—

- Abraham, G. D., "The Complete Mountaineer." 1907.
- Auldjo, J., "Ascent to the Summit of Mont Blanc." 1828.
- Collie, N., "Climbing in the Himalaya, etc." 1902.
- Conway, W. M., "Climbing, etc., in the Karakorams." 1894.
- Conway, W. M., "The Alps from End to End." 1895.
- Cunningham and Abney, "Pioneers of the Alps." 1888.
- Dent, C. D., "Mountaineering," Badminton Library. 1892.
- Mummery, A. F., "Climbs in the Alps and Caucasus." 1895.
- Whymper, Ed., "Scrambles Amongst the Alps." (Fourth Edition.) 1893.
- Whymper, Ed., "Great Andes of the Equator." 1892.



8th April 1939

Allan Arthur

FALLS OF GLOMACH
NEAR KILLILAN, ROSS-SHIRE
(Highest waterfall in Britain, over 370 feet)

THE SCOTTISH MOUNTAINEERING CLUB JOURNAL

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FOREWORD.

FOR the second time in the history of the Club the British Empire is at war with Germany. Those of us who remember the last war were entitled to expect that we should not see such another calamity in our lifetime, but that expectation has not been fulfilled and the Empire has once again been driven to take up arms against the forces of ruthless and undisguised aggression.

The sport of mountaineering, more than any other, brings members of all nations together in pursuit of their common interest, and the meetings in the huts in the Alps and other mountain ranges create a spirit of *camaraderie* and understanding which, had it extended to the political sphere, would surely have led to international differences being settled at the conference table instead of by recourse to arms.

Many of our members are already in the armed forces of the Crown, and others are engaged in essential National Service. The qualities of the mountaineer—courage, determination, and physical fitness—are those which will stand the nation in good stead in its time of trial, and there is no doubt of the determination of all to see the struggle carried through to a successful conclusion.

The war has cast a shadow over all of us and it will necessarily curtail our activities. The Annual Dinner has been cancelled, but it is hoped to continue the issue of the *Journal*, to hold Meets at New Year and Easter, and to have evening meetings at the Club Room and in Glasgow, if at all possible.

THE PRESIDENT.

A SHORT HISTORY OF SCOTTISH CLIMBING.

II.—From 1918 to the Present Day.

By E. A. M. Wedderburn.

"History is Bunk."—HENRY FORD.

THE last twenty years have seen a great increase in the popularity of climbing all over the world. The great publicity attending the sport generally, and the Everest and other huge expeditions in particular, has fostered this. To this increase have also contributed the spread of the love of the out-of-doors, improved and cheaper transport, the growth of the Youth Hostel movement, unemployment, and the psychological distress caused by the Treaty of Versailles. The general lines of development have favoured rock climbing rather than snow and ice work, and in parts of the Alps where all the main ridges and faces possible by ordinary means have been climbed, new routes have been made with the aid of ring spikes and other devices. This most recent development has so far only taken place in regions where routes made without "artificial aids" have reached a very high degree of difficulty, and the introduction of this technique into Scotland seems to be far off. All the factors mentioned above, with the exception of the last, have influenced post-war climbing in Scotland very markedly. Continental climbing has also been much affected by nationalism and by government support. Scottish Nationalists do not appear to be very interested in climbing, except into the Wallace Monument, and it is rather remarkable that with all this money being spent on national physical fitness nothing should have been done officially to encourage what we know to be the best of sports.

Post-war climbing in Scotland falls into four periods or phases which can be clearly distinguished in the details which follow. These periods may be called the Coming of the English, the Dark Ages, the Renaissance of the S.M.C., and the Triumph of Democracy.

During the war of 1914-18* there was naturally little time or inclination for climbing. In the summer of 1918, however, a party consisting of L. G. Shadbolt, D. R. Pye, and G. H. L. Mallory set the ball rolling with vigour in Skye, making several fine new routes, including the Crack of Doom and the Slab and Groove climbs. In the same year E. W. Steeple and G. Barlow were back making new conquests, and the work which they did in preparation for the "Skye Guide Book," which appeared in 1923, resulted in a number of new routes, including eleven on the Coire Ghrunnda face of Sron na Ciche. 1919 saw many other English parties in Skye, including C. F. Holland, H. R. C. Carr, and Miss D. E. Pilley, who discovered the Cioch West climb; the following year G. D. Abraham, H. Harland, and G. Summers climbed the north face of Knight's Peak. Another visitor in 1920 was E. Lüscher, who did new routes on the Third Pinnacle, and in 1921 A. S. Pigott and J. Wilding showed what endless possibilities there were for new routes in Skye by making two on the south face of the Inaccessible Pinnacle. In 1923 the publication of the "Skye Guide" seemed to put an end to the period of English activity in Skye, and in the following year, although Steeple and Barlow were at it again, making their "Guide Book" out of date, the only other party which did new routes was F. S. Smythe and J. H. B. Bell on the West Trap Route of Sgurr Sgumain and a new Cioch West Route. 1925 and 1926 were blank years in Skye, as in the rest of Scotland, so far as new routes were concerned, and although the number of climbers visiting Skye was steadily increasing their initiative was not. A Climbers' Club party did some slight pioneering in 1927, and in 1928 Chief Guide Wright began his summer visits which produced a number of not very important novelties. 1932 was a relatively good year in all this barrenness, yielding Engineer's Slant by D. L. Reid, Sale, and Brown, the Amphitheatre

* As this is being written in early summer for publication in autumn it would be unwise to write "the last war" or even "the Great War."

Wall by A. Horne and H. V. Hughes, and four good climbs by C. A. Cooper, E. Wood Johnson and others, notably on the North Buttress of Sgumain. 1933, when it was unpatriotic to go abroad, was a crowded summer in Skye, but little of note came of it except a few variations by Cambridge climbers and Frankland's Gully on Sgurr Sgumain. From 1924 to 1939 then, only about six first class new climbs were made, all on Sron na Ciche and Sgurr Sgumain. In that period the only new "all-Scottish" climbs were a variation on the Bhasteir Tooth, a small climb on Sgurr na Bannachdich, and another on the South-West Buttress of Sgurr na h-Uamha. None of these new climbs is of very great severity. It also appears that winter and spring visits to Skye have not been so frequent since 1918 as they previously were. Thus it will be seen that climbing in Skye, so far as pioneering is concerned, has, since the war, been mainly in the hands of the Sassenach, but even in these worthy hands little of value has been done since the publication of the "Guide Book" in 1923. This may be taken as a further tribute to the inaccessibility of the island and to its charm which soothes the fiercest tiger.

While in the early twenties much was going on in Skye, Ben Nevis was neglected. The first "Nevis Guide Book" was published in 1919, but apart from visits from Lüscher and Pigott and Wilding on their way to Skye, resulting in Lüscher's Climb, the Comb, and the first direct ascent of the Great Tower, there is nothing to record about the Ben in summer until 1929. The opening of the Charles Inglis Clark Memorial Hut in 1929 gave a certain stimulus to winter climbing, but the only new winter climbs up to that year were made in 1920 on the Observatory Ridge by H. Raeburn, F. S. Goggs, and W. A. Mounsey, and on Raeburn's Easy Route by an anonymous S.M.C. party. These winter climbs were the sole Scottish contributions to climbing on Nevis for ten years after the war, and during the same period new climbs by Scotsmen over the whole of Scotland numbered only about a dozen. But 1929 saw a revival on Nevis and three new climbs were done—Harrison's

Climb on Carn Dearg, the East Wall Route on the Tower Ridge, and a variation on the Great Tower. Members of the S.M.C. were concerned in all these climbs—A. Harrison, G. Murray Lawson, W. N. Allan, C. W. Parry, M. Matheson, S. F. M. Cumming, and J. H. B. Bell. There was nothing new to report in 1930, although a number of routes were repeated, but in 1931 G. Graham Macphee, intent on the revision of the "Nevis Guide Book," collaborated with A. T. Hargreaves and H. V. Hughes to produce two new routes, notably the fine Route I. on Carn Dearg, while J. Y. Macdonald and H. W. Turnbull made a route on the Secondary Tower Ridge. 1932 was again a year of retrenchment, while 1933 produced only the very fine Rubicon Wall climb by A. T. Hargreaves and the Green Hollow Route on the North-East Buttress by the Cambridge-Scottish party of P. D. Baird, M. S. Cumming, and E. J. A. Leslie. In 1934 Macdonald and Turnbull were again active and, as well as improving on their route on the Secondary Tower Ridge, they made a winter ascent of the North Gully of Creag Coire na Ciste; Macphee was implicated in the South Trident Buttress Route, and E. A. M. Wedderburn in the Slav Route, while J. H. B. Bell, C. M. Allan, and M. B. Stewart did the new Platforms Rib of the North-East Buttress. 1935 was the busiest year Nevis has known. Macphee was concerned in no less than eleven new ascents—some fine new routes, others the clearing up of little problems necessitated by the revision of the "Guide Book." With Macphee was often associated G. C. Williams, another member of the Club, and A. G. Murray, as well as several others. Winter climbing on Nevis owes much to Macphee's lead. The Basin Route, pioneered by J. H. B. Bell with Miss V. P. Roy of the Grampian Club, together with the Slav Route, drew attention to the magnificent cliff between the North-East Buttress and the Observatory Ridge, and they were followed in April 1936 by a snow ascent of the Zero Gully by J. H. B. Bell and C. M. Allan (in which, however, the gully was not followed throughout, the first pitch being omitted and part of the Slav Route used).

These two climbers, with E. A. M. Wedderburn, later that year climbed the Left Wall Route on Observatory Buttress, really the leftmost route on Rubicon Wall. With the publication of the new "Guide Book" in 1936 high-pressure work on Nevis ceased. Since then the only new rock routes have been a fine climb of truly Scottish character on the west face of Observatory Ridge in June 1937 (J. H. B. Bell and J. F. Hamilton) and a small climb on the north-west face of Observatory Buttress in June 1938. New routes under snow and ice conditions are Green Gully (J. H. B. Bell, J. Henson, P. A. Small, and R. Morsley in April 1937), a gully on Raeburn's Buttress (Macphee, R. Ashley, and C. H. Oates), and the Comb Gully (F. G. Stangle, R. Morsley, and P. A. Small in April 1938). Although, however, there have been few new climbs made on Nevis in the last three years, an increasing number of good hard winter ascents have been made, a few by the English climbers who now throng Fort William every Easter but mostly by a very small group of, at the most, six young Scottish climbers whose identity may be judged from the names mentioned below.

The most popular climbing ground in Scotland is, I think, Glen Coe, and so the history of climbing there will be more truly representative of the development of Scottish climbing than elsewhere in the Highlands. Before we deal with Glen Coe and try to draw final conclusions it will be more convenient to sketch the development or otherwise of climbing in the other parts of Scotland. Climbing in the Cairngorms has, as is right and proper, been largely in the hands of the Cairngorm Club. J. W. Levack made routes on Sgoran Dubh in 1922, and A. Harrison and L. St. C. Bartholomew in Coire Brochain of Braeriach in 1924, but it was not until G. R. Symmers started his pioneering on Lochnagar in 1926 that new routes began to be recorded with any frequency. Symmers is responsible for a large proportion of the post-war new climbs in the Cairngorms and almost every year he has something to report from Lochnagar. In him we have the specialist *par excellence*,

exceeding even Macphee's devotion to Nevis. Symmers is the only news from the Cairngorms until 1931, when Harrison and Bartholomew climbed the Centre Crack of Creag Coire an Lochain of Cairngorm. The next year J. H. B. Bell, C. M. Allan, and D. Myles made a new route on Sgoran Dubh, as did A. L. Cram on Lochnagar. In 1933 C. Ludwig and W. Ewen did further pioneering on Lochnagar. The Mitre Ridge which was first tried by J. A. Parker and H. G. Drummond in 1921, was climbed by two routes in 1933 by the Cambridge-Scottish party—Baird, Cumming, J. W. Crofton, Leslie, and Wedderburn. In 1935 Cram's party did No. 1 Buttress of Sgoran Dubh. In 1936 J. H. B. Bell, Myles, and W. G. McClymont added the very fine Eagle Buttress to Symmers' work on Lochnagar. Since then only two good new climbs have been done in the Cairngorms—Roberts Ridge on the No. 1 Buttress of Sgoran Dubh (J. H. B. Bell, E. E. Roberts, and D. Howe in 1938) and an excellent route, the Parallel Buttress of Lochnagar (J. H. B. Bell and W. H. Murray in May 1939). This last party also made a new route on the descent of the Tough-Brown Ridge.

In the Islands J. A. Garrick made new climbs in Arran in 1920 and 1925, Botterill in South Uist in 1930 and 1932, an Oxford party led by M. B. Nettleton in Rhum in 1931 and 1933, Parker in South Uist in 1933, Ewen, Parker, and Symmers in Uig in 1933, D. J. Dawson, Ludwig, and J. D. MacLennan in South Uist in 1936, a party led by Pigott in Arran in 1937, and a Rucksack Club party in Harris in 1938. With the exception of the climbs in South Uist, Harris, and Arran, nothing new of much difficulty appears to have been done in the Islands since the war, and again English parties have made the major contribution.

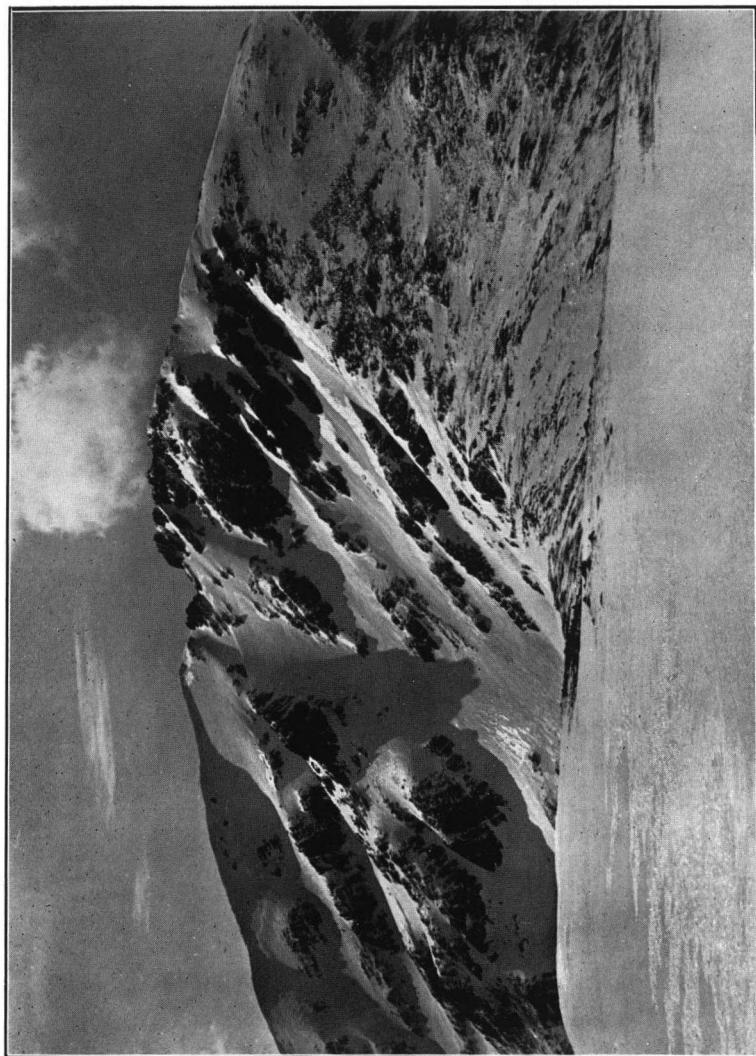
North of the Great Glen, Garbh Bheinn gave a new route to A. R. Wilson and R. R. Macdonald and to J. W. K. Dunn, A. M. MacAlpine and Murray in 1936. Baird, Crofton and Leslie did good work on Stack Polly and other north-west hills in 1933. In the same year W. Blackwood, Cram, and K. MacDougall made a new route on Slioch; Ludwig, and MacLennan on Fuar Tholl;

J. H. B. Bell and Myles on Ben Hope and A. C. D. Small on Beinn Eighe. This seems to be the total of recorded new climbs in the north since 1914, and it is an amazingly small total considering the immense possibilities and the increased ease of access. This part of the country seems to be the last stronghold of the Scot.

