

THE SCOTTISH MOUNTAINEERING CLUB JOURNAL

EDITED BY J. H. B. BELL



	PAGE
Kangchenjunga, 1955 . . . Tom McKinnon	I
The Scottish Women's Himalayan Expedition . . . Monica Jackson and Betty Stark	8
On the Possibility of seeing the Cuillin from the Cairngorms . . . Guy Barlow, D.Sc.	16
Fellow Traveller . . . Iain H. Ogilvie	25
The Slide Collection . . . Robert Grieve	29
A Nameless Sport . . . E. W. Hodge	34
Some Early Climbs in the Cuillin . . . W. Wickham King	37
New Climbs	40
In Memoriam . . . Alexander Fraser; Alexander Morrice Mackay; John F. A. Burt; Geoffrey Eliot Howard; Wilson H. Hey; and others . .	69
Proceedings of the Club—Meets; A.G.M.; Reception and Dinner; J.M.C.S.	76
S.M.C. and J.M.C.S. Abroad; Notes; Books and Journals.	88
Office-bearers, 1955-56	<i>page 2 cover</i>

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S.M.C. Abroad.—Please depute one person to report to the Editor for the party concerned and get it done by October when the details are still fresh in the memory. There are many accounts, so please keep it short, and use BLOCK CAPITALS for proper names and foreign place-names, **always**.

New Rock Routes.—Please report all 1956 routes before New Year. If any are done later, send them in at once.



LOCHNAGAR: BLACK SPOUT PINNACLE.
Route 2, 1st Pitch (Climbers: T. W. Patey and A. Will)

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KANGCHENJUNGA, 1955.

By Tom McKinnon.

NOTE.—Expedition members alluded to by their first names are as follows: George Band, Joe Brown, Charles Evans (leader), Norman Hardie, John Jackson, Neil Mather, Tony Streather.

KANGCHENJUNGA must be one of the most accessible of the great mountains. We had hardly recovered from the strenuous preparations for leaving Darjeeling when we found ourselves marching up the Yalung valley, approaching the mountain. Tony Streather and I were in the rear party, and when we reached Acclimatisation Camp, situated on an alp above the snout of the Yalung glacier, we found everything organised.

Between Acclimatisation Camp and Base we spent approximately one month, first prospecting, then ferrying supplies. The three camps, Moraine, Crack and Corner, were soon established. It was early in the year and we experienced storms; in fact, the first time Corner Camp was set up the Dome tent, weighing over 80 lb., was blown away and two Hillary tents badly ripped. Temperatures were low; -18° C. was recorded in one of the tents in the middle of the day. Parties often arrived back from a carry about midday in a blizzard, but our equipment was excellent and we suffered little discomfort. From here it took four attempts before Base was established. The route up the centre of the glacier was most interesting, as it zigzagged round crevasses and wound its way between séracs and penitents.* Half-way

* Pillars of ice left on glacier, after intense solar heating.

we always had a long halt while we roped up and put on our crampons, which were worn constantly above this point from now on. This route must be through some of the finest ice scenery in the world. Yet, in a few days, we hardly noticed it—on one side Kabru and Talung with great bulges of ice, gleaming high above; straight in front the steep ice walls leading up to Talung Saddle. On our left we passed at first a tremendous ice-basin, around which rose the fantastic ice ridges of Jannu. In the late afternoon we used to watch for the sun disappearing because it shone through holes in the ridges. Turning from this it was a relief to examine our own problem on the south-west face of Kangchenjunga, which by comparison looked much easier. I consider Jannu the most interesting peak I have seen.

When Base was established Norman and George immediately commenced work on the lower icefall. As progress was slow Charles and John Jackson joined them. They were certain that, given time, they could make the route go, but it was obviously not justifiable for daily caravans. While this was going on Neil and I were up on Talung spending a few off-days. Our route was an upward traverse from Corner Camp, which landed us on top of a sensational ice wall giving spectacular views of Base, 3,000 feet below, and of our friends working on the icefall. We managed to break through the steep sérac and the summit was open, but shortage of food and bad weather forced us to return. Neither of us will readily forget the wild night on the steep ice wall, expecting the tent to be blown off the narrow ledge. On this excursion we were most fortunate to have a grandstand view of the next dramatic move on Kangchenjunga, the key to success. We were in touch by walkie-talkie, and it was obvious that the position was becoming serious. The first ray of hope came from Norman when he asked if we could see a glacier breaking through the great rock wall higher up, as he had noticed some débris on the edge of the icefall, suggesting a break in the wall. Sure enough, when he drew our attention to it we could just see a thin white thread breaking through. It was three



KANGCHENJUNGA, S.W. FACE
From slopes of Talung Peak, showing Upper Icefall and Great Shelf



ON THE UPPER ICEFALL.

days later before we got back, but by that time they had moved to a new Base (18,100 feet), situated on top of a large moraine on the other side of the Western Rock Buttress from the original Base. We found the carved stone on Pache's grave and the little stone platforms for their tents, a few tins, and even a champagne cork from the ill-fated expedition of fifty years before. George and Norman had already found the route to the top of the ridge and down the small glacier to the top of the upper icefall, thus completing a remarkable piece of work. This section became known as the "Hump."

Very soon Base was a home from home, with Sherpas and Sahibs one happy family, reminiscent of a Meet in Scotland. The finest ice scenery in the world, yet we hardly noticed it unless we looked up to find the source of the roar from an avalanche. The ferry over the "Hump" to Camp 2 was soon operating, each team of Sherpas under two Sahibs. Most were reluctant to leave the comforts of Base after a day's rest for the surroundings of Camp 1 (19,700 feet) in a filled-up crevasse. Usually we delayed till midday, the last moment, then hurried up the soft snow. Another unpleasant thing about Camp 1 was the need for an early start to pass the steep snow slope above, before the danger of avalanche. This entailed leaving about 6 A.M., which meant rising in the icy shadows before 5 A.M. Approaching this snow slope one had to negotiate a large crevasse below a steep ice wall on which a ledge was carved and fixed ropes placed. Drifting snow caused half an hour's delay most mornings while someone cleared the steps. Although the slope above was probably the easiest on the mountain, we considered it the most dangerous and watched carefully for any rise in temperature.

The snow gully which led down from the "Hump" to the top of the lower icefall was a most spectacular place. The snow was always in good condition, probably on account of the shadow of the rocks above. This was most fortunate, because it was a steep 500 feet with large crevasses at the bottom. Framed by rock and ice walls, you looked out to the upper icefall and the Great Shelf

with the tremendous drop to the right. It was a tiring approach to Camp 2, through soft snow covering crevasses and ice débris, ending in a steep 15-foot ice wall which landed one on the lower shelf. Only 200 yards remained to reach Camp 2 (20,400 feet), but the laden caravan required two or three rests. After a short rest they would set off for Base.

I joined Charles and Joe at Camp 2 to help place 500 feet of fixed rope and a rope ladder on the route to Camp 3 (21,800 feet). Before my arrival Charles and Joe had been stormbound here. On the 3rd of May the radio-telephone again reported no movement over the "Hump." This was the last really bad weather to hinder our progress on the mountain, except the blizzard which nearly wrecked our final plans. On the following day Sherpas arrived to commence the carry to Camp 3 and Charles returned to Base. He left instructions and a detailed list of food and equipment ($1\frac{1}{2}$ tons) to be placed at Camp 3, our Advance Base. It had a wonderful situation on a shelf under a 60-foot ice wall half-way up the upper icefall. Joe remained for three days and was then replaced by Neil. Each day with six Sherpas we carried to Camp 3, arriving about midday, and tried to have ten minutes each, working on the ice cave before the cold wind drove us down. Each day from above we watched the other caravans crossing over the "Hump" to Camp 2 and resting before returning. When this lift was completed I was relieved by Tony.

On the way down I spent the night at Camp 1 with Charles and Norman who were on their way for a *recce* to the site of Camp 5 below the Gangway. From Camp 3 they used closed-circuit oxygen apparatus and, moving fast, they were back in a few days, completely successful. Within a short time of his arrival at Base, Charles was briefing us for the attempt. John Jackson and I with eleven Sherpas, moving up a Camp at a time, were to establish Camp 5 with approximately 500 lb. taken from Advance Base. Charles, Neil and four Sherpas, with the first summit party, George and Joe, would follow a day behind, leap-frogging over us to establish Camp 6.

A day behind them would travel the second assault party, Norman and Tony, supported by two Sherpas.

At lunch time on 15th May John and I with eight Sherpas moved off with much hand-shaking, everyone already confident of success. Three days later we spent the night at Camp 3 with Tony and Neil, who were engaged fixing ropes to Camp 4 and carrying supplies. Here we picked up three more porters and the lift really began. We received much help in preparing loads from Neil and Tony. One of the Sherpas was unwell and unable to start. As we were carrying sleeping bags and other belongings, rather than overload us, Tony insisted on coming up with a Sherpa and at the same time breaking the trail, returning the same day. John and I had been allocated a cylinder of oxygen each above Camp 3. One of the Sherpas on my rope took ill and, in order to carry his load, it was necessary to increase my oxygen flow, with the result that I ran out of oxygen next morning. John also had to increase his oxygen flow with the same result.

Camp 4 (23,500 feet) on the lip of the Great Shelf was always a windy spot, but that night appeared wilder than usual. I doubt if anyone had much sleep. All night the Sherpas were restless, and John was suffering much pain in his eyes. We were astir early, but a demoralising wind and other difficulties required the utmost effort on our part to move off by 10 A.M. Meanwhile John, who was almost snow-blind—he could only see about a pace—had covered his goggles with adhesive tape, leaving only two narrow slits, and had tied on between two Sherpas. It was against my wish that he should come, but he replied: "If I cannot see to help them, I can at least encourage them." It solved the problem; the last load would go up. Almost immediately there was another delay. A Sherpa on the first rope was vomiting on those below. At last we were moving steadily but very, very slowly through the séracs. Descending a steep wall on to the shelf proper, I watched a Sherpa placing John's feet. About here Chendu on the last rope had dropped his load, which disappeared down the

slope. By the time Annalu and I could return he had untied and was well down, making for camp as we thought.

About half-way up a Sherpa collapsed, obviously all in. I ordered him to remain until we returned. Annalu carried some of his food and I managed another cylinder of oxygen. Now the slope was easier, but the snow was soft and I had to break the trail. This, with the growing fear of not reaching our objective, probably prevented me from feeling tired. One of the first things we learn in the Alps is to appreciate time in relation to distance. Here time was flashing past and progress was painfully slow.

John untied and waited at the bergschrund, realising that he might delay us on the slope above. By this time we were moving about twelve steps between each rest. Never have I seen men try so hard yet accomplish so little; every step was fought for. Yet, as they lay in the snow exhausted, a word of encouragement showed them to be as cheerful as ever, with only one purpose, to reach the ledge. I reached the site of Camp 5 (25,300 feet) at 3 P.M. with two Sherpas, whom I despatched immediately to pick up John, the Sherpa who had collapsed, and Chendu, who was now half-way up with the part of his load which he had recovered. Annalu and Ming Mar arrived at 3.30 P.M. and, after a little food, they departed. While waiting for the last party I erected one tent, confident that it would be occupied the next day. At 4 P.M. they were still 100 feet below on a traverse and, at their present rate of progress, would take at least an hour. When I reached them we cut a hollow in the slope and dumped their loads. They actually wanted to go on. Pemi Dorge had been lively on the way up but quickly became very tired on the descent. Realising that there would only be room for two of us at Camp 4 now that it was occupied, I despatched the others at once to Camp 3 and returned slowly with Pemi Dorge. Charles and party came out to meet us with hot drinks.

That night the radio-telephone reported a change of wind and the fact that the monsoon might reach us in three days. A blizzard raged for the next 36 hours.



KANGBACHEN, THE WEST PEAK OF KANGCHENJUNGA
From near the summit. Makalu and Everest Massifs in distance



CAMP III ON UPPER ICEFALL
Showing (in the middle of the Western Rock Butress) the Gully leading down from the Hump

but then abated sufficiently for John, Pemi Dorge and I to grope our way down to Camp 3. It was another day before Charles' party could ascend to Camp 5. They found the going extremely difficult with fresh snow and had difficulty in finding the tent which was buried, also the dump, part of which was swept away, and they then required a day to rest and reorganise before Camp 6 (26,900 feet) was established. It was a magnificent effort, but I doubt if it would have been possible under the conditions if oxygen had not been used by all.