In the last few years Dundee climbers (notably Eric Maxwell and T. P. Winton) have explored the Clova Hills, J. H. B. Bell has reported on the climbing possibilities of Dumyat, and the crags round Inverness have not been neglected. The recent articles in this *Journal* show that Cor Arder has been frequented by a faithful few and has given several good climbs, including a fine winter climb in the Centre Post to J. H. B. Bell and C. M. Allan in March 1937, and a grand unorthodox rock-and-vegetable climb on the Pinnacle Buttress to J. H. B. Bell and Wedderburn in 1936.

Their proximity to Glasgow has led to enthusiastic exploration of the Arrochar hills. Nine new routes have been made on the Cobbler since 1930, in eight of which J. B. Nimlin has been concerned. Of these perhaps the best is the Recess Route on the North Peak; this route has also been led by Nimlin under winter conditions. A certain amount of climbing has been done on the Campsies, on Ben Lomond, on Ben A'an at the Trossachs, and on Loudon Hill. Some difficult routes have been made, but the real importance of this climbing lies in the keenness and inexperience of its devotees.

Like Nevis, Glen Coe for many years after the war was seldom visited unless by those who, after a period in which no climbing was possible, were naturally content to repeat the old climbs. When one considers how unexplored even the most prominent cliffs in Glen Coe remained until 1928 and how easy of access they are, it must be concluded that the decade following the war of 1914-18 was one of those periods of ebb which Harry MacRobert mentioned, although the excessive popularity of the Crowberry Ridge, which persists, is also to blame. During these years a fleeting visit by an English party resulted in the ascent in 1921 of the Crypt Route



A. E. Robertson

AONACH AIR CHRITH, THE NORTH FACE

Easter 1931

on the Church Door Buttress by Morley Wood and Wilding. The sole Scottish contribution during this period was Garrick's Shelf Route on the Crowberry Ridge in 1923. But better things were heralded in 1928 when Speirs's variation on the Crowberry Ridge was done by W. B. Speirs, Elton, and G. R. Speirs. In 1929 a number of good new climbs were done, notably the Cuneiform Buttress and the Central Buttress, both on Buchaille, both by J. H. B. Bell and Harrison. In 1930 J. H. B. Bell and C. M. Allan were active, climbing the hitherto unexplored Diamond Buttress, which gave a very difficult climb, and making new routes on the Central Buttress of Buchaille and on Stob Coire an Lochan. The Diamond Buttress illustrates the development of a new and unorthodox type of climbing, other examples of which are the Cuneiform Buttress, the Pinnacle Buttress of Cor Arder, and the Parallel Buttress of Lochnagar. Steep grass, moss, and heather, instead of being regarded as dangerous and as spoiling the climb, begin to take their place in Scottish climbing as media to be cultivated and wooed in order to give the best the Scottish hills have to offer. This development, which should influence the future of Scottish climbing considerably, is largely due to the researches of J. H. B. Bell, although Welsh climbing some time before showed signs of developing along similar lines.

The J.M.C.S. was founded in 1925, and within a few years its members began to make their contribution to Scottish climbing. In 1931 we find A. Horne, I. M. Campbell, and others of that Club collaborating with Harrison and J. H. B. Bell in the exploration of Stob Coire nam Beith, and J. G. Robinson and I. G. Jack making the first summer ascent of the Chasm.* This last climb did much to encourage the young to make

* In April 1920 (see *Journal* No. 92) R. F. Stobart and Mr and Mrs Odell ascended the Chasm under snow conditions, but made an exit by the side wall of the topmost pitch, the Devil's Cauldron; also they had left a 100-foot rope from the previous day's reconnaissance hanging down the 8th pitch. It was a very fine performance.
—EDITOR.

new routes. In 1932 J. H. B. Bell and C. M. Allan explored the Amphitheatre of Aonach Dubh where much remains to be done, and two spring ascents of the South-Central Gully of Stob Coire an Lochan, led by Baird and Wedderburn, drew attention to the winter climbing in Glen Coe, which had been neglected for some time. 1933 was a quiet year, but two small climbs on little low-lying crags made by a party led by Macphee are of interest, as they appear to have started the present craze for short severe problems. In addition J. H. B. Bell and C. M. Allan made the first complete ascent of Abraham's Arch Gully. In 1934 the "Central Highlands Guide Book" was published, and that summer saw the start of the present alarming series of climbing accidents in Glen Coe. More pleasing was the Rannoch Wall climb made by Williams, G. F. Todd, Macphee, and Jack, which, under the influence of the Macphee climbs of the previous year, pointed the possibilities for short severe routes on the east side of the Crowberry Ridge. Such possibilities, of course, exist on many crags in Glen Coe, and if they are keenly pursued we shall undoubtedly see as many guide books published about the climbs in Glen Coe as there are about the climbs in Lakeland.

The Rannoch Wall was climbed by a party of the old school. 1935 saw the rising of a new movement in Scottish climbing, in which are prominent what I can only call the "Glasgow ginger group." Most of the members of this group are members of the J.M.C.S., but many are members of one or other of the numerous small clubs of climbers and hill-walkers, notably the Lomond Mountaineering Club, which have sprung up so rapidly in the last ten years. This group brings into Scottish climbing an element, hitherto not prominent, of youth and relative poverty. Scottish climbing has survived in the atmosphere in which it was started longer than has climbing in the Lakes and Wales. It was regarded until about ten years after the war of 1914-18 mainly as a training for larger mountains and as a practice ground in off seasons for members of the Alpine Club. Such an atmosphere naturally tended to make climbing a sport

for the wealthier classes, and the new group of climbers thus find themselves not so much the heirs to a tradition as the discoverers of a secret hitherto kept hidden from their class. This has, as is obvious, both advantages and disadvantages. Before the war, if photographs and contemporary articles are any criterion, the typical Scottish mountaineering party would start from some convenient hotel which they had reached the previous evening in comfortable time for dinner. They would be met with on the hills in groups of five or six, several of them members of the A.C. and S.M.C. Some at least, clad in caps, tweed knickerbocker suits, and sometimes gaiters, would wear beards. With 30 feet of Alpine Club rope between each pair of climbers they would be intent on the conquest of some famous route, discussing the while the latest bits of Alpine gossip.

More typical of to-day is the youthful pair starting out late, after making breakfast, from their tent or Youth Hostel which they had reached late the previous night. Some are members of the J.M.C.S. or of the Lomond or Creag Dhu Clubs. They probably wear ragged Grenfell breeches and a miscellaneous and historic array of sweaters, and are all beardless—though probably unshaven. They may be met wandering up with coils of Alpine line, a hatchet, a few spring-clips, and probably a ring spike or two, "just in case," to have a look at some secret project of rock or ice which still awaits solution. Jimmy's exploits of last week-end or perhaps dialectical materialism are probable topics of discussion. These youthful climbers are, of course, not an entirely new phenomenon, nor are they the only ones on the hills, but some of them climb every week-end of the year. They appear to me to have the future of Scottish climbing in their hands.

In 1936 this group of climbers did Agag's Groove on the Crowberry Ridge—Hamilton, A. C. D. Small, and A. Anderson. In 1937 a party led by W. H. Murray made the west face route on the Church Door Buttress, while on the Crowberry Ridge A. C. D. Small and J. R. Wood explored the Hyphen Rib, Helical, and Fracture

Routes. The best climb of that year was the Raven's Gully, led by Nimlin, in which there is one exceptionally difficult pitch. In 1938 two English climbers, S. H. Cross and Miss A. M. Nelson, did the difficult Shackle Route on Buachaille, and the same year added one good new route to the Glen Coe climbs, Clachaig Gully, climbed by Murray, W. G. Marskell, A. M. MacAlpine, and J. W. K. Dunn; this is a climb which has been attempted several times in the past half-century and gives a very difficult route of great length. In addition to these rock climbs the same group of climbers have done a number of very fine snow-and-ice climbs in Glen Coe, notably a noble failure on the Crowberry Ridge, which has been reported in this *Journal*, and a fine successful ascent by Garrick's Shelf Route (Murray and W. M. Mackenzie). Enterprise, daring, and good technique—not ring spikes—have been the feature of these recent climbs.

This brief history has necessarily made no mention of the many steady climbers and hill-walkers who do not strive to be the first to pass. Nor have the small band of winter climbers, whose every ascent is a new route, been given the prominence they deserve. With their seed, however, shall remain continually a good inheritance.

The standard of climbing in Scotland appears to be higher now than ever before, although the average standard of ability is possibly lower. The great increase in the number of Scottish climbers is reflected in the growth of the S.M.C. (182 in 1919, 307 in 1939) and of the J.M.C.S. (founded in 1925—now 210), but there are many hundreds more of Scottish climbers and mountain goers outside these clubs, many outside any club and as yet inarticulate. The period reviewed in this article is largely one of recovery from the war of 1914-18. Not until its last years do we find climbers who may be said to carry the sport beyond its achievements in 1914. Now it appears that a further setback is to occur. The hills will remain.

THE MONADH LIATH "MUNROS." *

By J. Gall Inglis.

THE Monadh Liath Mountains had the reputation of being about the least interesting range in the Highlands, so it was with some surprise that some rather shapely peaks were seen to the west when arriving at Newtonmore for an autumn holiday. Examination of the map showed that these were the tops of Càrn Dearg, the culmination of the Monadh Liath range.

On a somewhat showery morning Goggs and the writer set out up Glen Banchor to make their closer acquaintance. The first mile or so of the glen is narrow, and the steep driving road keeps high above the River Calder rushing below, but on reaching the 900-foot contour the glen becomes a flat moor of gentle gradient, stretching miles into the distance, with hills rising tolerably steeply on each side.

As we went along we speculated on the origin of a prominent camp-like formation high up to the north, in a commanding position, on the sky-line of Creag an Lòin, but as there was no reference to it on the map we concluded it must be a natural feature. On visiting it subsequently, however, it was found to be artificial—a rectangular enclosure perhaps some 100 feet each way, with a perfectly flat floor of grass, and bounded by well-made walls of turf about 3 feet or so high. At one place on the wall were some twigs with two or three lines of string stretched between, evidently placed there quite recently, but why and by whom could not be divined, for the enclosure was about a mile from any house and 400 feet above the road. The ground sloped very steeply downward on three sides for hundreds of feet, with a gentler slope to a col behind, making the position an ideal one for an ancient camp of refuge, such as are found in abundance in the Lowlands. Such an origin,

* Geographical details, from notes made in 1903.

however, seemed unlikely among the Grampians: the 6-inch O.S. ignored it, and the perfect state of repair of the turf walls suggested recent care at least, but no information could be obtained about it at the time. Years later, however, someone in Newtonmore said that it was made near the end of last century by a man in the district "for a garden," but what could be expected to grow in such an exposed position at an elevation of some 1,400 feet did not appear, and suggested something of "a bee in the bonnet" of the constructor.

The driving road ends at Glen Banchor farm—the last mile or so is rather stony—after which a footpath leads on for a couple of miles to Dalballoch, from which an easy walk up the ridge takes one over the twin tops of Càrn Dearg. Goggs, however, had explored this route shortly before, and suggested that on this occasion we might prospect another line of approach, up the Allt Fionndrigh and over the col at the back of Carn Liath into Glen Balloch, which would take us to the eastern side of Càrn Dearg. So we left the road half a mile before the farm and struck north-west across the moor. On reaching the burn a fair track was found on its east side, which we followed for about a mile, then, fording the burn with some difficulty, we ascended a rather boggy hillside to the col (about 1,900 feet), and descended over peat hags into Glen Balloch, with Càrn Dearg rising in front of us.

We had expected the eastern slopes of this hill to be of the heather-and-grass type prevalent elsewhere, but found that the long even slope was slightly broken just below the highest summit by a well-defined rocky buttress of considerable height, cleft in the centre by a slight gully and with a steep slope of boulders at its base extending nearly to the bottom of the glen. To the north was a smaller crag, which from below looked like a third top, but later it proved to be only a shoulder. The easy way to the top was evidently up a steep grassy slope some distance to the south, but as Goggs wished to investigate the cliff we ascended the boulder slope—which abounded in whortleberries—for about 900 feet, and on reaching

the rocks saw that there might be some climbing on them.

The bottom portion was a series of steep terraces, but the first was found to be of the "O.H." order, and as the strata sloped the wrong way, Goggs's attempt to surmount it failed. A second attack to the south was more successful, and he disappeared on a prospecting voyage; we had not expected to find rock climbing on the Monadh Liaths, and, being unprovided with a rope, were unprepared for a regular assault. After a quarter of an hour he returned and reported having ascended some distance up the gully, which was quite feasible, but very rotten, requiring much clearing away.

The reconnaissance having been completed, we skirted the foot of the rocks southwards, expecting to get on to the grass slope already mentioned without difficulty, but soon found that a decidedly nasty traverse had to be negotiated across a very steep hard earth slope lying on steep slabs of rock. This wasted a good deal of time, but in due course the grass was reached and we soon stood on the summit of Càrn Dearg (3,093 feet; small cairn), overlooking the top of the southern portion of the cliff, and 250 feet above the foot of the rocks. The central gully we had seen from below emerged just to the north, and looked none too easy, being composed of earth and small stones. Goggs climbed the gully on a later occasion, but said it was a route "not to be recommended."