On the morning of 25th May, while John and I with the fittest of the Sherpas were struggling up with the second lift to Camp 5, we were able to watch two little black dots leaving Camp 6 and moving steadily up the Gangway. It was late in the morning when they finally disappeared, moving diagonally towards the ridge. They told us afterwards that they had to cut steps and had lost the route for over an hour, which caused the delay. The ridge was reached at 1 P.M. and, moving fast, the summit at 2.45 P.M. Their late return caused some anxiety. Just at dusk we thought we saw two specks enter the top of the Gangway and disappear into a shadow, but we could not be certain.

All was well next morning when we saw the second party climbing up from Camp 6 and George and Joe descending. Soon we were to learn of their success, and by midday I was receiving them at Camp 4. They both piled into my tent for a meal and a rest. I could not understand what was making holes in the groundsheet until I discovered they were still wearing crampons. George had frost-bitten fingers and Joe was snow-blind. He suffered great pain in spite of the cocaine ointment we applied. In the afternoon we descended to Camp 3, and that night we received the sad news from Base that Pemi Dorge had died from cerebral thrombosis. As we left next morning we saw Norman and Tony descending from Camp 6 and we soon learned that they, too, had reached the summit. When we reached Base Camp the following afternoon it was a sad place. The only sound was the ring of hammers on pitons as the Sherpas carved

prayers for Pemi Dorge on a large boulder. Next morning, as we joined the Sherpas in the ritual of the burial, we glanced up occasionally to watch the last parties streaming off the mountain.

A few days later we were gathered together at Moraine Camp where the vegetation appeared so green after two months above the snow-line. Already the adventure was a memory and we were able to place events in their true perspective. Monotony had been one of our difficulties and we kept on wishing for some of the climbing of the type we were used to. It had been a happy party on a safe route which may well become popular in the future. For some time now I have realised that one takes almost as much personal baggage for a week's winter climbing in the Highlands as for many months in the Himalayas, but the food and equipment required is another matter. At Darjeeling we started with $6\frac{1}{2}$ tons of baggage carried by 340 men and women in order to place four men on the summit!

THE SCOTTISH WOMEN'S HIMALAYAN EXPEDITION.

By Monica Jackson and Betty Stark.

THAT section of the Great Himalayan chain called the Jugal Himal lies nearer than any other part of the High Himalaya to Kathmandu. In view of this it may seem a trifle strange that it should have been, until the spring of 1955, the last large area of the Nepal Himalaya to remain completely unexplored. There are two good reasons for this state of affairs. With the opening of Nepal to mountaineers, expeditions naturally tended to gravitate towards the giants of the range, whereas the highest peak of the Jugal rises to no more than 23,200 feet. Tilman's report on the group in "Nepal Himalaya" was hardly encouraging. He was unable to get into the area on account of monsoon conditions, and from what he could see of them from the Langtang Himal the mountains of the Jugal looked distinctly uninviting.

We ourselves had not expected much of the Jugal. Our original intention was to try to break into the heart of this horseshoe-shaped area from the south and then cross over to the Langtang. If the river gorges proved impassable we had intended to retreat immediately to the Langtang. We were therefore rather taken aback when we found ourselves landed with the Jugal alone, since the Langtang had been allotted to Lambert. However, we decided to make the best of what we had got, and were rewarded far beyond our expectations.

It is true that the peaks of the Jugal are not exactly matey. The word "unclimbable" is now a dishonoured one, but most of them present difficulties and dangers for a small party out of all proportion to their height, though hardly worth the attention of a large expedition. But even to explore the glacier system of the group was a remarkable experience. As a party we were not untravelled. Apart from our Scottish experience we had, between us, climbed in the Alps, Tyrol and Pyrenees. Betty Stark and Evelyn Camrass had camped under the midnight sun of Arctic Norway, and I had camped at the foot of Kanchenjunga and of the lovely Siniolchu. But never had it been our privilege to see mountains so satisfyingly, almost vulgarly sensational as those of the Jugal Himal. The very memory of them brings to mind all the proper clichés.

Moreover, though the Survey of India $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch map was sufficiently wrong to give us the pleasure of discovering at least five hidden peaks and one largish glacier, it was quite correct in indicating a strongly demarcated frontier ridge. In both the Langtang Himal to the west and the Gaurisankar Himal to the east, valleys wander through the mountain chain and connect with the Tibetan Plateau, so that it is difficult to discover where the frontier really is, and the line marked on the map, though possibly ornamental, has no practical bearing on the matter. For this reason—let us be charitable—mountaineers occasionally stray unwittingly over the border. We were warned almost tearfully against this sort of thing by the British Embassy in Kathmandu, and regretfully promised not

to trespass. As it turned out, there was no inducement to do so. There are no through valleys in the Jugal Himal. On the Nepal side the mountains sweep up to the frontier ridge like a great wave, the curling cornices of which overhang the trough of the Tibetan Plateau. And there it ends. On the Tibetan side there is nothing but a few thousand feet of most impressive void. It is a perfect natural frontier; we sat in Nepal and dangled our feet into Tibet with a comfortable sense of virtue.

The frontier ridge is astonishingly narrow. With the exception of three cols, two of which we reached, and the mountain we climbed, it forms a tortuous curving knife-edge averaging about 20,000 feet in altitude and embellished with ice pinnacles and coxcombs of rotten rock.

Our purpose was exploration rather than peak-bagging, which was just as well, as the mountain we climbed, which we named Gyalgen Peak after our sirdar, appeared to be the only possibility for our party. For a larger party, with sufficient numbers and equipment for supporting camps, the unnamed 23,200-foot peak north of Dorje Lakpa and west of our mountain might go. We thoroughly explored the largest glacier in the system, and discovered and climbed a not inconsiderable subsidiary one which leads into the heart of the system. We also found two passes, one approached from our highest camp and one from base camp, leading to the second largest glacier valley, which looks on the map to be more important than the first, though this is incorrect. This glacier Betty and I subsequently crossed, and then followed the south ridge of Dorje Lakpa until we found another pass leading to the most westerly glacier valley of the Jugal. From this point we saw what appeared to be a very promising high-level glacier route from the Jugal to the Langtang, but we did not have time to try it out. In the meantime Evelyn with her party climbed to a summit on a south-easterly spur of Phurbi Chyachu and looked over into the most easterly valley of the Jugal.

Because we were the first party composed entirely of women to go to the Himalaya, our project at first



THE APPROACH TO GYALGEN PEAK (Arrow)

Route lies up the Icefall on the left (called the Upper Icefall), then rightwards to snow corridor below central peak
Highest camp is off picture on the left

caused a certain amount of mild fuss. One school of opinion held that we would fall by the wayside, another that we would fall off a mountain. We thought both these contingencies unlikely on the whole, but nevertheless took care to be well organised, because there were a great many people who were waiting to say "I told you so." It was partly due to this, and partly, I suppose, to luck that nothing went wrong on our trip. But credit must also be given to the immense goodwill of the people of Nepal, and particularly to the Sherpas, both our Sola Khumbu climbing Sherpas and the Sherpas of Tempathang, the nearest village to the Jugal Himal. Indeed, we found, in India as in Nepal, that our sex was an asset rather than the liability we had been warned about. We were treated everywhere with the greatest consideration, and people went out of their way to make things easy for us. From my previous experience of Sherpas, and of the people of the Indian sub-continent as a whole, I had expected that this would be the case. It was pleasant to find that I was not wrong.

PERHAPS it would interest readers if I described the technical problems involved in our climbing and exploration, from the point of view of the home-trained mountaineer with limited Alpine experience. Reaching our base camp, at 14,500 feet approximately, on 23rd April, we did not have a great deal of time in hand, as the weather was unsettled. Clouds and snow showers came up earlier each day, often hindering our exploration.

We found that the Phurbi Chyachu glacier, about 3 to 4 miles long and the largest in our area, was the key to the whole group of mountains, though at first we had no idea as to where it would lead us. During a reconnaissance of five days we climbed its icefall and followed the glacier to its head, discovering a magnificent horse-shoe of peaks and a subsidiary glacier which presented another icefall. After spending five days waiting at base camp for the consolidation of new snow which fell

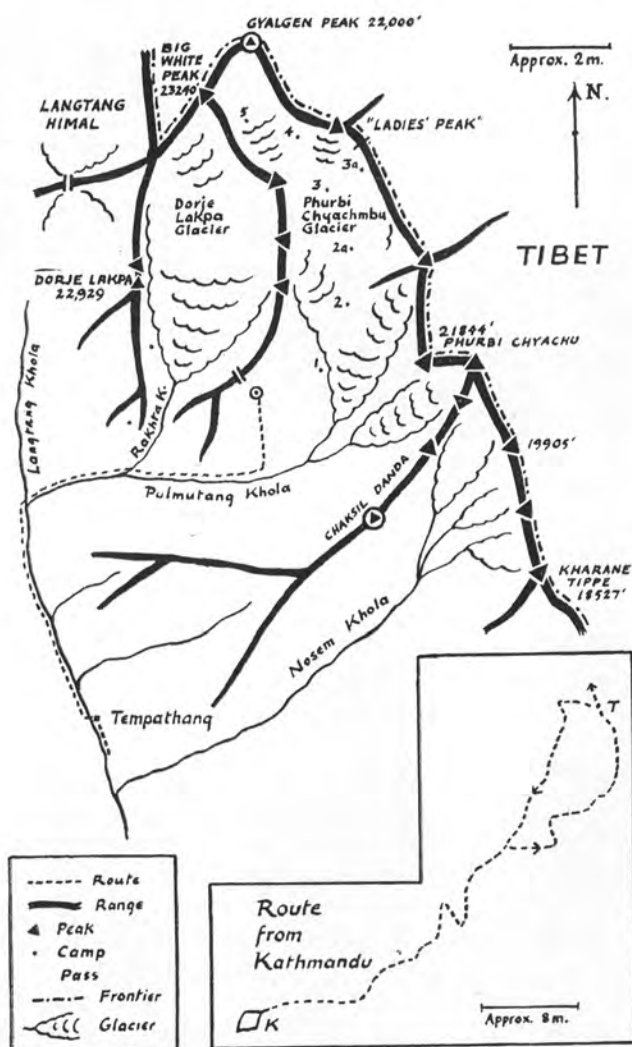
during a storm, we returned to the Phurbi Chyachu glacier, this time with a young untrained Sherpa porter, as well as our four climbing Sherpas, and taking a supply of food for ten days.

We had to follow a wide bergschrund, presenting little difficulty but constantly under threat of stonefall, to get on to the lower icefall. This gave us about 700 feet of climbing and was well covered by firm snow. We cut steps on the few ice pitches, since crampons would have balled up on the rest of this climb.

Well above the icefall we established two camps, one just below the frontier ridge of Nepal and Tibet. From this point we saw the subsidiary glacier clearly for the first time. Its icefall, about 2,000 feet in height, looked most complicated and dangerous. At its head, however, was a dome-shaped mountain, which looked as if it could be climbed, provided we could first get up that icefall.

The upper icefall proved to be more stable than the lower one, and much more generously covered by snow. This snow, frozen at night, remained fairly safe and firm throughout the day, and in this was rather like snow in Scotland or Arctic Norway. The only route across one huge crevasse, for example, at about 19,000 feet, was over a layer of snow and ice débris which had fallen from the upper lip. We crossed on this with safety about noon.

Route finding was complicated, however, and it took us a whole day to reach a snow corridor on the right, about half-way up the icefall, which would enable us to turn the worst of the crevasses. We had, therefore, to camp in the corridor and were uneasy about this, though the risk of avalanche was not great. Many avalanches poured from the small hanging glaciers above the main Phurbi Chyachu glacier, but the mountain wall above us at this point was not glaciated and was too steep to hold much snow. We pitched our tents immediately below a bergschrund, large enough to have swallowed all the minor snow slides which had so far come its way; and we hoped for the best.



ROUTE MAP.