By this time the day had greatly improved. The air was very clear and there was a magnificent view, especially to the east, with the Cairngorms towering up to the clouds in massive grandeur, and to the south and west—where, however, mist shrouded the tops of the highest hills. But we did not linger, the wind being strong and cold, and the microscopic cairn affording no shelter; and as peak-bagging was to be the order of the day we made for the south-west top mentioned in the "Tables." A gentle grassy slope was followed for half a mile, the dip to the col being about 120 feet, then a still gentler rise of 50 feet brought us to the summit of this "Munro" top (3,025 feet), which, it must be confessed, holds its

position in the "Tables" by the skin of its teeth, though it may be mentioned in its favour that from the south-east it does look a real top. The view to the south from this point is better than that from its higher neighbour, and by going a dozen yards or so to the west we looked down on Loch Dubh, nearly 1,000 feet below, hemmed in by steep slopes with bold rocky pitches here and there, which Goggs, from a previous visit, said might afford some scrambling but not likely any definite climb.

Snechdach Slinnean, the next "Munro" on our list, appeared to the north-west as the hardly recognisable culmination of a huge, dreary, flat waste of peat hags. Returning to the summit of Càrn Dearg we descended to the col (2,934 feet (?) 6-inch O.S., but the aneroid made it 100 feet lower) separating that hill from Càrn Bàn (Càrn Maing in the first edition "Tables," and original O.S.)—a sharp but shallow V groove—then turned west-north-west, curving round the head of a corrie over very boggy, broken ground, with hardly any slope, to try and locate the summit of Snechdach. Three boulder-strewn "tops"—barely undulations, even—vied for pre-eminence: each seemed the highest when one was on it, but after repeated trials the aneroids seemed to show that the centre one, half-way along a little lochan, held the palm by some 15 feet. Later, however, the 6-inch O.S. was found to give its height as 3,002 feet only, the actual top being the southern undulation, 3,011 feet. Never has the writer seen a "top" like it; its distance of three-quarters of a mile from Càrn Bàn alone justifying its presence in the "Tables."

By this time the mists to the south and south-west had lifted considerably, and the view was magnificent. The long ridge of Schichallion stood up prominently to the south, and farther to the west a series of sharp tooth-like peaks. To the south-west Loch Laggan and Loch na-h-Earba glittered in the sun, separated by the curious conical Binnein Shuas. The Creag Meaghaidh range was in deep shadow, but just south of it was a succession of very high tooth-shaped hills, looking very grand, being outlined against the bright horizon that was just

beginning to appear below the dark cloud-cap on some of the higher peaks. These were evidently the hills about Loch Treig and Ben Nevis. Nearly due west were a couple of very sharp cones barely seen through haze, but due north the scene was very different—a dreary expanse of undulating desolation, stretching into the distance, with a far-off range of hills on the horizon, their tops shrouded in mist.

From Snechdach a wire fence followed the ridge for several miles—Goggs remarked that it would be very serviceable in mist—and we followed it for Càrn Bàn, a big flat-topped hump three-quarters of a mile away. The col is only some 70 feet below the top of Snechdach, so that it was an easy and somewhat sloppy walk, and raised the question as to whether Snechdach should not be classed as a mere shoulder of Càrn Bàn. On the whole, however, the geographical formation of the country seems to be in favour of it retaining its position.

Càrn Bàn was found to command an even finer view than that from Càrn Dearg or from Snechdach. It combines the western view of the latter with a better prospect of the Spey valley, and it was easy to understand why the Ordnance Survey selected it in preference to the higher Càrn Dearg for the large cairn that crowns its summit. The northern 3,000-foot summits of the range were all in view, but there was so little to distinguish the various humps composing it that we half thought Càrn Sgùlain must be Càrn Ballach, the others looked so low. The only one we were sure of was A' Chailleach, separated from the others by a steep dip.

Following the fence, after half a mile we came to a col—well marked, but very soft and boggy, 2,820 feet approx.—some 200 yards east of a small lochan, then ascended a gently undulating grassy slope, strewn with large stones which glistened with plates of mica and quartz crystals. At last we reached what, so far as could be judged in the featureless landscape, must be the western top (first edition "Tables") of Càrn Ballach, represented on the O.S. map by a 3,000-foot contour. The aneroids, however, only registered about 2,990 feet

(evidently the 2,973 point of the 6-inch O.S.), so we went on to what we had supposed was the north-east top, and found they gave 3,012 feet, obviously the 3,009 top of the "Tables." Farther on was a third undulation which appeared decidedly higher, and on reaching it we found that it was the real top of the hill, 3,020 feet approx. This top was composed of small boulders, and from it the ridge fell gently but steadily to the north-east: the view was of no particular interest, as A' Chailleach and Càrn Sgùlain blocked out the Spey valley. It is really the only top of Càrn Ballach, the others are mere humps with no definite col.

The wire fence now took a sharp bend, and we followed it northwards to another col, 2,900 feet approx., which, like nearly every col crossed that day, was a slough of black mud, more or less hard—in this case less hard! On the other side was a top which the 6-inch O.S. calls Meall na Creadha, 2,954 feet approx.; this is clearly indicated on the hill-shaded map, but quite indistinguishable on the popular O.S. map, showing one great advantage of the former for mountaineering purposes. A dip of some 100 feet and a similar rise brought us to the summit of Meall a' Bhothain, a broad hump of springy grass. The hill-shaded map indicated that it might perhaps reach the 3,000-foot level, as the 2,926-foot height given in the old series map was obviously 200 yards from the top of the ridge. The aneroids, however, could make it no more than about 2,965 feet—10 feet less than the actual height, 2,975 feet, shown in later editions.

Only two "Munros" now remained on our programme, and we made for Càrn Sgùlain, the last on the main ridge between the Spey and the Findhorn; the other, A' Chailleach, belongs wholly to the Spey valley, burns flowing into the Spey cutting it off from the main ridge. The descent to the col (2,786 feet, old 1-inch map) was steep, and the greatest we had yet encountered: the other side is similarly steep at first, then eases off into a long ridge of easy gradient, the southern end being 2,935 feet approx., dropping to about 2,885 feet in the three-quarters of a mile separating it from the top of

Càrn Sgùlain. Sgùlain is of no particular interest: the higher A' Chailleach blocks out the Spey valley.

From Sgùlain a steep, grassy slope descends for about 360 feet to a small glen with a burn flowing down it: a similar slope rises to the top of the graceful A' Chailleach, 3,045 feet, which is crowned with a large cairn. There is a fine view of the Spey valley, and being quite near Newtonmore, this hill is probably the best known of the Monadh Liath "Munros." Its eastern side falls steeply for several hundred feet, then the rest of the descent to Newtonmore is over rather boggy slopes and moorland.

The remaining "Munro" of the Monadh Liath range, Geal Charn, lies several miles west of the others, and was not visited by the writer till some twenty years later. A year before, on approaching a certain member of the Club—who climbed it years ago—for information to finish this article, he could recall nothing about it beyond the fact that he "cycled from Kingussie to the foot, walked up, and returned to the cycle again," from which it was not unnaturally inferred that it lacks personality, though possibly its nearness to Loch Laggan may make it a good viewpoint.

* * * * *

Geal Charn, as indicated above, is not an outstanding hill, but it nevertheless provided my father and myself with a pleasant day's outing on our way home from Kinlochewe at Easter 1935.

We drove from Laggan Bridge to Crathie, some 2½ miles west, at the confluence of the Markie with the Spey, and after a little searching, struck the path leading up the east side of the Markie Burn. Forging the river some 2 miles up, at a height of about 1,300 feet, we struck north-west up the slope of an indefinite mass to the east of Geal Charn, and were soon rewarded by the sight of our hill, streaked with snow, with what seemed to be a clear route to the summit up a snow-filled gully rising from a loch, below a considerable buttress. We would fain have attempted it, but old legs had to be con-

sidered, for, judging from the consistency of the various patches of snow we had already encountered, it would have been a wearisome undertaking. The ridge was soon gained, and was followed gradually to the summit (3,036 feet), from which an extensive view was obtained. The Creag Meaghaidh massif looked especially grand and forbidding under a heavy sky, rising above black Loch Laggan. The only other features I remember were the twin tops of Càrn Dearg, which stood out prominently among the eastern Monadh Liaths.

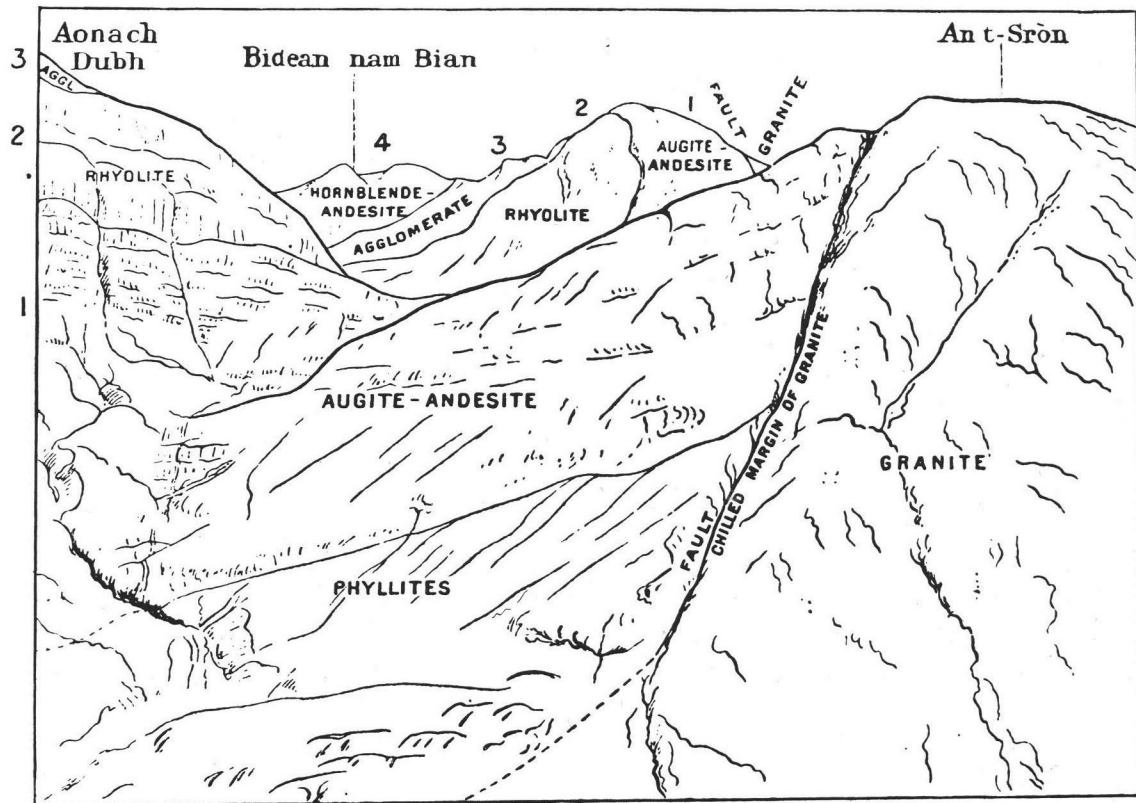
Continuing south, we descended to a "window" (similar to the one on Creag Meaghaidh) forming the col between Geal Charn and Beinn na Sgiath (2,845 feet), and climbing the easy slope to its summit, there joined the trail of a lone deer, and picked up a perfect specimen of a dead oak leaf deeply embedded in one of the tracks. The animal must, like us, have been bound for the flesh-pots of Crathie, for, following its trail to the river 1,800 feet below, we made an easy crossing, and soon were back at the car with pleasant memories of another Meet to look back upon.

R. M. GALL INGLIS.

THE GEOLOGY OF GLEN COE.

By E. B. Bailey, M.C., F.R.S.

THE best introduction to the geology of Glen Coe is afforded by the view of Aonach Dubh, Bidean nam Bian, and An t-Sron, which is to be obtained from the roadside near Loch Achtriochtan (see sketch). The oldest rocks visible are phyllites, slaty schistose sediments, which have been greatly folded and metamorphosed. They belong to the ancient Caledonian Chain that



COIRE NAM BEITH, FROM ROAD, GLEN COE

includes Norway as well as Scotland in its scope. They had already been deeply cut into by rivers and other agents of erosion before being covered by some thirteen lava flows of augite-andesite (1 on sketch). The latter issued from volcanoes that were active during the period of the Old Red Sandstone. After furnishing these andesites the volcanoes poured out lavas of a different composition, namely, rhyolite (2 on sketch). Rhyolite is more viscous when molten than andesite. Accordingly the three rhyolite lavas of Aonach Dubh flowed less freely than their andesitic predecessors, and consolidated with greater individual thickness. Rhyolite makes particularly sound climbing rock, and farther east is responsible for the whole magnificent face of Stob Dearg. Explosions followed upon the outpouring of the rhyolite lavas, and gave rise to volcanic ash or agglomerate (3 on sketch) which to-day provides rather featureless slopes. The latest of the superficial products of the Glen Coe volcanoes, in so far as they are preserved, are hornblende-andesite lavas making the summit of Bidean nam Bian (4 on sketch).

Towards the right of the sketch the lavas of Glen Coe abut against a steep fault. By fault a geologist means a fracture along which the rocks on the one side have moved relatively to those on the other. The lavas of Glen Coe have sunk about 4,000 feet with respect to the rocks outside, and while they sank molten material welled up along the fracture and consolidated as granite, well seen, for instance, in An t-Sron. Granite, like lava, starts as a melt, but cooling slowly underground it assumes a characteristically coarse crystallisation.

The Boundary Fault of Glen Coe is peculiar, for whereas the majority of faults continue across country in a straight line, this particular fault has a curved elliptical course enclosing an area measuring 8 miles by 5. Within its limits most of the surface is occupied by lavas. Outside no lavas occur, only the much older schistose rocks which make up the bulk of the Highlands. Along the actual line of the fault, and reaching for some little distance outwards into the

surrounding schists, there is generally granite, as at An t-Sron.

The Glen Coe lavas, when they originally sank within the limits of the Boundary Fault, left a great yawning cavity at the surface. Accordingly, geologists, who love to think of what happened in the distant past, talk of the Cauldron Subsidence of Glen Coe. The girdle of granite, which rose in molten condition while the interior solid mass was sinking, behaved like the liquor of a full bottle when the stopper settles home. There are many delightful features that can still be deciphered. The movement of subsidence was so rapid that the sinking mass carried its low temperature with it into the depths, so that it chilled the rising molten material at the mutual contact. Thus An t-Sron granite was a fine-grained chilled margin on the left of the sketch* against the down-faulted lavas and underlying phyllites, while outside the picture, to the right, it shows a coarse-grained slowly cooled margin against external schists. The interior marginal chilling is indicated by a note in the sketch, but it can only be appreciated at close quarters.

The great events that are recorded in the rocks as having happened in the Glen Coe district during the period of the Old Red Sandstone exercise only an indirect influence upon present-day scenery. The Cauldron Subsidence is no longer a hollow in its own right. It is true that its site embraces much of Glen Coe, but it also includes Bidean nam Bian, the highest mountain of Argyll. The position of the cauldron is marked in the scenery merely through the preservation of the Glen Coe lavas within its circumference. Outside, these lavas have been completely stripped away by erosion. The contrast between the internal and external scenery of the Cauldron Subsidence finds vivid expression as soon as one looks in at the western entrance of Glen Coe. The lower reaches of the valley form, as it were, a mighty avenue, flanked by mountains of the schistose group, which reach in the quartzite summit of Sgor nam Fiannaidh to a height of 3,165 feet; beyond, one sees the totally different scenery of the lavas with subordinate



GLEN COE, FROM THE STUDY
(an old-time photograph)

J. Gall Inglis

agglomerate, extending from the floor of the glen to the summit of Bidean nam Bian at 3,766 feet.

The present-day scenery of the district is not due to local earth movement but to erosion guided in detail by the nature of the rocks. Two main agents of erosion have left their mark—the rivers of the Tertiary period and the glaciers of the Quaternary. Glen Coe was probably cut by a west to east river coming from Glen Tarbert across the site of what is now Loch Linnhe, and escaping eastwards by the Moor of Rannoch. This great early river had suffered segmentation long before the glaciers of the Quaternary appeared on the scene. Its story carries many uncertainties, and to be read at all must be considered in relation to a wide region of the Highlands. Even in Glen Coe, however, it is noteworthy that the watershed that now sends some of the drainage west, some east, is scarcely discernible in the landscape. The original west to east drainage has been interrupted, but the great pass it fashioned still survives.

The glaciers of Glen Coe belong, geologically speaking, to the very recent past. They have left scratches on the surface of the rocks and erratic boulders and moraines that are still very obvious features for those who have eyes to see. The little loch, beside which we stand when we look up at the view pictured on the sketch, itself occupies a rock basin cut in the yielding phyllites by glacial erosion.

The sketch is reproduced by permission of the Controller of the Stationery Office from the Geological Survey Memoir on Ben Nevis and Glen Coe, where the matters dealt with in this article, and many others, are elaborated. The corresponding Geological Survey map is the one-inch Sheet 53.

A NEW-YEAR CAMP.

By G. G. Elliot.

THE idea of camping at high altitudes has captivated me ever since, several years back, coming in contact with a party who had camped at the Wells of Dee (4,000 feet) on the summit plateau of Braeriach. Thus it came about that a party of us, five in all, set out last New Year week-end to camp at the same spot. The party consisted of D. Henderson, R. Brown, J. Robertson, G. E. Wilson, and myself.

Our tent (made by Burns of Manchester) has a sewn-in ground-sheet and, for entrance, at each end, a circular sleeve which can be tied up hermetically either inside or outside, thereby making the tent absolutely windproof. We had previously used it more than once on lower hills and had every confidence in it, particularly in respect of wind-resistance, as it was thoroughly tested in the month of November on the exposed summit of one of the Border hills in a gale which lasted all night. The tent formed the main part of one man's load. Amongst us we also carried two primus stoves, a large supply of paraffin and a good stock of candles, as well as ample provisions for two days, with climbing ropes and an extra ground-sheet in addition, apart from personal gear. Each man's sleeping equipment consisted of two down sleeping-bags, placed one inside the other, and a waterproof cover into which the down bags were inserted; and it might be as well to mention here that we slept in our clothes.

The countryside presented a beautiful appearance, with a few inches of snow lying, when we left Aviemore on the morning of Sunday, 1st January. It was 8.45, and we hoped to arrive at the Wells of Dee in time to make camp in daylight. We failed, however, to reach our objective. The heavy packs made our pace slow, and we were hindered by the underfoot conditions, with the result that it took four hours to reach the Upper



January 1939

A NEW-YEAR CAMP—BRAERIACH

G. G. Elliot



September 1939

R. G. Donaldson

A.R.P.
(Central Buttress, Buachaille Etive)

Bothy in Glen Einich. There we made tea on one of the stoves and had lunch. Then we took to the path which runs up through Coire Dhondail, but almost at once we ran into unexpected difficulties: each gully which the path crosses was filled with frozen snow, which entailed step kicking and cutting and of course slowed us up. At the head of the corrie, where the angle steepens considerably, we were busy cutting steps in the frozen slope when we found darkness closing in rapidly and discovered the time to be 4.30 P.M. There was therefore nothing for it but to give up our original intention, so we descended, not without difficulty, to the flatter part of the corrie and there pitched the tent at an altitude of a little over 3,000 feet. It was snowing all day, lightly at first, but heavily by nightfall; however, fortunately for us, there was little wind. Mist was lying down to 2,000 feet all day.

We made a fairly elaborate dinner and kept both stoves going till we turned in at 9 P.M., so that we were quite cosy. All gear, including our boots, had to be left outside, but was covered with capes. With the exception of one member of the party, who unfortunately found a rock under him (we had failed to take the precaution of clearing the ground of snow before pitching the tent), we passed a comfortable night, only at intervals feeling the cold penetrating through the side on which we happened to be lying.

It continued to snow heavily throughout the night and was still at it when we rose at 8 o'clock next morning to find the tent enveloped in a dense mist. The condensation had frozen on the inside of the tent and was glistening in the half-light. Our boots were frozen stiff and had to be thawed out over the stoves. Outside, everything was white, and we reckoned, later on, that 18 inches of snow had fallen during the night. However, it had drifted a little round the tent, and the first man actually found himself up to his waist in snow two paces from the door. Icicles were hanging from the eaves of the tent outside. A hole had to be dug through the snow to procure water from the near-by burn, and a sheet

of ice formed on it in a few minutes. Nevertheless, we were comfortable inside the tent.

In view of the quantity of new snow we decided that climbing was out of the question, so we struck camp after breakfast. The return journey to Aviemore was memorable. It was still snowing heavily when we left our camp site at 11.45, but it soon faired, and we had only occasional snow showers during the afternoon. There were no signs of the path, and we had literally to plough our way down, leaving a deep trench behind us. Despite the fact that we were proceeding downhill it was very tiring work, and we took turns at breaking trail. When we emerged from the mist we were close above Loch Einich. It was 1.15 when we arrived at the Upper Bothy. From there to the Lower Bothy proved an exceedingly hard spell; the distance is $1\frac{3}{4}$ miles, and it actually took us $1\frac{3}{4}$ hours. We reached the Lower Bothy just a few minutes after the arrival there of three other friends who had ploughed their way up from Aviemore. Out came one of the stoves, and we soon had tea ready, which rounded off a welcome lunch.

Our friends had taken five hours to reach the Bothy, but even with the help of their tracks the journey down to Aviemore entailed four toilsome hours. However, the beauty of Rothiemurchus Forest under its heavy mantle of snow and in diffused moonlight provided us with some recompense. We have never before seen trees so heavily laden with snow.

Some of us had to return home with the train leaving Aviemore at 1 A.M. next day, but to offset the discomforts of that journey we carried with us a feeling of satisfaction over our first experience of high camping in winter conditions.

THE CONQUEST OF BUACHAILLE ETIVE

OR

THE ORRA LADS' TALE*

By the Ancient Scottish Bard

AODH MACBAPH

When wintry blizzards come and go
About the peaks o' drear Glencoe,
And guid folks huddlin' roond the peat
List tae the blatterin' o' the sleet,
It's then ye'll hear the story told
Hoo long ago in days of old
Twa orra lads, sae rins the tale,
Did mighty Buachaille Etive † scale.
God kens the stock frae which they sprang
But they were souple lads and strang,
For no anither since that day
Has ever climbed yon fearsome brae.
The first ane's name, or sae I'm told
Was John MacSnorrt, and he was bold,
A tall, camsteerie, ugly chiel
Wha's temper was the verra de'il.
The ither's name was Wullie Flyte:
A little man wha's build was slight,
His shanks were thin, his hands were wee,
An inconspicuous lad was he.

At Kingshoose Inn they spent the nicht
And started off at dawning licht.
Eh, man! but it was sad tae hear
Hoo yon MacSnorrt wad curse and sweir:
"De'il tak ye, Wullie! Hurry up!
Ye're like a muckle daunderin' tup.
Ye're no tae taigle us, d'ye see,
We maun be back in time for tea." ‡

* Reproduced from "Cambridge Mountaineering," 1934, by kind permission of the Author and the C.U.M.C.

† The exact position of this hill is doubtful. Offenbach puts it in MacGillicuddy's Breeks, but this is improbable.

‡ This was considered almost a point of honour by some mountaineers.

So off they went wi' highest hopes
 And sune had climbed the gentle slopes,
 And as they left the darksome glen,
 Before them rose the mighty ben,
 Steep precipices, fearfu' chasms,
 Eneuch tae gi'e the bauldest spasms.
 "D'ye think," speired Wullie, "we micht
 fa'?" *

MacSnorrt, he answered nocht at a',
 Juist boond a rope about his wame
 And made puir Wullie dae the same.
 They made quite sure it couldna slip,
 And, each an ice-axe in his grip,
 They started up, hand owre fist,
 There was nae crevice that they missed,
 Nae handhold but was firmly grasped,
 Nae slabs but they were safely passed,
 And mony a steep and icy gully
 That put the fear o' God in Wullie.

At length MacSnorrt got on a ledge
 Abune an awfu' chasm's edge,
 And Wullie, scramblin' doon beneath,
 Cried up tae him through chatterin' teeth:
 "I hope that ye've belayed † yersel'."
 But bauld MacSnorrt juist answered: "Hell!
 Man, but ye're gettin' awfu' saft,
 The folk that use belays are daft,
 Belays, ye ken, can only gi'e
 A sense o' fau'se security."
 Wullie replied: "Well, if I fa'
 It's your fau't." John said, "Not at a',
 It's yours for bein' sic an idjut,
 Noo be a man and dinna fidget."

Sae Wullie, baith his e'en shut ticht,
 Climbed up the rope wi' a' his micht. ‡

* There is evidence throughout the poem that Flyte must have had English blood in him.

† A nautical term which seems rather out of place here. Offenbach indeed would read "belaying-pin" for "ice-axe" throughout. On the other hand, Pflugk-Pimpl takes it to mean that MacSnorrt was lying at full length on the rock.

‡ Technically known as "moral support."

And wi'oot further hesitation
Achieved at length his destination,
And clung there safe wi' pantin' breath,
His cheeks were white wi' fear o' death.

And noo sae far up had they come
There nocht was left but an easy lum,
Up which they went wi' ne'er a slip
Tae reach the mountain's lofty tip.

They sat them doon tae rest a bittie :
Says Wullie : " Man, isna that pretty ?
Peak upon peak sae fair and grand
Like elfin towers in fairyland."
MacSnorrt said : " Dinna be sae fulish,
There's naethin' there but Ballachulish,
For God's sake dinna get poetic,
It acts on me like an emetic." *

Tae a' guid things there comes an end,
The 'oor has struck, they maun descend.
MacSnorrt, for tae show off his skill
Sets oot glissadin' doon the hill.
But pride aye comes afore a fa'
For what he thocht was frozen snaw
Was really ice, and sune he slippet
And lost the ice-axe that he grippet.
Upon his back at furious pace
He shot twa hundred feet through space,†
And on his doup he landed fair,
Eh! but yon dunt maun hae been sair.
Wullie cam clamberin' doon richt fast
And reached the stricken lad at last.
Man, but it gi'ed him joy in troth
Tae hear MacSnorrt bring oot an oath,
And then in muffled accents ask
If Wullie had the whusky flask.
He seized upon the braw Glenlivet,
And though I ken ye'll no believe it,

* Snoggle reading "erotic" is definitely wrong.

† Offenbach says this is impossible: probably poetic licence. Snoggle counters with the fact that the MacBaph had not a licence. But *vide* later *re* whisky.

He didna draw his breath nor stop
Until he'd finished ilka drop.
It filled puir Wullie wi' vexation,
He got quite red wi' indignation.
MacSnorrt juist wiped his muckle mou'
And scrambled up. Man, he was fu',
He clutched at Wullie lest he fa',
He couldna stand his lane at a'.

Puir Wullie didna breathe again
Until they reached the level plain,
But noo the world was lost tae sight
In darkness o' approachin' nicht,
And mony weary miles were passed
Afore they reached the door at last.
The landlord welcomed them wi' joy
Tae see them safe frae sic a ploy,
The guidwife sune was on her feet
Tae get them a' a bite tae eat.

Oh happy man am I tae tell
That merry evening a' was well.
The table sune was neatly laid,
And steaming dishes were arrayed,
And though MacSnorrt declined a seat—
He took his supper on his feet—
His aches and pains were quickly drooned
As bottles travelled roond and roond,*
And Wullie sune was heard tae say
Hoo much he had enjoyed the day.
But ane and a' agreed tae this :
While perfect rock is perfect bliss,
And ringing axe is music sweet,
The simpler joys are hard tae beat.

* In these last few lines the MacBaph reveals the depth of his appreciation of that spirit which makes men drive their bodies to the remote unconquered summits of the world.

TRAVERSE OF THE CUILLIN RIDGE AND THE ASCENT OF BLAVEN AND CLACH GLAS.

By Ian G. Charleson.

IT has been truly said that the traverse of the main Cuillin Ridge is the finest British rock-climbing expedition. It affords everything dear to the heart of the climber. There he will find good, sound rock, providing every variety of problem, the unending fascination of ridge-walking, and a constantly changing panorama of sea and sky which is a never-failing source of beauty and of pleasure. The ridge was first traversed in one day by Messrs Shadbolt and M'Laren in 1911, and there is a most interesting account of this expedition in Vol. XI., p. 326, of the *S.M.C. Journal*. Since then it has been completed by quite a number of parties. Until this year, however, there was no record of anyone succeeding in combining the traverse with that of Blaven and Clach Glas, thus climbing all the Skye Munros in a day.

When my friend Woodhurst E. Forde and I decided to make an attempt at the complete traverse, we were not unduly optimistic of the outcome. We realised that it would be a long day, and that the campaign would have to be planned very carefully. This was definitely an advantage, as it gave added incentive and zest to our preparations.

After some discussion it was decided that our attempt should be made from a camp at the base of Gars-bheinn at the southern end of the ridge. In the first week of our stay in Skye we planned to traverse as much of the ridge as possible, and, while doing so, to leave caches of food at two or three strategic points *en route*. We hoped also to pitch a second tent near the mouth of Harta Corrie, below the eastern shoulder of Sgurr na h'Uamha. This site was chosen for two reasons: it would enable us to have a rest after the descent from Sgurr na h'Uamha, and if we were successful in adding the traverse of Blaven and Clach Glas to the day's expedition, it would provide

shelter for the night and so avoid what would be, under the circumstances, the extremely tedious march to Sligachan. It was agreed that the weather would play a very important part in the success of the venture, for where else but in the Black Cuillins can the clouds gather with such amazing speed and the mists come swirling down the corries with such baffling intensity? In the light of experience gained in three previous visits, we thought that in June there would be the best chance of the weather being kind to us.