Our fifth camp was at about 20,000 feet on an exposed snow waste. Above it, to the right, a most impressive rock and ice ridge led to the dome of Gyalgen Peak. We now saw that we could turn this ridge by the right fork of the glacier above, a wide *couloir* leading to a very high col on the frontier of Tibet, about 500 feet below the summit of Gyalgen Peak. The snow conditions in this *couloir*, which was at least 1,000 feet in height and lying at an angle of about 35 degrees, were the most unpredictable we had met. Most of the time we were ploughing through poorly consolidated snow, but now and then bands of very hard snow or pure ice covered by powder snow intruded, and crevasses here were difficult to spot. Above the high col the mountain was a large dome of ice, and it was possible to climb easily to the top, using crampons.

Our altimeter did not function, but by observing those peaks of the Jugal which have been triangulated we estimated the height of this mountain to be above 21,000 feet.

It took us five hours to reach the summit. We had a great deal of trouble with our breathing, Monica going fast in spite of this. Though I felt quite dissociated from the proceedings, I wanted to cry, only no one would give me time.

We reached camp again as a storm broke. Little snow fell, though the temperature dropped markedly. As the storm receded it was strange to hear the thunder rolling about below us. The wind, which came at us with gale force down the two forks of the glacier above, did not abate, and for two days we could hardly crawl out of the tents. Evelyn, who could eat little, became weak.

On the third morning we packed up hastily in extreme cold and descended in two days to base camp again. But the big storm had been a herald of the monsoon. It was now 16th May. Snow and ice began to rot early in the day. On the lower icefall our steps broke under us at 9.30 A.M. and the snow was nearly all gone. Once or twice, thinking I had at last found a patch of sound snow



THE LOWER ICEFALL; PHURBI CHYACHU GLACIER

for a belay, I drove my axe home and nearly did a header into a concealed crevasse. Two of the Sherpas had gone snow-blind and had to be guided all the way down. We were truly alarmed and thought afterwards that this was the only time we were in real danger.

We visited the second largest glacier of the group, the Dorje Lakpa, late in May. Its icefall was the most extensive we saw and the most dangerous. It was in a state of wholesale disintegration and avalanched regularly from an early hour each day.

Though we felt—and rightly—that we had everything to learn about the Himalaya when we first saw the mountains of the Jugal, we did find that our experience of climbing and of mountain country stood us in good stead. We concluded that previous experience of climbing on snow and ice was essential to the safety of a Himalayan expedition, and for this reason primarily—altitude so affected us that we became less anxious, even less responsible than usual. We now think that if we had not been so trained that we took precautions automatically, we would not have bothered with them at all.

Altitude had other effects on us, though we did not feel the cold a great deal. Monica had least trouble when going high, since she had already been up to 21,000 feet. I was very sick at about 16,000 feet. Then, as if I had gone through a barrier of some sort, I had little further trouble except breathlessness and loss of appetite. Evelyn, who had not previously gone much over 12,000 feet, had a lot of sickness and could eat very little. She acclimatised more slowly but surely. The most noticeable effect of altitude, however, was the unexpected serenity it gave us all, which made our high camps the most delightful and truly peaceful.

NOTE.—The first part of this article is by Mrs Monica Jackson, the second part by Miss R. E. Stark. The third member of this 1955 expedition was Miss Evelyn Camrass. All are members of the L.S.C.C.—ED.

ON THE POSSIBILITY OF SEEING THE CUILLIN FROM THE CAIRNGORMS.

By Guy Barlow, D.Sc.

IN June 1951 Dr Bell wrote to me concerning this problem. After further stimulation from time to time and much neglect on my part the results of a theoretical examination of the subject are now set out in this report.

Since it had been suggested that Sgurr nan Gillean was a likely peak of the Cuillin to be seen from Ben Macdhuì—and indeed may have been observed from that mountain—it was decided to start by investigating the line of sight between these two summits. The gap formed by the bend in the lower part of Glen Shiel is critical, as it affords the only chance of getting any view of the Cuillin, and the view would be a very restricted one. But it was soon found that Sgurr nan Gillean was too far north to be seen through the gap. A point slightly north of Sgurr Dearg was indicated as a first approximation. Having already a great personal interest in this peak, it was chosen for the test.

The calculation for this case was carried out with accuracy, but the conclusion reached was that no point of the Cuillin could be seen from Ben Macdhuì. It was then thought that Cairn Toul should give a better chance as its position more to the south would tend to widen and perhaps deepen the gap. The favoured Cuillin peak would now be Sgurr na Banachdich (north top). A complete recalculation, with some refinements, was made for this slightly altered line. To simplify and shorten this account details of the former case are omitted.

Dr Bell had rightly pointed out that a great circle of the earth's surface must be taken in working out the "line (really plane) of vision" between the two points. On maps the methods of projection must involve some compromise, hence a line of sight could not possibly be for all directions a straight line on the map.

Taking the latitude and longitude of the two mountains, Cairn Toul and Sgurr na Banachdich, spherical trigonometry was used to calculate (1) their distance

apart, (2) the latitude of a point P on the great circle having a given longitude ($5^{\circ} 25' \text{ W.}$), practically that of the ridge from Sgurr Nid na Iolaire north of The Saddle, and (3) the latitude of another point Q also on the great circle but having a longitude ($5^{\circ} 10' \text{ W.}$) 15 minutes of arc to east of P. Using the latitude and longitude scales on the 1-inch O.S. "Popular" map of Glen Shiel and Glen Garry, the points P and Q (about $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches apart) were plotted on the map. The straight line through them was taken as the trace of the plane of vision in this critical region. Such maps have marginal scales without any lines of latitude and longitude marked on the map. Hence P and Q were located by *straight* lines across the map, but any error in their positions on this account must be extremely small. The correctness of the calculations was confirmed by determining a third point, R, on the great circle having a difference of longitude of 15 minutes from Q farther up Glen Shiel.

It was now seen that the critical profiles forming the gap would be, on the south the simple northern ridge of The Saddle, and on the north the very complicated southern ridges of the region extending from Sgurr na Ciste Duibhe to Sgurr an Fhuairail, giving a series of three or four overlapping profiles from P up to nearly 14 miles towards Cairn Toul.

The next step was to construct these profiles from the map. A careful tracing was made of the 1-inch map showing P and Q with the line through them, and the contours for 2,000, 2,250, 2,500, 2,750 and 3,000 feet. It was sufficient to draw only those portions of these contours which were in positions to contribute to the profiles. It was known that only contours between 2,000 and 3,000 feet were of any importance. The map shows contours for every 50 feet, but it did not seem desirable to make use of them as they are "interpolated," not determined by instruments on the ground.

The tracing was placed over a sheet of graph paper with $\frac{1}{16}$ -inch squares and adjusted so that the line PQ was coincident with one of the lines of the graph paper. By estimation to $\frac{1}{16}$ division it was then easy to read off

with an accuracy of $\frac{1}{100}$ inch the transverse distance z to the line PQ from the *nearest* points (*i.e.*, points of contact of tangents parallel to PQ) for the successive contours. These distances were tabulated together with the distances in inches (seen on the graph paper) from P along PQ to the points under examination. The Saddle ridge, at P, was, of course, quite straightforward; it gave a single profile. The northern buttresses along Glen Shiel were most confusing. The contours were inspected along the whole distance of 14 inches. Some contours provided likely points at several distances along PQ. These circumstances have greatly added to the difficulty of the problem. Diagrams of the profiles were then made by setting off right or left of a vertical line the transverse measurements, z , each at a height corresponding to its contour level, using exaggerated scales for convenience.

But various corrections must be made before we can superpose the diagrams to obtain the shape of the gap. Most important is the allowance for the earth's curvature. In our problem we are interested mainly in the line between two particular points on the earth, it is therefore convenient to adopt a direct method of allowing for earth's curvature and refraction. Assuming refraction as $\frac{1}{8}$ earth's curvature, a value which Parker considered suitable for Scotland, the refraction can be merged into curvature by simply regarding the earth's radius as $\frac{1}{8}$ greater than its actual value. Having made this alteration, lines of sight become straight in space just as if the atmosphere did not exist.

Corresponding to the sea-level positions of Cairn Toul and Sgurr na Banachdich the chord through the earth is found to be 95.4 miles. For all practical purposes this is the same as the distance over the curved surface. This chord is taken as a base line. The height y in feet of a point on the sea-level surface above the chord, for a distance x miles from one end of it, is given by

$$y = x(95.4 - x) \div 1.80,$$

the radius of the earth—3,957 miles—having been increased by $\frac{1}{8}$, bringing it to 4,748 miles to compensate

for refraction. At half-way across, this gives a rise, the maximum, of 1,265 feet for the sea-level above the chord.

Fig. 1 will help to explain the method. The chord is B_0C_0 , with B for Banachdich and C for Cairn Toul. At B_0 and C_0 we set up ordinates B_0B and C_0C to represent the heights of the two mountains, 3,167 feet and 4,241 feet respectively. (The latter may be increased by 5 feet for the observer's eye; he should not be allowed to stand on the cairn.) The profiles must be raised up to sit on the arc at distances from B_0 of 31.1 miles, at P, for the south profile due to The Saddle ridge, and 34.1, 37.5, 39.2 and 44.1 miles at the points K_0 , K_1 , K_2 and K_3 to represent the series of northern profiles. We must imagine them set transversely to the diagram with all the points corresponding to the line of sight ($z=0$) adjusted to be in the plane of the diagram. Then, looking from the point C, there will be a correct view of the gap formed by the profiles. To complete the model we set up transversely at B_0 a diagram of the Cuillin outline adjusted with Sgurr na Banachdich over B_0 .

This model has been actually constructed, using a long wooden straight edge as the base line B_0C_0 . It is not necessary to represent the arc; all the profiles are set up on the straight edge with the additional elevations (y) due to the arc. The scales used were 1 inch to mile for distances (x) along B_0C_0 , 1 inch to 500 feet for vertical heights (y) and 1 inch to 528 feet ($\frac{1}{10}$ mile) for transverse distances (z). It should be noted that there is no need to use identical scales for the three directions, but in order to give a natural representation of the gap the vertical and transverse scales are made nearly the same, within 6 per cent.

The model is most helpful in a study of the problem, and it gives a good approximate solution. But to avoid doubts which might arise from imperfections in the set-up and alignment of the model a mathematical treatment was employed in which all the points used to construct the profiles were radially projected from C on to a single transverse plane, that through B, the Cuillin plane, being naturally chosen. This gives a picture which should be identical with that seen in a perfect model.

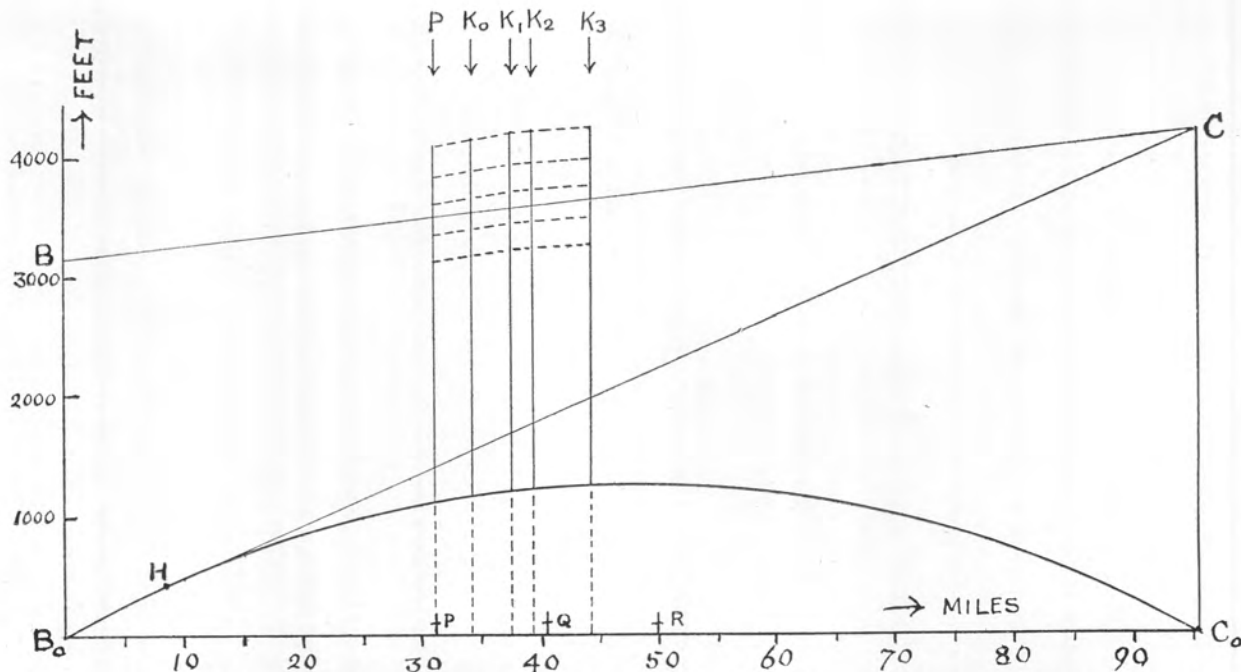


FIG. 1.—The plane of vision ($z=0$) between Cairn Toul (C) and Sgurr na Banachdich (B), showing the chord B_0C_0 , the adjusted arc of the earth, the positions of the profiles P, K_0 , K_1 , K_2 , K_3 , and the points P, Q and R. The five contour levels used for the profiles are indicated by the dotted curves. The point H, near Faoilean in Loch Slapin, is the visible horizon from C.