And so it was that on the 3rd of June Forde and I left the grime of the city in a very much overburdened but experienced car. Our equipment was comprehensive and varied; it included three small tents, cooking utensils, sleeping kit, and much spare clothing. There was a large supply of fresh fruit.

Our first week-end was spent in Glen Coe, where we had the pleasure of meeting George Sissons and climbing the Church Door Buttress with him under ideal conditions.

We arrived at Sligachan on Tuesday. Even at this early date we were dubious about the initial promise of good weather. True, the sky was still clear, but there was something ugly and menacing about the way in which the wind tore at our tent fabric and whipped the waters of Loch Sligachan into a white foam. Our misgivings were soon justified. We had not ascended very high on the Sgurr a' Bhasteir Ridge when a thick wet mist began to curl over the higher slopes and soon completely enveloped us. The traverse of Sgurr a' Bhasteir, Sgurr a' Fionn Choire, Am Basteir, Sgurr nan Gilleann, and the descent by the Pinnacles, however, proved to be a very enjoyable expedition and afforded some splendid experience in route finding.

Due to indifferent weather we failed to carry out our plan to traverse the ridge in sections during the first week. Suffice it to say that on Sunday, the 11th of June, when setting up camp at the base of Gars-bheinn, we were so far content. Both reasonably fit, we had caches of food and drink at the base of the Sgurr Dearg Pinnacle and on the summit of Bidein Druim nan Ramh, while our



Easter 1903

SGURR ALASDAIR AND SGURR DEARG, FROM MARSCO

W. Lamond Howie

tent in Harta Corrie was well stocked with food and spare clothing. We did not sleep very much that evening, and it was with a feeling of pleasurable relief that we arose at 12.15 A.M. It was very windy, and some valuable time was spent in groping for heavy stones with which to secure our tent. The main thing, however, was that the peaks, so far as could be seen, were clear. We breakfasted well and donned all our warm clothing—Grenfell windbreakers and breeches, Balaclava helmets and woollen gloves. A start was made at 1.30 A.M. When slowly ascending the slopes of Gars-bheinn we were surprised to find evidence of frost; tufts of moss were frozen and occasional slabs of rock were thinly coated with ice. Despite an unspectacular though steady pace we attained the summit of Gars-bheinn at 3.5, where there was a strong blustery gale. The visibility was good, and the whole ridge could be seen, with the exception of that part of it from Bruach na Frithe to Sgurr nan Gillean, which was capped by cloud. Beneath us the Island of Soay stood out like a map in bas-relief. We could dimly discern, too, many of the islands of the Inner Hebrides. At this point Forde burst into song, possibly in his enthusiasm for this unparalleled scene. I followed his example, and in very good spirits we proceeded along the ridge to Sgurr nan Eag, and thence along the amazingly adhesive Sgurr Dubh na Da Bheinn ridge, arriving at the summit of the latter at 4.36. We roped up (we were carrying 100 feet of Alpine line) at the Thearlaich Dubh Gap, which was passed without incident. Snow fell when we were on Sgurr Alasdair, and this fall continued intermittently until Sgurr a' Ghreadaidh was reached. We had our first meal at the foot of King's Chimney, after which pleasant interlude I had the pleasure of watching Forde leading this steep climb with the same effortless ease that I had admired on many previous occasions. The wind was still very blustery, and, as we steadily approached Sgurr Dearg, I remembered Harold Raeburn's description of the Inaccessible, where he expected to be "hurled into Coruisk on the wings of the Arctic blast."

Fortunately "the tempest was stilled," and, unroped, we quickly traversed the Pinnacle. At the base we were glad to find our cache of food quite intact. It was too cold to linger over our meal, and after thirty minutes' halt we left without reluctance. As we were traversing the rather intricate ridge of Sgurr a' Mhadaidh the Cuillins were completely clear of mist for the first time. We were grateful for this respite, for time might have been wasted on this portion of the ridge, particularly as the nailmarks were obliterated by the recent fall of snow.

We arrived at the summit of Bruach na Frithe at 1.45 P.M. At this juncture the wind was blowing strongly from the north. (Throughout the day the direction of the wind had varied from north to north-east.)

We had now been climbing for a little over twelve hours. Certainly we had not travelled very quickly, but at the outset we had decided to take things easily in an endeavour to conserve energy. In golfing parlance we played against bogey, for we frequently compared our times with those of Shadbolt and M'Laren.

Discretion suggested the advisability of using double line for Naismith's Route on the Bhasteir Tooth, but on roping up we discovered that this expedient gave us too little run out for safe belaying. Accordingly we had to untie and use single line. Possibly because of our long day the climb looked much steeper and the drop into Lota Corrie much greater than on our visit the previous week. On taking my boots off, however, the difficulties seemed to melt away, and it was with a feeling of security and pleasure that I felt the closer contact of the rock. Forde passed many acrimonious remarks about the weight of his rucksack, and particularly about the weight of my No. 10 boots.

We thoroughly enjoyed the scramble along the western ridge of Sgurr nan Gilleann, but we did not particularly enjoy the traverse of Sgurr na h'Uamha. It had begun to drizzle, and the climb presented some minor difficulties that we had not anticipated. Away across the glen we could occasionally see the huge bulk of Blaven as the mist momentarily cleared. It did not look inviting.

Very little was said about our immediate plans on the long, easy descent to our tent in Harta Corrie. Possibly the exertions of the day were beginning to have their effect. There is always something rather distasteful about the idea of finishing a day with an ascent.

These pessimistic thoughts were quickly forgotten after a meal and a luxurious rest of an hour and a quarter in our tent. It was with a keen sense of pleasure that the path round the foot of Ruad Stac was followed, and, as we gradually ascended to the foot of Clach Glas, we enjoyed our first pipe of the day. On the scree slopes leading to the col between Blaven and Clach Glas our speed was reduced to a minimum, but on reaching the rock better progress was made. Some day I hope to traverse Clach Glas in clear weather, but hitherto—and this was no exception—fate has decreed that the fantastic outcrops of rock on its narrow ridge should be caressed by mist. This possibly adds the charm of uncertainty to an interesting climb.

As we left the summit of Clach Glas darkness was beginning to fall. We carefully descended to the bealach, and then, by a curious diagonal fault on the eastern face of Blaven, we worked our way up to the final slopes. There we carefully marked the gully which would be most useful for our descent. The first summit of Blaven was reached at 11.5 and the second a few minutes later. A brief calculation showed us that we had taken 20 hours 7 minutes from the summit of Gars-bheinn to the south top of Blaven.

As we descended by what seemed to be an interminable stone shoot, we were possessed by a longing to feel soft, springy turf underfoot. When we heard the sound of running water we hastened to it and drank greedily. No longer was there need for us to deny ourselves. We could drink at will; we could meditate on the meal we would enjoy on our return to camp.

The tent in Harta Corrie was reached at 1.25 A.M. We were tired but well content that our fond ambition had been realised and that the main Cuillin Ridge lay behind us.

Schedule of Times.

Left camp near foot of Gars-bheinn, 1.30 A.M.; Gars-bheinn, 3.5; Sgurr Dubh na Da Bheinn, 4.36; Sgurr Alasdair, 5.30; Sgurr Mhic Choinnich, 6.45; Sgurr Dearg Cairn, 8 to 8.30; Sgurr a' Ghreadaidh, 9.50; Bidein Druim nan Ramh, 11.40 to 12.8 P.M.; Bruach na Frithe, 1.45; Sgurr nan Gillean, 3.28 to 3.35; camp near mouth of Harta Corrie, 5.30 to 6.45; Col between Blaven and Clach Glas, 9.10 to 9.20; Blaven, 11.5; Harta Corrie camp, 1.25 A.M.

The Second Traverse.

At 9.30 P.M. on 24th August, W. H. Murray and R. G. Donaldson (both J.M.C.S.) left Glen Brittle for Gars-bheinn in very doubtful weather. Leaving Gars-bheinn at 2 A.M. in mist and darkness, they traversed the ridge by torchlight as far as the Thearlaich-Dubh gap. Sgurr Dearg was reached at 7 A.M. (35-minutes halt), Bidein at 10.6 A.M. (30-minutes halt), and Sgurr nan Gillean at 1.30 P.M. (11½ hours from Gars-bheinn). The party then descended to a tent—previously prepared and provisioned—at Loch an Athain in Glen Sligachan. After food and rest they left for Clach Glas at 5.45 P.M., reached the summit at 8 P.M., and Blaven just before 9 P.M. The complete traverse took 19 hours (top to top). Food, 1½ pints of water, and 60 feet of line were carried. For the most part of the time the sun shone—over warmly, in fact.

R. G. DONALDSON.

Notes on Blood and Glucose Diet.

During our halt in Glen Sligachan, *en route* between Gillean and Blaven, we enlivened our diet by consuming between us 1 pint of Mummery's Blood. This mountain elixir consists of equal parts navy rum and Bovril, served boiling hot. Its effect on both mind and body is nourishing, warming, strengthening; it lowers angles, shortens distances, improves weather. One's resources grow in the bouquet of that particular liquid. Nothing is impossible and all climbs go. Thus, with over 10,000 feet

of climbing behind us, we traversed Clach Glas and Blaven in 3 hours 15 minutes.

For the first 10 hours of the ridge we relied for sustenance on bread sandwiches; but from the Bhasteir Tooth onwards the only food we carried was vita-glucose and water. During the final 12 hours of our expedition—we did not regain our bivouac tent till 1 A.M.—we consumed between us twenty-four tablets of glucose, taking two each at a time. Their effect on exhausted bodies was immediate, perhaps for psychological reasons, but within a few minutes there was a definite improvement in muscular efficiency due to the refuelling of the blood with sugar. The effects lasted for about three-quarters of an hour, and became more powerful on Blaven when our exhaustion was greatest. We could have completed the traverse without glucose, which none the less improved our time by reducing the length and frequency of our halts, particularly towards the end of the day, when there was difficulty in moving at all.

W. H. MURRAY.

NEW CLIMBS.

Good Friday Climb, Ben Nevis.

ON 7th April 1939 a party consisting of Dr G. Graham Macphee and Messrs R. W. Lovel, H. R. Shepherd, and D. Edwards climbed a new route between Observatory Buttress and the rocky face forming the true right wall of Gardyloo Gully. The climb started up the snow slopes on the climber's left at the head of Observatory Gully and led for about 350 feet over hard snow and ice, where step-cutting was necessary. At the foot of a steep, narrow, black, rocky buttress, which forms a definite limit to the precipice, a hollow in the snow, almost an incipient bergschrund, provided a resting-place for lunch.

The gully here narrowed between rocky walls and was ascended on good snow for about 250 feet until it ended against steep rock. To the left the route seemed impracticable, and would have led to Observatory Buttress. Instead, a traverse to the right was made, handholds being necessary, across hard snow and then ice for 35 feet to another little gully where a good stance was cut in ice. With the second man here, a rising traverse was made to the left, handholds being cut, and then a slight bulge of ice was surmounted directly upwards. This stretch of 35 feet took well over an hour. A steep slope above was ascended for 40 feet to a stance, then 150 feet more led to a little gully. This was ascended for 50 feet until it was possible to cross to the right above a bulge of ice overlying rock to a stance. Another 40 feet almost directly upwards led to the cornice, which was quite easy and landed one on the summit plateau about 150 feet from the Indicator.

The climb was entirely on snow and ice, no rocks being encountered. It was a magnificent climb under the excellent conditions prevailing. Two days later it would probably have been impossible. In exceptionally

good and less wintry conditions it might be easier and faster.

G. GRAHAM MACPHEE.

The Roberts Ridge—Sgoran Dubh.

Little attention appears to have been paid to the most northerly or No. 1 Buttress of Sgoran Dubh since March 1902. On that occasion the party did not like the look of the straight, steep, slabby ridge which bounds the dividing gully of the Buttress on its true left side, so they ascended the rocks on the opposite side and on the face beyond the impressive and almost vertical nose of rock which overhangs the gully.

The next climb on the No. 1 Buttress was effected in July 1935 by A. L. Cram and Miss Bailey (see *Journal*, Vol. XX., p. 459). Their route is up the rocks to the north of the aforementioned gully, but the start is a few yards away from the foot of the gully. A careful comparison of Cram's description with that of the climb here recorded shows that the routes are to some extent parallel, but quite apart and distinct in character until the summit block is reached. This was confirmed by the personal comparison of notes. The climb here described was carried out in reprehensible ignorance of Cram's success of 1935, especially reprehensible, no doubt, on the part of the writer!

In glorious weather, on 24th April 1938, our party, consisting of Messrs Ernest E. Roberts, D. W. Howe, and myself, walked up Glen Einich and were attracted by the straight line of this slabby ridge, apparently the best defined and longest ridge on that part of the mountain. We decided to try and climb it, and in this we succeeded, the climb taking a little over two hours and proving somewhat encumbered by heather and loose flakes of rock in its lower steep section. The rock was excellent in the upper part. Aneroid measurements made the total height of the climb 450 feet. There are some very difficult pitches. We used and required 150 feet of rope for our party of three climbers. The end of the climb was perfectly defined by a short length of very narrow ridge,

with steep drops on either side, abutting against the easy upper part of the mountain face. Great care was necessary in the lower half, but the belays were ample.

1. Start just at the lowest corner of the gully and proceed straight up, but not too close to the gully wall, to a small tree. Traverse right to a larger tree growing in the base of a small chimney (75 feet). This tree serves as a belay.

2. The little chimney is now ascended. The leader had to remove a loose block. The ascent is difficult. A short stretch is now easier, and at 40 or 50 feet there is an excellent stance behind a huge bollard of a belay.

3. The next section is delicate and difficult. One goes upwards to the right to a stance, then obliquely up to the left and straight up on very small holds on fairly good rock. Then a delicate step to the right on to heather, and finally straight up to a sort of huge block or pinnacle (belay at 70 feet or so).

4. We are now above the lower steep section, and easier climbing goes straight up for 100 feet or more to a great stance and belay, overlooking the gully.

5. The next 70 feet is the upper steep section of good rock. This is fairly close to the edge overlooking the gully, with a sensational step to the right half way, and so up a little crack to a fine stance and belay. This section is very steep with small but adequate holds.

6. One now climbs straight up to a massive block, split on the left by a short crack. This is all good climbing, and leads to the roof of the ridge consisting of smooth, broad, inclined slabs, after about 60 feet of which we come to

7. A vertical drop of 6 feet or so on to a short, very narrow ridge, with steep drops on either side, which abuts against the wide, easy rocks of the upper buttress. An impressive view is obtained through this gap across the gully and past a vertical nose of rock to the silver strand of the northern end of Loch Einich.

The unprejudiced enthusiasm with which such an Alpine veteran as E. E. Roberts regarded such a typically Scottish rock climb—heather, trees, and loose flakes and blocks of Cairngorm granite—appeared to the others sufficient grounds for the nomenclature suggested. On our return from the summit of Sgoran Dubh we enjoyed the most glorious colourful view from the ridge overlooking Loch an Eilein. At an evening halt in the forest Roberts confessed to being 64 years of age.

J. H. B. BELL.

Lochnagar—Parallel Buttress.

This fine buttress, narrowing to a true ridge at the top, looks most attractive from the summit plateau of Lochnagar. It lies midway between Eagle Buttress and the Tough Brown Ridge, from which it is separated by Parallel Gullies A and B. The first of these is a terrific and formidable rift in its upper part; the other is really divided into three sections by two great basins, of which the upper one holds the winter snows until well into summer. The lower basin is crossed by the normal route up the Tough Brown Ridge; the upper is surrounded by a horseshoe of precipices. Underneath the lower basin the gully contracts to a most conspicuous, straight chimney, of which the lowest section seems to be vertical and unclimbable. At the top of this bit it might be possible to traverse into the chimney from the left. The lower part of Gully A is also a slabby chimney terminating in an overhang and a waterfall.

On 28th May 1939, in perfect weather conditions, Messrs W. H. Murray and J. H. B. Bell succeeded in making a first ascent of Parallel Buttress. Attempts to climb the lower face between Parallel Gullies A and B were unsuccessful. Finally we reached the easy terrace above the lower wall by climbing steep rocks to the left of the waterfall which issues from Gully A. We were then on the normal Tough Brown Ridge route of approach.

We now commenced to ascend obliquely upwards to the right towards our Buttress, crossing Gully A above its lowest basin. This oblique ascent continued until we reached the formidable middle band of slabs, which seems to girdle Parallel Buttress. No way through these appeared on the face flanking Gully A nor on the central front, but there was a weakness on the Gully B face. This gave us our first thrill on a traverse towards the right on a thin vegetitious ledge (perfectly sound) along the face of a granite wall—a balancing problem with an incut hold round the corner of the wall as the solution—then a step round on to a turf ledge.

A long rising scoop is now discovered on the flanking

wall above Gully B. This is not difficult. One can now climb up on to the crest of the Buttress and progress reasonably well towards the slabs of the Great Tower. Above this is the conspicuous and narrow but easy top section of ridge. We anticipated trouble, as the Buttress narrowed to a ridge at the Tower, and we found it. The Tower was shaped rather like an arrowhead, especially when seen from above, and may be about 30 feet high and 200 feet below the top. It is a perfect gendarme with A.P. drops on both flanks.

The only route lay up a slab, rather convex and holdless except for one finger-wide crack on the left. The slab led up to another overhang, besides being above one.

The problem resolved itself into four short, severe pitches, probably about 8, 10, 7, and 6 feet respectively in height. The third was a traverse to the right. The first was pretty difficult and led to a stance. The second was severe and called for the insertion of a ring-spike into the finger crack to serve as foothold and the insertion of a second into a crack on the left wall. Both were removed by the second man. A perfect belay occurred above this pitch, and the second man could stand on a ledge to the left of the Tower while the leader sidled along the severe traverse in stocking soles, which seemed the only tolerable way of proceeding. This was an exceedingly trying movement. By contrast, the last pitch seemed almost easy though exposed.

A short, steep section followed, well provided with holds. The final ridge looked bad, but was merely a threat without substance. We crossed a narrow little neck, up a steep nose on good holds, and along a narrow ridge. A beautiful knife-edge of frozen snow led to the plateau.

We climbed unroped, except for the severe section, and the climb took us two hours. The conditions were perfect, but the lower section, where there was a vegetable coating on the rock and heathery ledges, would have been vastly different, if not quite impossible, under wet conditions. It was very fast going most of the time. The

length of the climb can be assessed from the diagram and photo in the new "Cairngorms Guide"—probably about 700 feet.

J. H. B. BELL.

Moss Gully, Ladhar Bheinn.

During a visit to the above mountain in July of this year the undersigned ascended by what was evidently a new route. Coire Dhorrcail was wreathed in mist when we entered it, and when we reached the cliffs it was raining. We followed up the main burn which comes down and from there made our way to the rocks below the Ladhar Bheinn and Stob Coire Odhar Ridge. The gully from here appears as a big black rift and is quite an obvious route of ascent. A tricky scramble over wet slabs was followed by steep grass and then we were in the gully. Loose boulders and small pitches take up about the first 100 feet, which is followed by a difficult slab pitch which, however, is only about 40 feet, but with water pouring over it, as on this occasion, it was none too pleasant. Above this, scrambling and nasty moss ledges lead to the col. Although only a moderate climb, it is a feasible route to the top, and in good weather should afford some particularly fine rock scenery throughout.

K. McLAREN.

J. BENNET.

Corrie Club, Dundee.

In Memoriam.

JAMES GALL INGLIS.

1865-1939.

MY friend Inglis would, I am sure, have wished for no other epitaph than that "He was a lover of the hills." That love was in his blood: his father and three of his uncles were climbing Scottish hills right up to Sutherland, not to speak of Swiss peaks, from 1846 to 1886, and Inglis edited for the *Journal* a most interesting series of notes written by his uncle, Charles Inglis, in 1856. After their conclusion he contributed five articles under the heading of "Days that are Past." Both series are most interesting, not only from the Club's standpoint but for the vivid light they throw on the then conditions of life in the Highlands. Dr Inglis Clark was his first cousin, and doubtless they encouraged each other in mountain madness. Inglis was born in Edinburgh, went to Craigmount School, and never left the northern capital: he became a member of the Club in 1897, and his election as a Vice-President last year was a source of much gratification to him.

He climbed his first Munro in the seventies and his last, Meall a' Chrasgaidh, in the Fannichs, in 1938—a fine innings. He was several times in Switzerland, but the only peak he was up was the Cima di Jazzi. He never specialised in any department of climbing, but took everything as it came. He thoroughly enjoyed a day on the hills in any weather and in any district, and few of our members possessed a greater or more intimate knowledge of the Scottish Highlands. A red-letter day in his life was when at Easter, 1928, he, with Corbett, discovered a new Munro—Beinn Tarsuinn (*S.M.C.J.*, Vol. 18, 269-275).

As a professional cartographer map problems were of special interest to him, and the *Journal* contains many

notes of his in this connection. Astronomy was another subject of which he had considerable knowledge; he was an ex-President of the Edinburgh Astronomical Association and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh. He took a keen interest in Church affairs and at the time of his death was senior elder in Mayfield North Church, Edinburgh.

In conclusion, what shall I say of him as a man? His somewhat slender build did not indicate a strong mountaineer; on the other hand, I have been out with him in all kinds of weather and under varied conditions and never knew him to crack. He was one of the first members of the Club to give me the right hand of fellowship, and I enjoyed his friendship for nearly forty years. He was modest and unassuming and it took time to discover his breadth of knowledge and strength of character: he had a gift of literary style, a sense of humour, and thoroughly enjoyed in his quiet way Club Meets and functions. He was of the salt of the earth and the Club is the poorer for his passing.

Our sympathies go out to his widow and his son, a member of the Club.

F. S. GOGGS.

FRANCIS GREIG.

FRANCIS GREIG, who died on 22nd March 1938, belonged to a generation of climbers who were active from about 1900 until the outbreak of war in 1914. Of spare build—he was so thin that we used to say chaffingly that we could strike matches on his ribs—he was able to tackle many places that defied the efforts of ordinary people. Skye in particular was his happy hunting-ground. He preferred it to Switzerland, and was never happier than when working out new variations of well-known climbs or exploring places like the Hidden Gully of Greadhaidh which had not been visited before. His name, too, is associated with Buachaille Etive Mor, for who does not

know of Greig's Ledge on the Crowberry Ridge? It was astonishing that one of his physique could accomplish climbs which call for lion-hearted effort and real stamina. Yet his pluck was amazing, and he was always regarded as a leader who inspired his companions with confidence. Of buoyant and cheerful disposition, he was the life and soul of many a happy party, and his friends will ever hold him in grateful memory.

S. F. M. CUMMING.

DR ALFRED HARKER, F.R.S.

BY the death of Dr Alfred Harker in July at the age of eighty, the Club has lost one of its most distinguished members. He was born in Hull in 1859, and he entered St John's College, Cambridge, in 1878, graduating eighth wrangler in the Mathematical Tripos of 1882.

Devoting himself to geology and petrology, he soon made a name for himself, and, at the suggestion of Sir Archibald Geikie, he was appointed in 1895 to the Geological Survey of Scotland for special field work in the Cuillins in Skye. For six years he devoted himself to the difficult and complicated job of mapping the Cuillins, and by the end of that time there was not a corner of the Cuillins, not a ridge, nor a corrie, nor a peak (with the one possible exception of the summit of the Inaccessible), that he had not explored. This was a remarkable feat in itself, as Harker never professed to be a climber—it is doubtful if he ever was on a rope in his life—showing what brains and grit can do when a special need arises to bring into use bodily powers that otherwise would have lain dormant.

I first met him at Sligachan in July 1898. Coming down to breakfast one morning I saw at a table by himself a tall, thin, dark, shy-looking man rapidly eating an enormous breakfast. Thereafter he strapped on sundry satchels and map cases and I watched him disappear up Glen Sligachan at an incredible pace. Later on we

became friendly, and I soon became aware of his exact and peculiar knowledge of the then rather unknown Cuillins. One day I specially remember when we did Sgurr na Banachdich together. We went up to the Mam, into Coire na Creiche and round the base of Sgurr Thuilm. The rapidity with which Harker traversed the ground was quite remarkable, and the deft way he selected the easy and quick routes to gain his objective made a strong impression on me which remains to this day.

His field work was mostly done from Sligachan, but one year he found quarters at Glen Brittle, and another time he camped out at Loch Scavaig with John Mackenzie as his faithful gillie and helper.

He made several notable contributions to our *Journal*. Perhaps the most epoch-making was his article in Vol. VI., entitled "Notes Geological and Topographical on the Cuißlin Hills, Skye." The first part of this article contained a very clear description of the complicated geology of the Cuillins, subsequently revised and reproduced in the Club's Guide Book, "The Island of Skye." The second part consisted of his valuable corrections and additions to William Douglas's Appendix in Vol. IV., p. 209. This information was subsequently embodied in a map on which Harker marked in red all his main routes and important ways. This map has been an invaluable asset to the Club and to all climbers in the Cuillins. It is one of the best sellers we have in our Guide Book Series, and its sale has run into some 3,000 copies.

And so we say farewell to this distinguished savant and friend and helper of our Club. Only the older members can have known him or seen him, but the younger members, who are now treading in our footsteps, have every reason to bless his memory for all he did to make straight and easy paths for the feet of those who come after him. His name will be remembered by grateful climbers as long as the Cuillins continue to be the favourite rock-climbing ground of the Scottish Highlands.

A. E. ROBERTSON.

ROBERT ERNEST OSBORNE

ROBERT ERNEST OSBORNE was one of a very small band of Irish-born Scotsmen who early in life was attracted to the Highland hills. As with many another, it was the sight of the Cairngorms from Aviemore and subsequent expeditions there which gave birth to the latent mountaineer.

For many years all his climbing was done in the Alps in company with his sister, Miss Osborne, O.B.E., a Past President of The Ladies A.C. The war years brought him to the Lakes, Wales, and Skye. After a few more seasons in the Alps he brought his guides to Skye. Though duly impressed with the technical difficulties of many of the Cuillin climbs, they could never understand how so much sea could be around so much climbing.

Even the Cuillin expeditions became at last too strenuous, but Skye still called, and for fifteen years Osborne plied his rod and line in the Storr lochs with the same skill and accuracy with which he wielded axe and rope on the surrounding hills. Although calls of his practice, and later of his circuit, prevented his attendance at meets or dinners, many of our younger members are grateful to him for the advice and recommendations so freely and cheerfully given to anyone who shared with him his love of the everlasting hills.

J. G. OSBORNE.

We regret to announce the death of Mr Robert Brown during the course of the year. Mr Brown joined the Club in 1928.



Hugh Gardner

ASCENDING SGURR NA FORCAN—THE SADDLE
from the East

7th April 1939

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.**EASTER MEET 1939—CLUANIE AND TOMDOWN.****Notes from Cluanie.**

THE President, R. Jeffrey, and ten members were present—Messrs Unna, Glover, Ling, Arthur, Hird, Campbell-Allen, Pointon-Taylor, Gardner (who all arrived Thursday), and Dixon and Burt (who came on Friday). The whole party left on Tuesday, 11th April. The baby of the party was aged 41, and the majority were English by blood or domicile! The party was well and comfortably looked after by Mrs MacDonald of Cluanie Inn, and the hill wanderings of many were facilitated by the thoughtfulness of Campbell-Allen and Dixon in providing transport to and from the hills. The weather was fine during the Meet, though rain fell during Friday night and mist lay over 2,000 feet on Saturday. On Friday and Sunday hill visibility ranged from Harris to the Cairngorms. There was little snow except on the north faces and corries, and that was most soft, but one party enjoyed 250 feet of step-cutting on the east face of Ciste Dhubh.

Ridge-walking and peak-bagging, rather than the quest for technical problems, were the order of the day, and the Falls of Glomach were visited by two parties. All the Glenshiel-Cluanie peaks were climbed, from the Five Sisters to Ciste Dhubh on the north side and from the Saddle to Creag a' Mhaim on the south, with A' Ghlas-Bheinn and the three peaks of Ben Fhada in addition. The most notable achievements were (1) the entire Saddle group on Friday by the whole party of Thursday arrivals; (2) the whole south ridge, from Faochag and Sgurr na Sgine to Creag a' Mhaim (nearly eleven hours road to road and eight Munros) by the President and Arthur, who, as an off-day after this extensive ridge-walk, traversed the main and east peaks of Fhada from Dorusduain and returned home by the

Bealach a' Choinich, Arthur picking up Ciste Dhubh en route; (3) Faochag and Sgurr na Sgine to Sgurr an Doire Leathain by ex-Presidents Ling and Glover.

J. F. A. B.

Notes from Tomdown.

Fifteen members and three guests were present. The members comprised Messrs J. L. Aikman, E. A. Baker, I. M. Campbell, W. L. Coats, M. H. Cooke, J. R. Corbett, S. F. M. Cumming, J. M. Davidson, A. Geddes, T. H. Gibson, E. W. Hodge, D. G. Kellock, R. W. Martin, J. G. Osborne, and T. E. Thomson, and the guests were Messrs R. Tyssen-Gee, P. J. R. Heath, J.M.C.S., and W. D. M'Kinlay, J.M.C.S.

The activities of this section of the Meet were directed as follows:—

1. *The Ridge south of Glen Shiel.*—The section from Creag a' Mhaim to Aonach Air Chrith was visited in parts by Baker and Davidson on Friday and Monday, and on the latter day also by Cooke and Heath, and by Aikman and Tyssen Gee. The Saddle was visited on Friday by Martin, Geddes, and Thomson, on Sunday by Campbell, Coats Hodge, and Tyssen Gee, while Cooke and Heath included Sgurr na Sgine then too. Gibson and Osborne did part of Sgurr na Sgine and enjoyed tea at the Lodge at Kinlochhour.