The actual profiles without any correction are shown in Fig. 2 where they are all superposed. This would be the view for a flat earth with the spectator at an infinite distance.

The constructed perspective picture is shown in Fig. 3. It agrees perfectly with the view in the model. The lowest point of the gap is 2,880 feet when projected on to the Cuillin plane. All that can be seen of the Cuillin is the north summit of Sgurr a' Ghreadaidh, with a narrow shaving of its northern ridge extending down to Eag Dubh (2,890 feet), which is exactly at the lowest point of the profile gap. The outline of the Cuillin ridge here given was drawn with much difficulty, using maps and photographs. As the maps showed surprising disagreement it is not possible to guarantee great accuracy in the result. A photograph of the Cuillin seen from Clach Glas supplied by Stuart F. M. Cumming has been most helpful (see reproduction in "Skye" Guide Book). This direction of viewing deviates only 8° from that desired. The true line of sight passes over the south ridge of Blaven. Besides the scale of miles there is one for minutes of arc as seen from Cairn Toul. The setting sun (diameter 32') is shown to scale with its centre at Eag Dubh.

There was still the possibility, however, that part of the gap might be cut off by the high mountains between Glen Shiel and Cairn Toul. An examination of the map showed that the most serious obstacle was Carn Ban (3,087 feet), dead on the line about 21 miles from Cairn Toul. When projected on the Cuillin plane the gap just escapes being affected. Blaven also gives no interference.

The profile K₂, due to a ridge stretching out in the direction of the Cluanie Inn, gives rise to the bump in the base of the gap and prevents it from being a V-type. It is a most important feature. Its highest point is below the 2,750 contour; it was taken as 2,700 feet in the calculations. Obviously the Cuillin should be well seen from it.

If we now move northward to Ben Macdhuì the Glen Shiel gap, contracting and rising, shifts southwards.

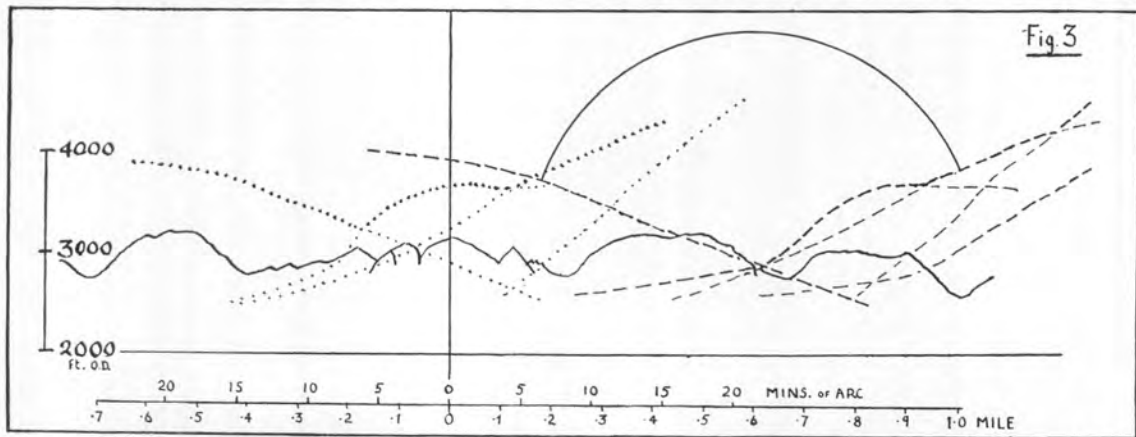
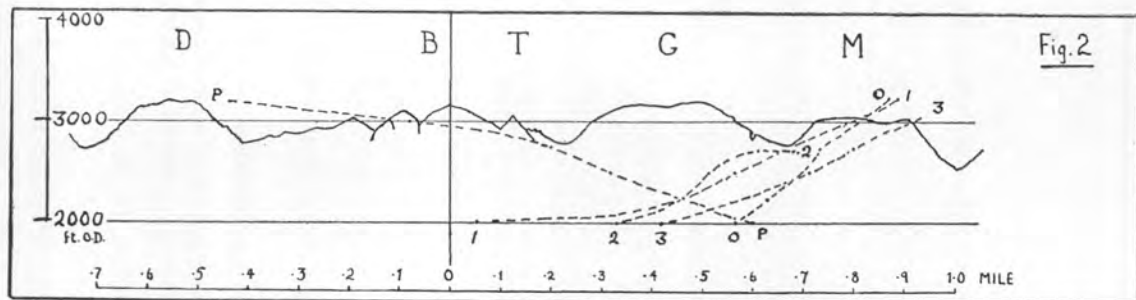


FIG. 2.—The Cuillin outline, from Sgurr Dearg (D) to Sgurr a' Mhadaidh (M), with the uncorrected profiles superposed. The line of sight is from Cairn Toul to Sgurr na Banachdich (B).

FIG. 3.—The Cuillin with the constructed Glen Shiel Gap. The profiles as seen from Cairn Toul are shown by the broken lines. The displaced profiles, when the viewpoint is moved to Ben Macdhui, are indicated by the dotted lines. The setting sun is shown to scale. To give the natural representation this diagram would need to be viewed at a distance of 21 feet.

along the Cuillin. On the left in Fig. 3 is shown the gap as it appears from Ben Macdhui. The lowest point is now 3,220 feet, hence the Cuillin is hidden. With enough abnormal visibility the Banachdich peaks should rise above the gap. The additional refraction required would be about 5 minutes of arc. The changes in the view are confirmed by the model. It is found that within the range considered the lowest point of the gap is displaced along the Cuillin by distances which are 0.65 of the displacements of the point of view in the Cairngorms. This means that the line of sight to the lowest point of the gap rotates about a point in Glen Shiel 5.5 miles from P.

These considerations indicate that if we go a little south of the Cairn Toul cairn, 150 yards perhaps, we should get a glimpse of the south-west peak of Sgurr a' Mhadaidh.

Anyone attempting to see the Cuillin from either of the two summits should certainly observe not only from the cairns but also from short distances to north and south. Photographs from two positions would be of great interest. The high point (4,149 feet) to south of the Wells of Dee should be worth a trial.

With regard to accuracy a few remarks may be added. It would be more correct to consider the points of contact of tangents to the contours all *radiating* from the eye and not the series of *parallel* tangents which were used. But in this particular problem no sensible error could be introduced. There is also error due to the lines of vision being in general *inclined* to the contour surfaces (which are spherical surfaces); it would indeed be difficult to correct for this without the use of a solid model of the mountain side. Here, again, there can be no sensible error, especially as, by good fortune, in the region of the critical points of the profiles the lines of sight are inclined only very slightly to the elements of the contour surfaces (see Fig. 1). In any case it is possible that the O.S. contours are not exact enough to afford the degree of accuracy which has here been attempted.

Finally, there is the question of abnormal refraction. Under ordinary conditions of the atmosphere we suppose

that the so-called "convective equilibrium" state exists. This is a relation between temperature and pressure at every point such that if any mass of air be moved up or down suddenly it will automatically acquire the temperature corresponding to its new level. By taking this distribution of density we obtain the result that a horizontally travelling ray of light will experience a refraction which gives the ray a curvature of nearly $\frac{1}{8}$ that of the earth's surface, and it appears that this value is generally accepted as being in agreement with observation. Any other distribution of density will be unstable. Moreover, haze and poor visibility arise from irregularities in density in the line of sight. Abnormal refraction may be possible for a short time over a plane surface under still conditions. It is difficult to believe it possible over a stretch of 100 miles of country so varied and complicated as that which lies between the Cairngorms and the Cuillin. Nevertheless the writer thinks it just possible that there may occur one or more local conditions to bring about helpful refraction. For example, could a low temperature curved surface on The Saddle ridge, and perhaps on the dome top of Carn Ban (3,087 feet), act as prisms to give additional bending of the light over them? This is a matter which seems best decided by direct observation, which should not be difficult.

The refractive index of air is affected to a small extent by the presence of water vapour. It seems difficult to make any useful estimate of its effect on the refraction. Clearness of distant views, however, is often associated with rain showers when the atmosphere may be expected to contain much water vapour.

After having so many times traversed in my imagination the nearly 100-mile line from Cairn Toul to the Cuillin, over the high mountain ridges and through the deep glens, the thought now comes to me how wonderful it would be for once to follow that line in reality!

NOTE.—With reference to J. D. B. Wilson's statement that he saw the Cuillin from Ben Macdhui (see *J.* 25, p. 388), Dr Barlow considers it probable that he did in fact see the Cuillin, but most likely under conditions of abnormal refraction.

FELLOW TRAVELLER.

By Iain H. Ogilvie.

WE met him in Skye a good many years ago and this story is true—well, nearly true. Charlie and I were about half-way through our holiday when he caught us up between Sligachan and Allt Dearg.

“ Good morning,” he said, out of breath, as he was a little man and had had to walk fast.

“ Good morning,” we answered.

“ Where are you going to-day ? ”

“ Am Basteir.”

“ Oh, that’s grand ! ” he exclaimed, smiling at us pleasantly and blinking through a very thick pair of glasses. “ I’m by myself,” he went on. “ Got a new rope the other day and haven’t used it yet. I thought the hotel would have been full of climbers but they’re all fishermen.”

We hadn’t quite given in yet ; so he went on. Evidently he was a member of a well-respected club from the south. One of their leading lights, he knew all the best climbers of the day and had climbed with most of them. And what a list of climbs ! He still smiled and blinked at us through his thick glasses. We were sorry for him.

His life history was repeated once or twice on the way up the hill, but as this made him even more out of breath, he eventually dropped some way behind. We came to easy rock and had started scrambling when a voice came from below.

“ I say ! You know ! You don’t mind my saying so, but shouldn’t we put on the rope ? Just throw me the end.”

I couldn’t. The rope wasn’t long enough, so I started to climb down. Charlie carried on. When we rejoined him he was at the foot of the climb. He had been watching us, and now he was looking up at the rock.

“ We’re not going up there,” said Charlie.

“ Why not ? ” I said.

"Oh, why not?" said our friend.

Charlie gave us no direct answer but muttered: "I think there will be an easy way round on the right," and set off.

Our route may have been a first ascent, but its difficulties were not such that it has ever been considered desirable to clutter up the pages of a guide book with an account. When we were all roped up, I was in the lead with Charlie second. I started up the first pitch at a fair pace, dropping out the coils of rope behind me as I walked. Charlie followed almost as fast, picking them up again, and when his rope ran out I continued to the end of mine. I sat on a broad ledge in the mist. My party was out of sight below. I could hear the scraping of a pair of boots and, from time to time, muffled grunts. After what seemed an age, Charlie came up. He said nothing—an unusual thing for him! I felt rather uncomfortable and went on.

When he next joined me he could keep it in no longer. He almost burst. "That man," he said—"he's fallen off twice so far—once on each pitch! He's . . ." No, I can't repeat it! It took a long time to say and some of it was very rude. Fortunately the next few feet brought us to the top, and we found an easy way home.

Charlie was speechless again, but not so our friend. He had had a grand climb and recalled its incidents one by one. When we reached our tent he thanked us profusely, smiled at us sweetly, blinked through his thick glasses and left for the comforts of the hotel.

Half an hour later we were contemplating a dirty frying-pan and some still unwashed breakfast dishes. We wondered which of us would go for some water. The midges had begun. Just then a small boy, whom we had noticed toiling up the road from the hotel, arrived and handed us a note. Would we care to join our friend and his wife for dinner? The temptation was too great.

I must say that a more charming couple could not have stood us a better dinner anywhere, and after a drink or two our spoilt day had been forgiven if not forgotten.

But things were a bit difficult. Our new friend was quite undaunted. We had a whispered consultation, between the dining-room and the lounge. We would simply have to ask him to join us again, but I had an idea. When we had settled down I began:

"We were thinking of trying a new climb on Clach Glas," I said. It was a big, horrible, dark, dirty gully, full of loose stones and moss, with water running down it and a huge slimy chockstone at the top. All the best parties had failed in it: that is to say, all those who had had the courage to try! It was a long way off and would take a long time; so we would have to start early and go fast. I wondered if he would like to join us.

It appeared that he already knew the gully. He knew it well. In fact, he had wanted to have a go at it ever since he had first seen it a year or two back. Oh dear!

That night Charlie and I had another consultation. We would have to go very fast and tire him out before we got there. Next day it was stinking hot, and we covered the 6 miles to the foot of the hill in just under the hour. Before us lay a most beautiful burn pool, and he was a long way behind. We were still in it when he arrived.

"Well!" he said. "You two certainly can move. I'm not as young as you these days, you know. I think I'll just carry on and let you catch me up."

We never had intended to climb the beastly gully and we had to talk our way out of it. Our friend was disappointed. He even offered to lead. "That is to say, if you don't feel up to it I don't mind having a go," he said.

"No!" said Charlie, and led the way to the easiest known climb on the face. "I shall lead to-day," he continued when we got there. "And you can go second," he went on, looking at me in a way I didn't quite like.

Charlie led and the fun began when I started to bring up our friend. I could hear grunts and scrapings again from beneath the first chockstone. A hand appeared, fluttered about for a moment and was gone. Then the other hand. When that had gone too there was a pause,

and suddenly, without warning, both hands came up, grabbed at the chockstone, missed it, and the rope came tight.

That started things. It began with a rumbling and mounted to a crescendo. He addressed the chockstone in terms which must have made it wince. He recommended it, Clach Glas and mountains in general, to the devil. He used words which—well, I had heard them before but not often! The mountains trembled, but the Prince of Darkness ignored him and the chockstone was not removed.

It is when we look into the abyss of nothingness
infinite nothingness,
that we lose courage
and die swearing,
or die praying.*

In despair he turned to his Maker. Apart from one short lapse, when he rebuked Him rather sharply for not getting a move on, his tones were more subdued. He had been wicked but surely he had not deserved all this! If only he could get down he would never climb again. Next year he would go to Blackpool—anywhere—but not here. But he couldn't get over that chockstone! Couldn't it be removed or something? His voice died away into silence.

The Almighty did not remove the chockstone either. His solutions are generally simpler than that. After a brief pause a voice came from below. "Well, I suppose I'll have to come up some time! I might as well get on with it."

His next efforts were more successful. The hands found their mark, and after a lot more scraping, up came the thick glasses and the smile. "Grand!" it said. "You know, I'm . . ." He was gone again—this time with such a jerk that I nearly followed him.

"As I was saying," he said as he surfaced, "I'm so short-sighted! I keep missing the holds. Still, you know, there's always the rope, isn't there?"

* from "Moon's Farm" by Sir Herbert Read.

“ You see ! ” said Charlie when I joined him.

I'll leave out the remaining pitches in case I should become tedious. We got home in the end. When we left him he thanked us again and said he had enjoyed himself immensely. “ What time shall I pop round in the morning ? ” he said.

That night Charlie and I did a thing we had never done before—from anybody. We packed up our tent and ran away.

THE SLIDE COLLECTION.

By Robert Grieve.

THE *Journal* is the principal record of the activities of the Club. Two years ago, during a convalescence, I read methodically through all the numbers of the *Journal* from the first one. It was a fascinating experience, giving a fine continuous perspective of the Club, its background, achievements and personalities. It occurred to me at the time that the Slide Collection was the essential complement to the *Journal*. In it one sees the affairs of the Club reflected directly or indirectly in pictures—in some essential ways it brings the records of the *Journal* to life. Yet, strangely enough, no article on the Collection has yet found its way into the pages of the *Journal*. It may, therefore, be of interest to members to learn something of it at this stage in its life, when substantial changes are taking place in its nature.

The Collection started sixty-three years ago on 15th February 1893 at a meeting of five Club members in the Windsor Hotel, Glasgow. The members were Robert Davies, Howard Priestman, J. Rennie, W. Douglas and W. Lamond Howie. Eighteen slides were donated at the meeting and constituted the foundation of the Collection ; Rennie became the first Slide Custodian. It has grown since to the great total of some 4,000 slides—but not steadily. It would appear from the dates on the

slides that it grew in bursts, depending on the skill and enthusiasm of the photographers who appeared from time to time in the membership of the Club. We still have many slides donated by Douglas (whose name will live as long as the famous Boulder), Rennie, Priestman and Lamond Howie, and we have slides featuring these early members. Some of the Lamond Howie slides are still among the very finest in the Collection and, owing to the use of the large plate camera and long-focus lenses, give an impression of scale, majesty and texture of detail which the modern shots apparently cannot rival. It would be wrong, however, to give the impression that all the old slides are of that standard; many are very poor and, in any case, have not worn well. It is just that Lamond Howie would have been a first-class photographer in any generation; and the same can be said of one or two of the other principal builders of the Collection such as W. Inglis Clark and A. E. Robertson. It is rather humiliating to have to record that, in the purely Scottish Collection, no comparable individual appears to have made anything like the same impact, either in quantity or quality, since the first decade of this century. In fact, when J. H. Buchanan gifted his private collection to the Club five or six years ago it was remarkable how it filled many gaps and included some good action pictures—a standing deficiency which later Club photographers have not, even with the more portable and efficient camera equipment, done much to remedy in the Collection. And to this day, the negatives of A. E. Robertson are still in demand. The present Custodian still asks for them in the building of the new 2 by 2 in. collection. These negatives, mostly taken before 1910, are still magnificent stock—crisp, beautifully lighted and well composed, and a standing challenge to the mountain photographers of to-day.

The range of the present Collection is an impressive one. Of the total of about 4,000 slides, approximately 2,400 are Scottish and 1,600 foreign. The Scottish Collection is divided into 122 groups; the system is largely geographic in its plan, but seven groups are of a

particular character, *e.g.*, Historical, S.M.C. Personalia, River and Loch, etc. The former two record such things as groups at old meets and the personalities of the past, and the latter include pictorial studies of fine examples of landscape under that heading. One slide in the Historical section records the first J.M.C.S. meet and shows a group bivouacking under the Narnain Boulder. We are fortunate in having pictures of John Mackenzie, J. G. Stott (the Club Bard of early days), Norman Collie, Harold Raeburn and Sir H. T. Munro. The latter celebrated personage is well represented in kilt and bonnet, and the first time I saw a slide of him he was mentally transferred from the fabulous category of the unicorn to that of a real individual human personality. And that, to my mind, is the great value of the Collection; these old slides bring to life all these personalities and telescope the years amazingly. They also have the salutary effect of reminding us all, for the good of our souls, that there were great men before Agamemnon. Our predecessors were a lively lot, too, and there are many amusing slides recording a great variety of situations, some of them almost censorable. The early emphasis of the Club on spring and winter mountaineering is reflected, in some groups, in the preponderance of winter scenes, although, for example, the An Teallach group includes only one or two in winter garb.

In the foreign sections the Alps are by far the largest group, as might be expected. Here one finds a higher standard of technical quality. Alpine scenery is, of course, much easier to photograph than temperamental Highland landscape. Of the total of foreign slides, about 700 are Alpine. They range from relatively modern ski-touring shots through many action climbing shots to reproductions of Whymper's drawings and other old fantastic drawings of De Saussure's attempt on Mont Blanc. They do not include, however, two or three hundred slides in the Ling and Unna Collections which have not yet been indexed and absorbed in the Club Collection, largely because of lack of space at the moment. These slides can, of course, be borrowed by members if required. Many other parts

of the world are represented even if only by a handful of slides in each section—the New Zealand Alps, the Canadian Rockies, the Himalaya, the Caucasus, and even one of Vesuvius! There are some of the Irish mountains and a few (four, to be precise) of that foreign climbing centre, the English Lakes! Recently Gordon Donaldson sent from Africa a sequence of first-class slides of climbing in Kenya. Altogether, an interesting agglomeration, although one strongly hopes that the remarkable post-war exploits of Club members in the Himalaya and elsewhere will soon be represented by appropriate donations.

However, the backbone of the Collection must continue to be Scottish, and here the Custodian wishes to address some winged words. The Collection is old—the great bulk of the slides are thirty years old and more. They cannot but crack, break or fade with the years, and although strenuous efforts have been made to maintain them in reasonable order, their age and long use are against them. In any case, many of them are, quite frankly, redundant and worthless. The only sound policy is replacement by new slides both from the best of the old stock and from modern negatives. Those slides of an historic or unique character should be regarded as irreplaceable and probably used only on special occasions or studied in the hand by members. But this is a counsel of perfection, whilst members require selections for lectures and whilst we have a limited new stock to call upon. Further, the 2 by 2 in. slide is now taking over from the old $3\frac{1}{4}$ by $3\frac{1}{4}$ in., and obviously we should now concentrate on the former, whether colour or monochrome; the saving in storage space alone is a very important consideration. We now have some 200 slides in the new size, mostly colour, and the process of reproducing the best of the old is slowly proceeding. This will give us a mixed collection of colour and monochrome which is probably a good thing—a straight diet of colour can be indigestible.

At this juncture the Custodian comes to the point, which is that those members of the Club who are photographers (and how many are, nowadays) should make a

real effort to send him good negatives or colour transparencies in larger quantities. He is not dissatisfied unduly with the response in the last year or two, and he has been greatly helped by members in strengthening some of the monochrome sections; this is particularly so in the Skye group where many excellent slides of new climbing routes have been added. But he would like to say that he is particularly anxious to get (*a*) really good pictorial shots of Scottish mountains anywhere; (*b*) good action shots of modern rock and snow routes in the standard climbing districts of Glencoe, Skye, Nevis, etc.; (*c*) more shots of the North-west Highlands and Islands, their rock faces and the new routes being made on them; (*d*) records of the Cairngorm faces and the climbing done in the last few years; (*e*) pictures of howffs, huts, cottages, camps and caves used as climbing bases—inside and outside shots; and (*f*) pictures of personalities in credible, incredible, creditable or discreditable situations. He believes that many excellent records of all the above definitely exist. Monochrome negatives should be sharp, clear and full of detail; colour transparencies should not be those that would normally have landed in the fire.

So much is happening to-day; so many tigers rage along the faces, so many Munro-baggers reach the 277th and retire to ski-ing, so many howffs are found or built, so many personalities emerge from all this that the response to this appeal should be impressive. If it is, the Collection will continue to illustrate the story of the Club in all its aspects; if it is not, we shall be rightly denigrated by our descendants, and consigned to their contempt.

A NAMELESS SPORT.

By E. W. Hodge.

THE Black Rock of Novar is not really a rock at all, but a gorge rather more than a mile long, through which flows the River Glass, taking most of the drainage of Ben Wyvis. Its lower end is only about half a mile above the bridge on the coast road. Of its kind, it is unique. The walls are throughout its whole length almost vertical to a height varying from 60 to 120 feet, and frequently undercut, with no break in them on either side anywhere. Many years ago a local man, one David MacDonald, of the Grove, near Evanton, who, I believe, is still alive, leapt across the gorge where it is 100 feet deep. From the cliff edge there are not many places where one can see the stream at all, and indeed much of the stream cannot be seen from anywhere—unless one were to traverse it at water-level.

What sort of an excursion would this be—6,000 feet of horizontal climbing, a mile of wading and scrambling, or 2,000 yards of swimming? What of the obstacles? The 6-inch map gives no information regarding the total fall of the stream from one end of the gorge to the other, but on direct inspection one would not say there was scope for waterfalls of as much as a score of feet in height, singly. But horrible distorted rumblings are heard here and there, and on a past visit I had seen the gorge, at one point at least, filled to the top with the smoke of a fall.