2. *The Ridge north of Glen Quoich.*—Eleven people were out on Gleouraich and Spidean Mialach on Saturday. Sgurr a' Mhoraire was visited by Baker and Davidson on Sunday and by Kellock and M'Kinlay on Monday.

3. *South and west of Loch Quoich.*—Gairich was visited by Kellock on the 7th and by Coats on the 10th. Sgor na Ciche, Garbh Chioch Mhor, and Sgurr nan Coireachan were visited by Coats and Aikman on Friday and by Thomson, Geddes, and Martin on the Sunday (leaving out the last peak). Aikman, M'Kinlay, and Kellock went to Luinne Bheinn on Sunday. Corbett cycled to Kinlochquoich and climbed Ben Aden on Tuesday.

For the rest part Coats and Hodge went poaching on Cluanie preserves and bagged Ben Fhada on Tuesday. Cumming was fishing most of the time.

J. H. B. B. (*ex Records*).

LIBRARY REPORT.

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

- “ The Appin Murder,” by D. N. Mackay.
- “ Kenya Mountain,” by E. A. T. Dutton.
- “ Ascent of Mount Denali,” by H. Stuck.
- “ Walking Tours in Scotland,” by T. S. Hall, and several other volumes and many maps, all from the library of the late Percy Donald.
- “ Scotland Under Trust,” by Robert Hurd. Presented by the publishers, Messrs A. & C. Black.
- “ Oxford Mountaineering Essays.” Presented by the Librarian.

The following have been purchased and await presenters :—

- “ Unclimbed New Zealand.” Pascoe.
- “ Sinister Crag.” Gayle.
- “ Son of the Mountains.” Kugy.
- “ Men against the Clouds.” Burdsale-Edmonds.
- “ Michael Roberts’ Poems.”
- “ Death stalked the Fells.” A. S. Macleod.
- “ The Mountain Speaks.” Johnstone.

There has also been added to the Library a complete set of “ Alpinisme,” which is the quarterly Journal of that most excellent Club, the Groupe de Haute Montagne. This Journal, which is beautifully illustrated, contains the best accounts of all the good Alpine climbs since 1926 and is an exceedingly valuable aid to planning an Alpine campaign.

E. A. M. W.

EVENING MEETINGS 1938-39.

AT EDINBURGH IN THE CLUB-ROOM.

1938.

- Oct.* 11. Informal Discussion on Summer Holidays.
Nov. 8. Dr W. Rickmer Rickmers, "The Switchback of Life."
,, 24. Mr W. H. Murray, "Recent Scottish Climbs."
Dec. 12. Exhibition of the Slide Collection of the late Mr Percy Donald.

1939

- Jan.* 19. Discussion on Rescue Parties and First Aid in Scotland, led by Mr Alan Horne and Dr D. Myles.
Feb. 28. Films of Climbing and Ski-ing.
Mar. 21. Mr W. H. Murray, "Recent Scottish Climbs."
April 20. Mr Sealy, "Climbing in New Zealand."
May 2. Informal Show by Members of Easter Photographs.

AT GLASGOW IN THE CENTRAL HOTEL.

1939.

- Jan.* 30. Mr Gilbert Thomson, "The Early Days of the Club."
Feb. 24. Dr J. Y. Macdonald, "Explorations in Iceland."
Mar. 21. Mr E. W. Hodge, Display of Colour Slides of the Western Highlands and Islands.

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.



Can Ireland be seen from South Uist?

Mr Hodge's note, on page 84, on "A Mirage" interests me as I was responsible for inserting in the "Islands Guide" the statement that Beinn Ruigh Choinnich (902 feet), at Loch Boisdale, "has the local reputation that from its summit it is possible in clear weather to see the distant hills in the north of Ireland." At the same time I expressed considerable doubt. My reason for inserting the statement was that the people at Loch Boisdale in 1933 were positive that they had actually seen Ireland, while I was unable to prove that they had not.

Mr Hodge's note clears the matter up, although I rather think that his party were of opinion that they also had seen Ireland from a height of 1,250 feet on the east ridge of Beinn Mhòr. Probably they had been led astray by my reference to mirage in the "Guide." What the party actually saw were the small hills at the west end of Tiree, as the bearings that they give, over Rudha na h-Ordaig and Ru Melvick (which latter was mistaken for Roneval) to the dome-shaped hills, point directly to these little hills. The highest, Carnan Mòr (460 feet), would lie almost directly in line with the tip of Rudha na h-Ordaig. It is 57 miles distant, and the upper 400 feet would show above the 48 miles distant sea horizon. The compass bearing of "almost exactly true south" was taken with a small pocket compass and cannot be accepted as dead accurate. To have seen the top of Slieve Snaght (2,019 feet) the Beinn Mhòr party would have had to be at a height of about 3,750 feet above sea-level.

There cannot therefore be any doubt that what Mr Hodge's party saw was simply the west end of Tiree, and that that was also what the Loch Boisdale people mistook for Ireland in 1933.

J. A. PARKER.

Lochnagar—Tough Brown Ridge.

On 28th May 1939, a day of hot, perfect weather for rock climbing, Messrs W. H. Murray and J. H. B. Bell effected a new descent of Tough Brown Ridge on Lochnagar.

The easy upper section, on somewhat vegetatious rock, was followed down for about a quarter of the way. The original route now leaves the ridge and works down in the direction of the lower rocks of Eagle Buttress. We continued straight down, hopeful of a more or less direct descent all the way. The ridge soon broadened into a buttress and the climbing became gradually more difficult.

Our route trended towards the side overlooking Raeburn's Gully. Some 200 feet above the bottom we were stopped by a great barrier of precipitous slabs, curving over in a convex manner towards the final vertical wall at the foot.

The only alternative was a steep and difficult descent of about 100 feet into Raeburn's Gully. We effected this immediately to the right (descending) of a well-defined mossy scoop situated about 150 feet above the foot of the gully. The final mode of escape appeared to us from below to be a unique solution of the problem.

J. H. B. BELL.

The Munros.

Mr A. L. Cram writes :—

Last July I completed the ascent of all the 3000-foot tops in the revised Munro Tables. Several of the last tops were revisits executed in a spirit of doubt. Some had got lost in the mists of the past, others just in mists. Probably about the half of them were done twice over. This is probably the third time that all the tops have been bagged.

Coire Ardair.

Attracted by the articles in recent numbers of the *Journal*, M. H. Cooke and I visited Coire Ardair on 24th and 26th June 1939. On our first visit we looked apprehensively at the Posts and climbed B Buttress, which proved little more than a scramble on steep grass, with some all-too-short stretches of pleasant rock on the upper part. Some attractive-looking rock at the top right-hand corner of the grassy traverse mentioned by J. H. B. Bell proved unsatisfactory, as it was possible to take it to pieces after the fashion of a child's brick building!

On our next visit we followed the right-hand ridge of the Pinnacle Buttress faithfully from bottom to top, not even neglecting the very unstable fangs of rock which occur just before the top of the gully marked G in Stewart's sketch in the *Journal*. So far the ascent had been a rather uninspiring scramble, enlivened only by an encounter with a family of ptarmigan chicks. From the top of the gully the steep rocks of the Pinnacle looked attractive, if improbable, and we traversed upwards to the left over dank and mossy slabs to a platform above the head of the gully, which forms an obvious base of operations.

From here the Pinnacle, though undeniably steep, looked distinctly inviting. It was found possible to climb practically straight upwards on smallish but quite adequate holds. The pitch is between 40 and 50 feet in height and is hardest in its middle section, where the rock bulges slightly. At this point a good pull upwards and to the right can be obtained from an undercut flake, and a substantial ledge is reached soon afterwards. At the top of the pitch a luxurious stance allows the second man to be brought up in comfort and safety.

Cooke, who had been lying on his back in the rain watching the soles of my feet, told me he enjoyed the climb very much.

The rock on this part of the Pinnacle is delightfully firm, in pleasing contrast with that immediately below, and judicious gardening revealed more and better holds than at first appeared. From all accounts, and judging by the mossy and unexploited appearance of the holds, this seems to have been a first ascent.

P. R. L. HEATH (J.M.C.S.).

Sgurr a' Mhadaidh.*

[*Extract from letter from W. L. Wood, Customs and Excise Officer, Portree, to The Secretary of the Scottish Mountaineering Club.*]

"On Sunday, 4th June, we climbed Sgurr a' Mhadaidh from Tairneilear, starting by the route which appears to be described in your 'Guide' as the Upper Terrace parallel to Foxes Rake. From the terrace we then climbed a deeply cut gully in the middle of the second peak. It consisted of three pitches—one was an easy scramble, the second was climbed on the left wall past a chockstone, and the third by backing up underneath a large chockstone. There is no mention of it in the 'Guide.' No nailmarks were seen, and Professor Collie said he had not looked at it. While scarcely thinking it is a new climb, although there are no marks, we should be glad of some information on the point."

Pitons on the Crowberry.

[*Extract from a letter to the Editor by E. A. M. W., who regrets that he cannot divulge the name of the climber in question.*]

"A climber, reputedly of some experience, ascended the Crowberry Ridge by Abraham's Traverse in early June of this year. Not liking the step round, he drove in a piton [ring spike, E. A. M. W.] into a crack which is conspicuous on the well-known photo ('Central Highlands Guide,' facing page 49, also front page of wrapper). The pitch was successfully negotiated by the leader, but the second man was unable to remove this ring spike, try as he would. The party completed the climb and descended Curved Ridge, then reascended to Abraham's Ledge and both together were at last successful in removing the ornament."

Carn Gorm Loch, Strathvaich.

This remote hill, a mile north-east of Am Faochagach, is referred to in Vol. XV., p. 339, and noted by both Munro and Burn as being over 3,000 feet. The writer has had two opportunities of visiting it, first with Corbett at Easter 1938 and again alone in July 1939. On

* So far as we have been able to discover this is a new route.—EDITOR.

both occasions aneroid readings checked from Am Faochagach (twice) and corrected for temperature error make Carn Gorm Loch to be 2,997 feet approximately.

Its summit is a stony one, so it was surprising to find three large frogs hopping round the cairn that July day. The nearest moss, let alone water, is fully 400 feet below. The south top of Am Faochagach, mentioned by Burn in the above reference, is a mere 30-foot rise in the ridge, and not worthy of note. Meall Gorm, too, was found on both occasions to be only 2,920 feet. ROBT. M. GALL INGLIS.

Stob Coire nam Beith, Glencoe.

Winter ascent of Deep-cut Chimney.

The first winter ascent of the Deep-cut Chimney between Buttresses Nos. 3 and 4 was made by W. M. Mackenzie and W. H. Murray on 7th April 1939. Each led alternate pitches.

There were four ice-pitches. Measurements by clinometer gave the *average* angle of the first pitch as approximately 63° (height 20 feet), and of the second pitch as 77° (height 45 feet). At this second pitch we climbed direct up the bed of the chimney and did not use the summer route up a shelf on the left wall. The third pitch was of great difficulty and proved the crux of the climb; the height was greater but the angle less than that of pitch 2. Thus far the rocks had been coated with ice of unsatisfactory thickness, and the climbing had been severe. But above pitch 3 the angle eased off and poor quality snow gave us access to the upper amphitheatre where the chimney forks. We chose the right fork as the line of least resistance, and made our escape to the open buttress without great difficulty. Time from the start—four hours. From that point probably no two parties will ever follow the same route to the summit, but whatever route is followed the indefinite snow-covered rocks will give excellent mountaineering.

It is our strongly held opinion that this route gives one of the hardest winter climbs in the Central Highlands. From the start of the chimney to the summit should take about six hours for over 1,000 feet of climbing—provided the chimney goes, which is not always certain. It would be difficult to exaggerate the very great assistance we derived from using an abnormally short axe for working on the high-angle ice in the restricted space of the chimney.

W. H. MURRAY.

Crowberry Gully.

A winter ascent of the Crowberry Gully was made by W. H. Murray, J. K. W. Dunn, and A. M. MacAlpine on 2nd April 1939. At the crux of the climb, where the gully forks, we found that, as usual, the summer route would not go, whereas the lower slabs

leading up to the right-hand branch bore insufficient ice to make the normal winter traverse possible. Under such conditions it has hitherto been assumed that there exists no alternative to retreat. On this occasion, however, we succeeded in forcing a route up a shallow scoop midway between the normal summer and winter routes. This scoop, no more than 30 feet high, took one and a half hours and was very severe. It gave the hardest winter pitch the writer has climbed, but is worth noting as an alternative line if the usual traverse across ice-sheeted slabs below should prove impossible.

W. H. MURRAY.

Raven's Gully—Buachaille Etive Mor.

The second ascent of Raven's Gully was made on 5th June 1939, by W. H. Murray, A. M. MacAlpine, and W. G. Marskell (all J.M.C.S.). The party climbed the gully in rubbers in two and a half hours, and agreed that the climb was excellent throughout, and that pitch 4 must be the most strenuous in the whole of Glencoe. Nimlin's left-branch route was followed at the fork of the gully, but the right branch clearly offers most interesting exploratory work.

W. H. MURRAY.

"Guide Book" Editors.

In the list of Past Office-bearers on page 5 of this volume only the name of the present Guide Books General Editor has been given. The scope of this office has, of course, greatly extended during the past few years, but it is fitting that the omission should be rectified, and the complete list is accordingly given below:—

| | | |
|--------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| W. Douglas | | 1894-1907 |
| F. S. Goggs | | 1911-1916 |
| J. R. Young | | 1919-1920 |
| H. MacRobert and G. Sang | | 1920-1925 |
| Sir H. Alexander | | 1925-1930 |
| Rev. A. E. Robertson | | 1931- |

EDITOR.

S.M.C. ABROAD.

MR A. L. CRAM writes:—

I was in the Oberland in August along with J. Lucas (A.C.), R. Lucas, and D. Adam (F. and R.C.C.). We ascended Fründenhorn, Finsteraarhorn, Jungfrau, Gspaltenhorn, and Lauterbrunnen Breithorn. We traversed Öchsinehorn, Blumlisalphorn, Aletschhorn (Oberaletsch to Mittelaletsch), Mönch (ascent by south-west ridge), Schreckhorn (up by south-west ridge), and on to Lauteraarhorn and Eiger (ascent by Mitteleggi). Dr G. Graham Macphee was with us

on the last two climbs. Weather was broken; we had a snowstorm on the Blumlisalphorn, and encountered avalanches at the Rothornsattel.

Messrs J. D. B. Wilson and G. A. Collie (J.M.C.S.), along with W. A. Gilmour and M. Da Fano, were in the Bernese Oberland for the first half of August. They climbed the Grüneckhorn, Finsteraarhorn, Tschingelhorn (one party traversed its twin peaks), Lauterbrunnen Breithorn, and Gspaltenhorn. In the second half of August Collie and Da Fano went to Corsica, which was delightful in spite of the midges. Bathing was excellent and water supplies good. From the Grotto des Anges in the Val Viro they did part of the marvellous ridge stretching north from the Paglia Orba over Cinque Fratri. On Monte D'Oro they were storm-bound, but climbed the finest gendarme north of it.