Should the passage be attempted upstream or downstream? The former would entail a great deal of effort against the current, but by the other way retreat would probably be found impossible, in the all-too-likely event of unforeseen difficulty or exhaustion. It would be reckless to attempt a downstream passage without inspection (as far as is possible) of the particular difficulties; not forgetting to take careful account of the state of the river on the day of the attempt as compared with its state on the day of reconnaissance. Loss of body heat by long

immersion in swiftly flowing water would be a problem, whilst one would not want to be encumbered with too much wet clothing if rope-ladders or rocks had to be climbed. A minimum requirement would be adequate means for hoisting out an exhausted man without delay.

On 27th August, as the prolonged drought of 1955 was ending, a party, mainly of Ferranti Ltd. Mountaineering Club, arrived from Edinburgh to make the attempt, permission having been kindly granted by the Novar Estate. One could have crossed the Perthshire Garry or the Upper Spey dryshod for many miles, but the River Glass, though low, was not relatively as low as these. We had 100 feet of rope-ladder belonging to F. A. Evans and, besides much else, a field telephone. This was most useful, as vocal acoustics were not at all good in the gorge. It was lowered on whistle signal. Without it very awkward confusion could have occurred in the event of someone needing help. A running block was available, which, if attached to a rope made fast to one of the many trees on the far side of the gorge, would give a straight lift without friction on rock, and one of the support party followed the opposite bank of the river to arrange this.

The assault party consisted of J. C. Cruickshank and Duncan Macdonald. They had with them a rubber dinghy, which they propelled by swimming with the legs. This kept the upper part of the body dry and enabled them to remain in the gorge much longer than otherwise possible. As in climbing, one man went first, and then sent the dinghy back on a cord, with which he brought up the second at each "pitch." I had feared that the encumbrance of a dinghy, with its load of pitons, marine flares, etc., might make the difference between completing the passage and failing to do so; but both men, though strong swimmers, said afterwards they would not like to have been without it, as real resting-places in the gorge were few. Except at occasional rapids, the water was extremely deep, although the current usually affected the surface, not the deeper water.

At several places the gorge was narrower than the width of the dinghy (3 feet), and at one place only 20 inches. Elsewhere, circular chambers or potholes had been scooped out under the overhang of the walls. At the narrow places, therefore, it was necessary to straddle or to back-up but nevertheless impossible to climb out of the gorge anywhere. The rock, a New Red Sandstone puddingstone, although much pitted and wrinkled, is without adequate holds or ledges and unsuitable for climbing.

I had wondered whether a light pole, with which to sound the stream and maintain balance whilst creeping along the edge, would be of any use, but the walls were too sheer and the river too deep for this. These deep reaches would never be shallow in any drought, and probably never frozen. As the gorge runs through a wood it is bridged in several places at the top by fallen trees, and at the bottom several big log-jams were met, which were holding back water. None of these could be seen from above. These jams, as much as 10 feet high, were of doubtful stability and gave some trouble to surmount. The estate people told us that salmon never get through the gorge to Loch Glass. Possibly these log-jams may be the reason.

Cruickshank and Macdonald were some seven hours in the gorge (including an interval of rope-ladder climb to the cliff-top) and reached a spot about as far upstream as the former bridge. This, of course, is only a fraction of the whole length of the rock. Although to the party on top progress seemed slow (and was mostly out of sight), we were content with the day as a tactical exercise, without troubling about the "first through" record. It was, however, a pity that the waterfall or waterslide at a left-hand bend in the gorge (looking downstream) some 200 yards above the old bridge site was not reached, as my impression is that this might be the crux. Possibly rush tactics in the downstream direction might have yielded a complete through passage on the day of our visit, but could hardly have been justified without a try-out at stream-level. And if there is not likely to be a

better opportunity it is also true that anyone ought to consider carefully before launching downstream at any time, as I am sure the gorge is no place to be in except at low water.

SOME EARLY CLIMBS IN THE CUILLIN.

By W. Wickham King.

Mr Wickham King, who joined the Club in 1891, is our oldest member. This account of his early climbs in Skye was prompted by an appreciative reading of "The Cuillin of Skye," by our member B. H. Humble, the notes being written on a sheet pasted into his copy of the book. We are grateful to Mr King for permission to publish them in the *Journal*, a valuable and interesting document in the history of Scottish mountaineering.

AFTER reading Mr Humble's excellent description of the Cuillin and of its exploration I compiled this brief account of my climbs there, with Norman Collie and others.

In the year 1888 my brother and I made the acquaintance of Norman Collie and his brother John at the Sligachan Hotel. My brother and John Collie went fishing, whilst Norman Collie and I made the following ascents: Sgurr nan Gilleann by the Tourist route, Am Basteir, the Bhasteir Tooth and Bruach na Frithe, Sgurr a' Mhadaidh and Bidein Druim nan Ramh, with a descent by the steep route into the corrie on the western side of the northern peak of the latter. On these two days Collie took levels with a barometer, which he did not use afterwards for the reasons set out in Mr Humble's book. We also ascended Sgurr Dearg and its pinnacle on both north and west sides.

In 1889 with F. P. Evers* and Collie the ascent by

* Col. White, who was in command of the Ordnance Survey men who mapped the Cuillin, was the uncle of F. P. Evers, one of my companions in 1889. Col. White told me that none of his men were climbers, which was inimical to their task.

the Pinnacle Ridge of Sgurr nan Gillean. Evers then returned to Sligachan Hotel. With Collie I climbed the Gendarme close by, and then made a direct descent into Coire a' Bhasteir. As rain ensued for several days, Evers and I left Skye.

In 1891 with Collie and Maylard, Sgurr a' Mhadaidh and all peaks to Sgurr nan Gillean, with descent by its Pinnacle Ridge. Maylard then invited us to stay with him when we reached Glasgow. He invited Naismith, Rennie and Thomson to meet us.* Both of us became members of the Scottish Mountaineering Club the same year. With Collie, ascent of Sgurr Dearg, taking with us the Ordnance map and a clinometer. We located the highest place to which the Survey had taken levels. Collie from there, with the clinometer, obtained the angle of inclination to the summit of Sgurr Alasdair, and thus determined that peak as the highest in the Cuillin. By the same method he ascertained the height of many peaks and the intervening Bealachs. Ascent of both sides of the Thearlaich-Dubh gap with Collie and Mackenzie; and with the same party, ascent of Clach Glas and Blaven. On the slabs leading to Clach Glas we were not roped. J. Mackenzie was the last man. His unsuitable shepherd's boots caused him to slip, and then he slid with face to rock for some distance. He arrested his descent himself. He needed my aid to reach a safe resting place, for he was much shaken. The drink in the rucksack on his back was intact. After a good rest we ascended both peaks, with Mackenzie roped up, till we reached the valley. Collie soon after gave him proper climbing boots. With Collie, ascent of lower part of Water-pipe Gully. All the time we had fine weather.

In 1898 with Naismith and Douglas. When the latter left, Gibbs joined us. The ascents of Basteir Nick Cave (now known as King's Cave route) and south-west side of Dearg Pinnacle were made with Gibbs and Mackenzie. On the day after Naismith ascended the

* W. W. Naismith, A. E. Maylard and Gilbert Thomson were founders of the Club. J. Rennie was also an original member.

face of Bhasteir Tooth he and I made the first descent. Mr Humble dealt with our chief ascents in his book. Gibbs mentions the others in the *Journal*.

My longest expedition in 1898 was with Naismith. We started from Sligachan at 8 A.M. along Red Burn to Glenbrittle. Then by Coir' a' Ghrunnda into Thearlaich-Dubh gap. We ascended Sgurr Dubh na Da Bheinn and Sgurr nan Eag, with descent to head of Loch Coruisk, then along its north-east side to path crossing Druim Hain. We reached Sligachan Hotel about 11 P.M. Landlord still downstairs.

In 1908 with Collie, the ascent of A'Chioch, when I was his guest at Glenbrittle. Other ascents with Dr Inglis from Sligachan Hotel in fine weather.

MOUNTAIN PLOYS.

LOUPIN owre a burn,
Slunkin throu a moss,
Is better nor the corner and
A game at pitch and toss.

Scruntin on a boulder,
Scartin on a slab
Wi' wind and sun upon your face
Is juist the very dab.

Warslin up a chimney,
Speelin up a craig,
Sure-fitted as a mountain goat
Or noble royal staig.

Poised upon a traverse
On a mountain wa'
Taks the stuff to mak the merr
That dings doun a'.

Breengin throu a snawdrift,
Smoolin up on ice:
A fig for creeshie fireside folk
That think we arna wyce!

Pechin up a brae
Or skytin doun a scree,
For wale o' a' the manly sports
Climbin bears the gree.

J. K. ANNAND.

NEW CLIMBS.

CAIRNGORMS AND LOCHNAGAR.

Lochnagar.

Girdle Traverse.—Hard Severe. Climbed by T. W. Patey, A. G. Nicol and A. Will in May 1955. The cliffs were traversed from right to left to allow an abseil off Eagle Ridge into Douglas Gully where a previous attempt in the reverse direction had failed. Although at no point markedly artificial, this route must be regarded principally as an academic problem for those who have completed an apprenticeship on the classic routes. Difficulties are well sustained for over 2,000 feet of climbing, but there are some long vegetated sections. Allow 6 hours for a party of two climbers of equal experience. As a preamble the west buttress was also traversed by the obvious terrace, but this has little merit although a higher traverse might be worth while.

Start at the fork of the Black Spout; climb the first two pitches of Route 2 (*S.M.C.J.*, 1953). The second pitch (H.S.) is the crux of the whole traverse. Continue round the Pinnacle and always downwards to reach Pinnacle Gully 1 below the second cave. Descend via the rock crevasse to the level of the first cave and strike horizontally across (80 ft.) to join Scarface route above the third pitch. Descend this route to Raeburn's Gully 60 ft. up from the bend. At the top of the wall crux in the gully follow a ledge on to Tough-Brown wall until it peters out. Then continue delicately to the left over a moss-covered slab (S.) to the crest. A descending line leads to the end of the terrace of Tough-Brown Traverse. Then the way is easy, veering upwards to gain Eagle Ridge below the tower pitch. Descend the crest directly to a point 50 ft. below the tower pitch, where a slanting ledge goes steeply downwards to Douglas Gully. Sixty feet down a piton is fixed, and a slightly diagonal *rappel* is made into the gully just above its cave pitch. About 120 ft. up the gully there is a recess on the left wall where a mossy corner is climbed for 70 ft. to reach a discontinuous ledge traversing the wall of Shadow Buttress B (S.). Descend Shadow Buttress B to just above the cairn marking the top of the lower steep section. Here a splintered chimney goes down to Polyphemus Gully just above its big lower pitch. Continue traversing horizontally round and climb the pitch of

Giant's Head Direct above the trough of Giant's Head Chimney. Then cross to the top of Shadow Chimney and so up to the apex of the main face of Shadow Buttress A. An easy gully goes down the other side to Shallow Gully and a second one up on to Central Buttress.

The Pinnacle Face.—600 feet, Very Severe. Climbed by J. Smith and J. Dennis on 4th September 1955. Comparable in difficulty to Parallel Gully B, the climb lies on the face of the Black Spout Pinnacle overlooking the corrie; it is steep and exposed but, like many Cairngorm buttresses, it becomes progressively less steep and easier. There is a good deal of vegetation.

Start at the corner of the Black Spout, 30 feet above the lowest point of the face where two grooves slant leftwards on to the face. Take the shallower, left-hand groove (cairn).

(1) 60 ft. Climb an awkward wall and follow the shallow groove, negotiating steep grass at 40 ft. (block belay). (2) 50 ft. The line of the groove continues as cracks still trending leftwards (flake belay). (3) 80 ft. Climb a few feet to a piton in a corner, which is used to safeguard a very severe pull on to the right-hand slab. Work leftwards across slabs and vegetation to a large grassy stance (piton belay). (4) 30 ft. Traverse left a few feet to two severe cracks. Climb the left one by jamming or the right one by lay-back, in either case finish at the top of the right-hand crack (flake belay). (5) 60 ft. Continue up the crack, traverse right on flakes to a grassy niche and climb an overhanging severe corner (piton belay). (6) 60 ft. Take an easy grassy ledge on the right leading to a flake belay. At this point, 100 ft. above the Springboard, the route joins and follows the original Brooker-Sutherland route (see *Journal*, 24, 202 (1950)). This account is continued for comparison and reference. (7) 70 ft. Steep grassy climbing leftwards ending in a short, very difficult corner (block belay). (8) 50 ft. Up 10 ft. left, then easy climbing right to a large block. (9) 90 ft. Climb two successive very difficult corners, then right to a large block. (10) 150 ft. Moderate climbing leads to the top of the pinnacle. (Time, 3 hours.)

West Buttress, Gargoyle Direct.—R. H. Sellers and G. Annand on 5th December 1954. First winter ascent; heavy powder-snow conditions. Normal summer route followed, except for 60 feet on middle buttress where small gully directly above the neck was preferred. As

chockstone at cave pitch (summer crux) was heavily iced, a piton was required. Time, 5 hours, leading through.

Tough-Brown Ridge.—A first winter ascent, under heavy snow and ice conditions, of the line of descent used by Bell and Murray in 1939, was made in $3\frac{1}{2}$ hours by T. W. Patey, A. Will, G. McLeod and A. Thom in March 1955. The first pitch after leaving Raeburn's Gully was the hardest. (See "*Cairngorms*" Guide, p. 120, or *Journal*, 22, 149.)

Parallel Buttress.—First winter ascent by T. W. Patey, W. D. Brooker and J. Smith (Patey and Smith shared leads) on 4th March 1956. The buttress was completely plastered with snow and ice, and conditions good, apart from clouds of spindrift driven off the plateau by a strong wind.

The first pitch in Parallel Gully A was taken direct on steep hard snow (no previous recorded ascent), and the party climbed unroped up easy bands of snow to the foot of the first steep pitch on the brink of Parallel Gully B ($\frac{1}{2}$ hour). This was the most formidable pitch on the climb, V.S. for 80 ft. to a stance in Parallel Gully B above the middle section. 100 ft. of easy climbing up the gully led to a return traverse left on to the buttress. More hard climbing for 100 ft. to foot of the Tower. Two pitons used as on first summer ascent, and another on the initial mantelshelf. This was also V.S., as the rocks were badly glazed. From the stance on the left of the top of the groove things went surprisingly easily. An easy upward traverse on hard snow round the left side of the Tower led to the neck behind. This traverse is on a smooth holdless slab in summer. Thence, a graceful snow arête swept up to merge into the summit cornice. Time, $6\frac{1}{2}$ hours.

Route 1, Black Spout Pinnacle.—First direct winter ascent on 11th March 1956 by J. Smith and W. D. Brooker. Hard snow, and a lot of ice of good quality in chimneys and sometimes on slabs. One piton used on first and hardest pitch. The summer route followed almost continuously, and the difficulties were maintained throughout except on last 100 feet. Time, 5 hours to top of Pinnacle and another hour to plateau. (Reported as Grade 5, which will be explained in new *Guide*.)

Carn Etchachan.

The following routes are on the upper cliff of Carn Etchachan Crag overlooking the Shelter Stone. For previous routes see *S.M.C.J.*, 1954. The routes are described from left to right.

Crevasse Route.—250 feet, Mild Severe. Climbed by T. W. Patey, M. Smith and A. Duguid on 29th July 1955. A short but exhilarating route on good rock, it gives a well varied climb up a succession of short slabs, cracks and chimneys. The first buttress on the upper cliff along the Main Terrace and to the immediate left of Equinox.

Start at the lowest rocks; climb steep rocks just on the right of the mid-line for 60 ft. to reach a rock crevasse passing leftwards. Sixty feet higher move into a corner on the right and climb a large leaning block. The overhanging curving crack above is overcome by layback (crux). To avoid an ensuing mossy pull up, step left and climb huge flakes *à cheval* to another crevasse. A queer contorted chimney of 70 ft. leads through a hole to a fine eyrie. Climb the first crack above straight up for 80 ft., veering right at the top up a nose to the true finish of the buttress: an excellent pitch.

The Guillotine.—250 feet, Very Difficult. Climbed by T. W. Patey and A. Duguid on 13th August 1955. Route is on the upper cliff of Carn Etchachan between Boa and Python.

Easy zigzagging up to the foot of the chimney (often wet) to the left of the pink spur of Python route. Here Boa route slants up to the left. Instead, climb the chimney direct and continue into the upper amphitheatre. It is now easy to join Python above the great semi-detached flake on that route. However, instead of taking the first chimney on the right (as on Python), move up to the next. This chimney, which cuts sharply into the spur on the right, is initially very deep behind a large flake and then climbs steeply up as a fine tunnel roofed by jammed blocks. At the top there is a good platform below the final 60 ft. chimney of Python route (M.S.).

Pagan Slit.—250 feet, Hard Severe. Climbed by R. Barclay and G. Adams on 7th August 1955. The long slanting fissure on the upper cliff between the pink spur of Python and some more pink rock next to the Battlements route. A prominent chimney throughout, it is broken by several mossy overhanging ledges and is

suited best to dry weather. It slants rightwards and has several hard pitches.

Narrow 20-ft. chimney to large grassy terrace. Next pitch continues up the chimney, with difficulty sustained by a series of chockstones for 50 ft. For the next 80 ft. the chimney is easier and widens in parts, with two avoidable through routes leading on to a grassy scoop below the final wall. Continue up the main chimney with a step on to a precarious flake. After 80 ft. move right to a stance behind a flake boulder. Step back into the chimney and climb strenuously for a few feet. Easier climbing to the top.

Cairngorm.

The Relay Climb, 600 feet, Very Severe. Climbed by T. W. Patey on 14th August 1955. This is the biggest buttress on the Cairngorm side of Loch Avon, facing the Shelter Stone. A long climb with one very hard pitch. The rock is good, and vibrams were used in the first ascent. There are three sections on the climb.

Start on the immediate edge of the buttress on the right side of Amphitheatre Gully (Cairn), slightly artificial going up good rock for 50 ft., including one interesting move with slight layback to belay below quartz-studded nose. Buttress becomes steeper; move right and up over steep slabs, and return to left horizontally to balcony with thread belay. A fault in a slab slants upwards to the right to a small overhang which is climbed direct (M.S.); move round corner to right and then back left on easy-angled slabs to glacia below middle section. (This part was first climbed by G. H. Leslie and M. Smith, 12th June 1954.)

Above the glacia a bulge girdles the buttress, and several attempts had been made at three different points before a solution was found. The problem is to reach the foot of an obvious grassy groove 40 ft. up. Climbing at first to the left and below the foot of the groove, vertical rock with good but widely spaced holds leads up to below a large overhang, where a very awkward sloping ledge gives access to a little corner on the right, and to the foot of the grassy groove immediately above. At the top of the groove there is a good stance and belay on the left. A few feet higher traverse right to another slanting crack leading up to easier ground. Trend back left by cracks towards the edge and the end of the steep section.

Easy but interesting climbing comprises the upper section which was first climbed by K. Winram on 23rd August 1953, traversing in from Amphitheatre Gully. Near the top a steep little buttress gives a good finish, starting by a crack a few feet up its right side.

Hell's Lum Cliffs—The Escalator.—350 feet, Moderate. Climbed by A. G. Nicol, T. W. Patey and Miss E. M. Davidson on 30th September 1955. It is the obvious watercourse on the right-hand end of the cliffs beyond Kiwi Slabs. Clean, sound rock but best in dry weather. Good training for a novice. Easy scrambling up a gully leads to a large platform below the steeper section where an easy shelf leads off to the right. Three or four rope lengths of good climbing follow, finishing just to the left of the top of the watercourse.

Creagan-a-Choire Etchachan.

The Corridor.—First summer ascent, Severe, on 21st July 1955, by J. Y. L. Hay, A. Crichton and W. Christie. Second summer ascent, Very Severe (vibrams), on 13th August 1955, by T. W. Patey and A. Duguid (following a more direct line).

The most obvious gully on the cliffs, to the right of the broad Bastion. A much better route in winter than it is in summer, it is worth doing nevertheless in dry conditions for the top pitch. Loose rock in the lower part of the gully can be partly avoided by climbing the central rib. There is no great difficulty up to a point 150 feet below the top, where a short pitch of large jammed boulders blocks the way. Here Hay's party went to the right. A vigorous pull over the jammed blocks leads to loose scree sloping steeply up to the back of a huge cave.

Start about 10 to 15 ft. above the top of the last substantial platform. Commence a 25-ft. horizontal traverse across the slab to the right. Very delicate, minute holds and suited best to vibrams and dry conditions (V.S.). Once the edge is gained avoid a steep step by the right and gain a good stance at the top. Slant left to finish at the top of the corner crack. The overhang above the huge cave was first attempted direct, but the rock is not good and will seldom if ever be completely dry. On the winter ascent, however (F. Malcolm and A. Thom), this pitch was climbed direct.

Original Route (Severe).—From first cave, 50 ft. below the great cave, traverse 12 ft. right and descend to foot of grass terrace, from where start climbing rock rib by means of narrow crack. Continue

up rib to large boss of rock and then up slabs and groove to belay (100 ft. run-out, severe). The route now followed more slabs to a short chimney leading to a plateau (100 ft. run-out).

Juniper Buttress.—First winter ascent, 27th February 1955, by T. W. Patey, A. Will, M. Smith and G. Adams. The buttress to the right of the Corridor. Under the existing conditions of deep, soft snow, skis were found to be the only practicable means of approach from Derry Lodge. On the climb the snow was somewhat more consolidated, but very careful handling was required. On only one pitch could the party climb on rock. The route selected was by the central chimney with one initial deviation on to the left-hand rib just above the grass slope. Time, $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours.

The Red Chimney.—Hard Severe (vibrams). Climbed by J. Gadd and Mrs Gadd in July 1955. This is the prominent steep rift splitting the cliff on the left of the Crimson Slabs. Normally a watercourse in parts, this gave an excellent vibram climb to two parties in the remarkably dry July of 1955. The climb is delicate on polished rock with few positive holds and is as good as any in the corrie. The final part of the chimney, which apparently is always wet, is avoided and Flanking Ribs route (M.S.) followed instead.

Straddle the initial chimney up to the top overhang and make an awkward exit on the right. Climb unrelenting rock with downward dipping footholds to below the next steep pitch, where pull out on to edge on left and a pointed belay. Return by a fine slab pitch into the chimney and continue up easier stuff to where the chimney forks. The left branch is easier; a short water groove. Above this, Flanking Ribs route crosses the chimney and the climb can thus be finished by this route up the right bounding rib.

The Crimson Slabs.—400 feet, Very Severe. Climbed by T. W. Patey and J. Y. L. Hay on 4th September 1955. A great sheet of smooth red slabs to the right of the prominent Red Chimney is seamed only by two long and roughly parallel grooves. The one on the right was the selected line and it provided one of the hardest climbs in the Cairngorms, very strenuous and sustained. The

groove, or "dièdre," goes straight up for over 100 feet and culminates in a forbidding overhang. Above this, easier heather grooves lead to the topmost slabs. Three pitons were used on the actual climb, more for safeguard than direct aid, though they served for both, and a repeat ascent may clean things up. A further piton was used on the top slab.

Steep scrambling and an awkward traverse from the right lead to the foot of the great dièdre 80 ft. up. This is an inch-by-inch struggle throughout. For the first 20 ft. the corner crack admits a leg. Then for 20 ft. the groove is grass-choked and slightly harder. In the next section the crack is clean and admits only fingers and toes (socks used). Here two pitons were used in a crack on the right wall, and this proved the hardest struggle (V.S.). More hard climbing (V.S.) up to a perfect belay but poor stance immediately below the overhang. Surmount the overhang by an awkward move round the bulge and step left (piton, S.). Regain the grass groove above the overhang and continue upwards without further ado, or traverse left at obvious ledge and climb similarly easy groove farther to the left. (It would be possible here to traverse across on to Flanking Ribs route and avoid the Upper Slab.) All routes converge on a good platform below the last slab, where a descending ledge goes down to the right. Climb the slab by a mossy crack slanting right (M.S.) (one piton used—unnecessary if some gardening performed). The last pitch then goes straight up on the left on good holds.