W. N. Ling was in Switzerland the latter part of July and beginning of August with P. J. H. Unna and J. M. Davidson (members), but owing to the continued bad weather—rain, snow, and mist—the party was able to accomplish very little.

In the few fine days which occurred they ascended the Gwächtenhorn (11,245 feet), a snow mountain near Göschenernalp, and the Fleckistock (11,215 feet) from the Voralp Hut, an interesting rock climb. From both tops they had fine views.

A short visit to the Maderanenthal was unfruitful, as the bad weather was in evidence there also.

C. R. Steven was in the Bernese Oberland from 27th July till 9th August. Training walks were provided by the Faulhorn from Grindelwald and the Klein Siedelhorn from the Grimsel, before the meet of the Diablerets Section of the S.A.C. This centred on the Lauteraar and Strahlegg Huts, and expeditions included the Hühnerstock, Strahlegg Col, Schreckhorn, and the Finsteraarhorn by the Agassizjoch. Bad weather marred the last part of the week and also three days subsequently spent at the Jungfrauojoch, only permitting a rapid and viewless ascent of the Mönch in a snowstorm.

The Hon. Editor spent the most of a fortnight of execrable weather in the Southern Bernese Oberland in early August. He was in a cheerful company of friends and never climbed anything higher than 11,500 feet. The new snow, thunderstorms, and Brocken spectres were excellent; so was the swimming in the Lake of Geneva.

REVIEWS.

Always a Little Further. By Alastair Borthwick. Faber & Faber. 7s. 6d. net. 276 pp.

This is a personal tale of the development of the younger climbing clubs in Scotland; of the climbers who sleep in tents, barns, caves, and Youth Hostels; who travel to the hills every week-end on motor bikes, inside lorries, on foot, or by the cult of hitch-hiking. A foreword announces that "no character in this book is fictitious"; the reviewer is acquainted with several of the characters and is able to substantiate the statement for these and to acquiesce in it for the others.

Most of the book is about climbing, but there are humorous episodes about hitch-hikers, berry-pickers, bird-watchers, and gangrels of all sorts. It is quite in keeping with several of the characters, so truly delineated, that the long bow should be drawn about some of the incidents described, but any little exaggerations will be accepted as part of the rollicking humour which is the background of the narrative.

The reviewer has heard at first hand the tales of the lorry ride to Fort William in company of a sheep's carcass, the ascent of the Upper Couloir of Stob Ghabhar (not quite 300 feet in height), and the rescue of Hughie by night from the middle of the Devil's Cauldron by two Glasgow bakers in dancing pumps; and the written word does not belie the echo of the original narrative. They are all light-hearted and refreshing tales, filled with the enthusiasm of care-free youth and a genuine love of the Scottish hills. J. H. B. B.

Scotland under Trust. By Robert Hurd. A. & C. Black. 6s. 98 pp. 49 illustrations.

While only fifteen pages refer to country in which the S.M.C. is interested, this book gives an enlightening account of the work of the National Trust for Scotland in the preservation of the countryside, buildings, and monuments in many parts of our land under its control. Historical and descriptive notes on Glencoe, Glenfinnan, Culloden, Bannockburn, and the village of Culross are only a few of the many subjects covered, while biographical notes on Burns, Carlyle, and Barrie appear in their appropriate setting. We like the method of conjoining illustrations to chapter headings in the index of contents, but note one or two glaring inaccuracies in the text. On the whole the illustrations are good, but it is a pity that an evening photograph of Culloden has been included in preference to one in daylight. The view of Loch Leven and Glencoe is particularly fine.

R. G. I.

Climbers' Club Guides. Lliwedd Group by C. W. F. Noyce and J. M. Edwards. 173 pp. 10 illustrations. 3s. 6d.

This is Vol. IV. of this new series of Guides and, like the others, it is most admirable. It succeeds in stripping the cliffs of Lliwedd of most of their mystery and makes easy the difficult places. As an antidote to this is an excellent Introduction by G. W. Young, in which he exhorts climbers to eschew all guide books such as this!

E. A. M. W.

Climbers' Club Journal, 1939.

This is the first number of Vol. VI. of the new series, and the *Journal* has a new size and cover. J. M. Edwards brilliantly justifies his style of writing in "Scenery for a Murder," and his influence may be remarked in the styles of at least two other contributors. "Welsh Rarebit," by Baldwin Shaw, is genuinely humorous. There is a mathematical treatise on the requisite strength of a rock climber's rope by Professor Goodsell. The conclusions arrived at—*i.e.*, that the criterion of absolute safety is that the breaking tension be greater than the tension T calculated—

$$T = W + \sqrt{W^2 + 4AEW}$$

(where W is the weight of the climber, A the cross-sectional area of the rope, E is Young's modulus)—is similar to that arrived at in an article in the current *Belgian Alpine Club Journal*.^{*} The author of the latter article definitely asserts, and proves to his own satisfaction, that a plaited rope, if it has a small core of space, is much stronger for climbing purposes than a laid rope of equal weight. Other articles are on the Caucasus, the Grepon, and Lofoten. This club owns two climbers' huts and is contemplating opening a third.

E. A. M. W.

The Journal of the Fell and Rock Climbing Club, 1939.

This large and interesting *Journal* contains two articles of Scottish interest: "The Border Line," by M. M. Barker, and "The Mountains of Mull," by E. C. W. Rudge. There are several articles on Lake District Hills and an amusing story of his first steps in climbing by C. F. Holland. In Miss Brenda Ritchie's article on the Mer de Glace face of the Grepon we note with admiration that, led by Joseph Georges it is true, she found it a short pull up from the Trélatête Glacier to the Grepon rocks. Less admirable is a statement by a reviewer that our Ladies' Scottish Climbing Club has "reached

^{*} As the expression for T does not involve the height through which the climber happens to fall before he is stopped by the tension of the rope, it would appear that the latter consideration is irrelevant as far as absolute safety is concerned.—EDITOR.

the mature age of ten!" The *Fell and Rock Climbing Club Journal* is always fun to read, and this is well up to standard.

E. A. M. W.

The Cairngorm Club Journal, Vol. XV., No. 80, July 1939.

This is the Jubilee number and starts off with "Fifty Years of the Cairngorm Club," a historical article, and of great interest to our own members, particularly at this time when we have just been celebrating our own jubilee. The sketch of the Past Presidents of the Club is most amusing, especially as regards those we have met. The illustrations are practically all by Mr R. L. Mitchell, who contributes "Climbing with a Camera," an expert and helpful dissertation fully justified and illustrated by his results. Our own honorary member, Professor Collie, contributes a charming article in his own inimitable style on the "Independence" which is the gift of the hills to their true votaries. There are articles on the lochs of the Cairngorms and on the mountain names of Scotland, one by Odell on the Everest Expeditions and two Alpine articles. "Artist in the Hills," written and illustrated by T. Train, is a short and delightful impression of a type which appears too seldom nowadays in our climbing journals.

J. H. B. B.

Ski Notes and Queries, May 1939.

This attractively produced *Journal*, amongst other features of interest, reproduces a good many of the photographs illustrating Mr MacRobert's article on "Scottish Ski-ing" in the November 1938 number of this *Journal*.

J. H. B. B.

Wayfarer's Journal, No. 6, 1939.

Outstanding articles are "Up Against It," by J. M. Edwards, being his reactions to four weeks' climbing on Lliwedd when completing the "Climbers' Club Guide" to that region—very amusing. Then there are "Ethics of Ironmongery," by C. F. Kirkus, and "Scottish Alps," by J. F. Byrom, who was lucky to be there at Easter 1937. This is not an annual *Journal*, but is very well produced.

E. A. M. W.

Hutchinson's Pocket Guides—Scotland, Old Strathclyde.
By B. H. Humble. 6d.

This book is amazing value for money and is packed with useful information. It is not directly of mountaineering interest, but the author, one of our members, does not ignore the hills and makes

appreciative reference to the "Islands Guide Book." There are occasional lapses or conundrums—*e.g.*, on p. 106 one reads of "Closeburn Castle, once the home of the Kilpatrick who was Burns's companion at the murder of Bruce!" The illustrations are good.

J. H. B. B.

The Alpine Journal, Vol. LI., No. 258. May 1939.

Of the eight principal articles in this *Journal*, four deal with the Himalayas and three with the Arctic Regions. Of the former, the most interesting is that by C. S. Houston, which somewhat modestly describes the American Expedition to the Karakorams in 1938 when a height of 26,000 feet was attained on the south-south-east face of K₂—a great achievement. The remaining three describe the 1938 British and German attempts on Everest and Nanga Parbat, neither of which made any advance on previous expeditions, and the German Expedition to the Garhwal Himalayas.

Of the Arctic articles, that by R. Scott Russell describing the 1938 exploration of the Beerenberg, Jan Mayen Island is of unusual interest and is well illustrated with photographs and a good map. Andre Roch's article describes the Swiss Expedition to Greenland in 1938, when Mont Forel (11,032 feet) was ascended from Angmagssalik, and A. M. Binnie's describes a month's holiday in the Lofotens.

The remaining articles in the *Journal* are of interest, but do not call for special comment. Mention must, however, be made of the beautifully worded In Memoriam note on Achille Ratti—Pope Pius XI.—with which the *Journal* commences.

J. A. P.

Pinnacle Club Journal, 1935-38.

This is a fine fat volume, the product of four years' silence. Its articles range from the Tatra to Mount Kenya and from the Atlas to Glen Brittle. Of special interest to us are "June Days in Glen Brittle," "Torridon in April" and "Ridges." Mrs Armstrong Richards is to be congratulated on this *Journal*.

E. A. M. W.

THE JUNIOR MOUNTAINEERING CLUB OF SCOTLAND.

ALL J.M.C.S. activities have been temporarily suspended, but it is hoped that a few unofficial meetings may be arranged from time to time. The four Sections have each made their own dispositions, and further particulars may be had from the Secretaries as undernoted. Club correspondence will be dealt with as before by the Central Secretary, W. H. MURRAY, and in his absence by W. G. MARSKELL, 43 Lamington Road, Cardonald, Glasgow. The membership at 2nd September 1939 was 225.

EDINBURGH SECTION.—*Hon. Secretary*, A. H. HENDRY, 102 Oxbangs Terrace, Colinton, Edinburgh.

GLASGOW SECTION.—*Hon. Secretary*, W. H. MURRAY, 8 Lyndhurst Gardens, Glasgow, N.W., or in his absence W. G. MARSKELL, 43 Lamington Road, Cardonald.

INVERNESS SECTION.—*Acting Secretary*, RICHARD B. FRERE, Maryfield, Inverness.

PERTH SECTION.—*Hon. Secretary*, JAMES GRANT, Craigellachie, Cavendish Avenue, Perth, or in his absence J. KILPATRICK, 3 Atholl Place, Perth.

Glasgow Section.

Informal Meets were held since Easter as follows :—

20th to 22nd May.—Garbh Bheinn, Ardgour. Camping. Twenty members.

11th June.—Kingshouse, Glencoe. Twelve members.

15th to 17th July.—Ennerdale, Cumberland, and Glencoe.

20th August.—Arrochar.

23rd to 25th September.—C.I.C. Hut, Ben Nevis.

W. H. M.

Easter Meet at Roy Bridge, 8th to 10th April.

Members.—R. D. Walton, W. C. Murray, W. J. Johnson, L. Edwards, Jas. N. Ledingham, W. H. Murray, R. S. Donaldson, A. M. MacAlpine, J. K. W. Dunn, D. Scott.

Friday.—J. N. Ledingham climbed Stob Coire Sgriodain, Chno Dearg, Beinn na Lap from Corrour S.Y.H.A.

Saturday.—R. S. Donaldson, L. Edwards, W. J. Johnson, W. C. Murray, R. D. Walton climbed Stob Coire Na Ceannain, Stob Choire Claurigh, and Stob a Choire Leith.

Sunday.—R. D. Walton, W. C. Murray, W. J. Johnson, L. Edwards, and J. N. Ledingham climbed Aonach Mor and Aonach Beag. W. H. Murray spent the day exploring Spean River gorges.

Monday.—Most members left for home. Remaining members climbed on Creag Meaghaidh.

Perth Section.

The Section has been holding Meets on the second Sunday of each month with good attendances of members, who enjoyed a wide variety of snow, rock, and hill climbing. The districts visited were Glen Clova, Balquhiddy, Glen Lochay, Lochearn, Glen Tilt, Glen Shee, Loch Laggan, the Cairngorms, Glen Coe, and Glen Lyon. Several old members have gone, but new members had brought the strength of the Section to twenty-two before the war suspended activities. The Secretary, Mr Jas. Grant, Craigellachie, Cavendish Avenue, Perth, retains the Section's documents for the meantime. These, in the event of his absence, will be in the hands of the President, Mr J. Kilpatrick, 3 Atholl Place, Perth.

Junior Mountaineering Club of Scotland, London Association.

Members of the Club living in London have established a "London Association of the Junior Mountaineering Club of Scotland" in order to organise Meets and meetings. Membership of this Association is open to all Ordinary, Honorary, and Adherent Members of the J.M.C.S. upon their signifying to the Secretary their desire to join, and on their paying an annual subscription of 2s. 6d.

The President is W. D. Short, and the Secretary is Edward R. Zenthon, 12 Clarendon Mews, Hyde Park Square, London, W.2.

W. H. MURRAY, *Hon. Sec.*

Since the formation of the "London Association" on 16th March 1939, Informal Meets have been held at Stone Farm Rocks, Harrison Rocks, Bulls Hollow Rocks, High Rocks, and High Rocks Annexe—all situated in Sussex.

A Meet was also held in and around the "Peak District" at Black Rocks, Harboro' Rocks, Brassington Rocks, Castle Naze Rocks, and Laddow Rocks. A Theatre Meet was held at the old Vic., Waterloo Road, S.E.1, for the play, "The Ascent of F 6."

The following members were in attendance at one or more of the above Meets: R. Buchanan, H. B. Cotton, L. Edwards, J. Elsey, B. V. Fox, J. M. Hartog, W. D. Short, A. M. Smith, T. Smith, H. J. Turnbull, and E. R. Zenthon. In addition, several guests were also present. (The Association has eleven members.) E. R. Z.

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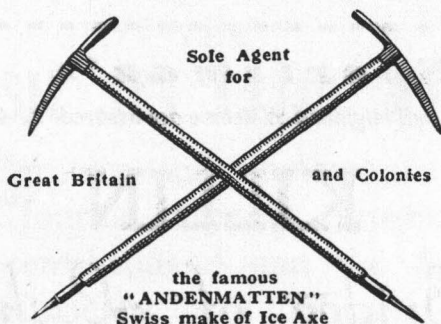
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