Braeriach.

Coire Bhrochain — Ebony Gully.—Very Difficult. Climbed by J. Y. L. Hay on 7th September 1955. This is the forked gully between West Buttress and Domed Ridge. Its left branch forms Ebony Chimney. The gully comprises four pitches; the first and second chockstones were both passed on the right. Piled boulders above climbed direct and final overhanging groove climbed by shelf on left.

West Buttress.—650 feet, direct route, Severe. Climbed by A. Stevenson and J. Y. L. Hay on 19th July 1955. The start is 100 feet above the screes at the bottom of a prominent right-angled groove slanting rightwards on the north side of the buttress (cairn).

Two hundred feet up the corner, past a pointed flake climbed *à cheval*, is a small spike belay set in the floor of the groove. From

here one descends a few feet in order to climb the steep wall above (40 ft.). Trending slightly to the right the route goes up the face to a recessed corner with running belay, from where a short leftward traverse takes one on to grass ledges (80 ft., S.). The shallow gully above is climbed for 100 ft., then the ridge on left which leads directly to the imposing final tower. This is climbed on magnificent rock by a series of steep chimneys on the right flank.

Domed Ridge.—Winter ascent by A. G. Mitchell and W. P. L. Thomson on 9th April 1955. The ridge was well plastered with snow on the gentler slopes and with ice on the steeper rocks. A start was made on the initial slabs, probably left of Brooker's route (*Journal*, 1952), and the tower which he avoided on the right was taken fairly directly on the left by a fine 60-foot Very Difficult slab and chimney pitch relatively free from ice. The Dome provided three pitches of almost continuous step-cutting on hard snow and ice. The last 15 feet of steep rock were severe and constituted the crux of the climb.

Garbh Choire Dhaidh—The Culvert.—Severe. Climbed by R. H. Sellers and G. Annand on 3rd July 1955. On the best piece of rock in the corrie, starting 25 feet to the left of the Great Rift. An exposed climb, but good firm rock with fine situation.

Follow slabs up to a small platform with cairn (30 ft.). Follow the ensuing groove up and into a grassy crack, then a wall on to a ledge with belay (60 ft.). Surmount flake (crux) and follow line of dyke to the top of a wall with detached block and belay (90 ft.). Next up and over a 7-ft. overhanging wall into a small amphitheatre with huge tumbled blocks, above which is a water-worn slab (40 ft.). This slab climbed on small holds leads to a shallow chimney (100 ft.). Above this go up the wall directly under the large overhang and up the slab going left (80 ft.). Forty feet of moderate rocks to the plateau.

Beinn a Bhuird.

Coire-na-Ciche—The Carpet.—350 feet, Very Severe. Climbed by F. Malcolm, A. Thom, G. Malcolm, R. Barclay and G. Adams in August 1955. Passing along the foot of the cliffs from the Trident on the extreme left, this route starts in the first big grassy recess up a great slab on the right. Although several pitons were

used on the first ascent, in nails, it has since been repeated in socks, using two pitons for running belays only. A good climb with a fine steep slab pitch. Care should, however, be exercised in handling some of the grass ledges in the first pitch.

Starting from right-hand corner of grassy recess 30 yards to right of the Trident, climb 100 ft. to piton belay (some of the grass ledges are unstable). The next pitch of 100 ft. up the great slab is the crux. Follow the line of least resistance, trending left after 50 ft. or so. This pitch is throughout very exposed and of continuous difficulty (pitons for safeguard in place at 30 and 50 ft.). From easy ground at the top of the slab climb a short overhanging crack by combined tactics (S.). Then straight up a short chimney, a traverse to the right, and a deep cleft is reached providing an excellent stance. An easy traverse to the left leads to the final slab pitch climbed on its right-hand edge by a series of dimples.

Sgoran Dubh; No. 5 Buttress Gully.—First winter ascent by two parties on 2nd January 1956—T. W. Patey and A. Beanland; L. S. Lovat, J. Hay and Miss E. M. Davidson. The gully is well seen from site of Upper Bothy. It cuts the side of No. 5 Buttress, ending at a col above the Pinnacle. Climbing time, 1½ hours.

A big double-tiered pitch forms an initial bottleneck and is the only difficulty. Above this the angle eases and, with adequate snow covering, there is little further difficulty to the col. The final tower on Pinnacle Ridge can be avoided by a deeply cut gully reached by a short traverse left from the col.

Miscellaneous.

On **Lochnagar** the most prominent and rightmost of the buttresses to the left of Central Gully and in the smaller corrie was climbed by T. W. Patey and W. D. Brooker (300 ft., S.). A short route parallel to and just above Pinnacle Gully 2 was made by F. R. Malcolm and A. Will. Parallel Gully B was climbed by several parties including one solo ascent. At **Creag an Dubh Loch** an attempt on Labyrinth under heavy snow and ice conditions was defeated on the final pitch in the Groove itself (unclimbed in summer). There was insufficient time remaining to attempt the summer alternative, and the party escaped by the Midway Terrace (T. W. Patey and A. Will). This summer Vertigo Wall (*S.M.C.J.*, 1955) was repeated three times, notably by J. Smith and J. Dennis who, favoured by dry conditions and using rubbers, required only one piton for direct

aid. In **Coire na Ciche**, Beinn a Bhuird, Malcolm, Will and McLeod climbed the chimney to the right of Jason's Chimney, a wet and rather dirty 300-ft. V.D. In **Coire Etchachan**, Avalanche Gully, to the immediate right of Pioneer Buttress, was climbed by two parties. This 400-ft. V.S. route was regarded as distinctly dangerous as a result of much loose rock. In **Coire Sputan Dearg**, John Hay climbed Ardath Chimney under winter conditions, and a rather artificial chimney route was made on the main crag above Loch Etchachan (R. Ellis and M. Scott). New climbs on **Braeriach** include Boomerang in Garbh Choire Dhaidh (Annand and Sellers) and the first winter ascent of Thisbe Gully, a fine route, by Leslie and Smith. On the **Cairngorm** cliffs above Loch Avon, Petrie, Leslie and Smith climbed the rib to the right of the buttress housing the Relay Climb (described in this issue). This gave a 500-ft. route on good rock, V.D. in standard.

Cairngorm, Coire an-t Sneachda, The Runnel (see *Journal*, 25, 353 (1955)).—This route, climbed 1st January 1955 by Lovat, Weir, etc., corresponds to the central of the three Trident Gullies climbed earlier by the E.U.M.C. and described by them as "the best snow climb in the corrie."—*Note by Tom Patey.*

NORTH WEST REGION.

Beinn Fhada (Kintail).—The following three climbs were done by G. H. Kitchin and R. J. Porter (J.M.C.S.) on 12th July 1955. The climbs are located on the north-east cliffs of Sgurr a' Choire Ghairbh. Reference may be made to the illustration facing page 443, *Journal* 1947, to *Journal* 1950, page 235, for location of Needle's Eye Buttress and to *Journal* 1952, page 70, for the only other recorded climb hereabouts. South of Needle's Eye Buttress (left on photo) is a broad grassy gully beyond which is a prominent rib with almost vertical side walls. Guide's Rib follows the narrow frontal face of this rib—an obvious route with fine, open climbing. Porter's Climb is to the south of Guide's Rib where the foot of the cliff is lower, and starts from the left edge of the lowest section. Continuation Climb starts from a grass ledge on the same level as the finish of Porter's Climb, but 20 yards away, across a gully on the right. Details follow of all three routes.

Guide's Rib.—310 ft., Very Difficult. Rib rises steeply in pitches of 50, 45 and 75 ft. to a large block. A short groove on the right

leads to the top of the block. Rib continues 35 ft. to level, knife-edged arête and so to a narrow wall climbed to a *gendarme*, behind which is a hole through the rib. Climb this direct and finish rib to easy ground.

Porter's Climb.—395 ft., Difficult. Climb (from cairn) near the left edge of vegetative slabs in pitches of 70, 85 and 45 ft. to the base of steeper rock. Climb this on right to foot of crack, followed up to a large rocky stance. Easy slabs lead to corner on left climbed to a good ledge. A grassy groove or a difficult slab on right lead to the top of small pinnacle and then to easy ground.

Continuation Climb.—100 ft., Difficult. Step up a few feet and then round to the right on to a steep wall. Climb wall and continue up easier slabs, with a stance at 55 ft.

The authors assert that the rock climbing in Coire an Sgairne, the branch corrie to the east, offers far more scope. There are several buttresses, all very steep with perfect rock. The first is twin-tiered, each tier about 150 feet in height. The cliff then recedes, offering a fine section with a large groove, on the left of which is the most impressive feature of all—a great black, blank wall, almost vertical and about 200 feet high. Two routes might be possible for a strong party, but probably more than severe in the upper part. The authors tried a route up the left edge of the wall by a crack. Still another fine buttress lies beyond.

Meall Gorm, Applecross, Blaeberry Corner.—350 feet, Severe, was climbed by W. D. Brooker and A. J. R. A. Norton on 18th August 1955. The route lies on the broad buttress to the left of the Blue Pillar, and separated from it by a broken-up buttress. It is in three vertical tiers, the route being on the left side.

Start up corner on edge of buttress by gully on left (severe). At 50 feet traverse right, over block and up wall to terrace. Go up steep wall for 80 feet to top of first tier. Climb second tier by vertical wall directly above, over some flakes and ending by a right traverse. Third tier vulnerable at several places. Crest gives a good 70-foot pitch. The climb has four steep, continuously difficult pitches on clean, sound rock.

Sgorr Ruadh, North Face, Upper Buttress of Coire Lair.—This was climbed on 11th July 1955 by Iain H.

Ogilvie and P. M. Francis (standard Very Difficult). Raeburn's Buttress, from the north-east, is seen in profile with a steep north-east wall, bounded on the right by a deep scree-filled gully. Beyond this again is Upper Buttress, the last considerable rock face in the glen, as the slopes of Sgorr Ruadh are broken up. On the left edge of the buttress is a series of overhangs and on the right are steep rocks and a prominent pinnacle. Between these is a face, rather less steep, and broken by a series of vertical cracks.

Climb a 10-ft. corner near the overhangs and traverse 40 ft. to the cracks. The route goes now, more or less, straight up the buttress, with slight traverses. The main difficulties ended about 300 ft. up, where a through route was made behind a boulder, jammed in the right-hand crack (cairn). A further 400 ft. of scrambling led to the top, near the col separating Raeburn's Buttress from Sgorr Ruadh.

Cona Mheall, Acheninver Pinnacle.—Cona Mheall, which forms part of the Ben More Coigach group of hills, lies 2 miles west of Sgurr an Fhìdhleir and immediately above the Summer Isles. A prominent pinnacle flanks the hill on its left.

From the lowest rocks climb a large right-angled block and follow the right-hand edge of the pinnacle to the top. A wide crack about half-way up was turned by a left traverse. A short ascent from the pinnacle leads to the main top. This route, 300 ft. very difficult, was climbed in August 1955 by D. Niven and G. F. Webster. Other routes are possible on the pinnacle and on Cona Mheall itself.

SKYE.

The Thearlaich-Dubh Buttress.—300 feet, Very Difficult. On 18th July 1955, K. Bryan and R. Jamieson (both of the J.M.C.S.) explored a prominent buttress lying to the immediate right of the Thearlaich-Dubh Gap, as viewed from the Ghrunnda side. The potentialities of this buttress were first mentioned by W. M. Mackenzie in his lecture at Glasgow in November last year.

The buttress lies at a high angle, its face being broken up by a large number of overhangs. The principal features are a terrace which cuts across the lower third of the

buttress and a deep groove which splits the whole upper face of the buttress.

Start under a small overhang near the left-hand edge of the buttress. A short traverse is made to the right and a shallow groove is followed until a corner leads on to the terrace. At the left-hand end of the terrace is a very steep slab topped by two overhangs. The slab is climbed by a crack and the first overhang is surmounted directly. From under the second overhang an awkward step is made to the left on to the very edge of the buttress which is followed to a stance and belay. Easier rocks are then followed until progress is barred by another series of overhangs. A traverse is made across the left wall of the buttress to a nose of rock projecting from the face. A steep shattered groove leads from the nose on to the summit of the buttress.

Sron na Ciche, Coire Lagan, Angels' Pavement.—330 feet, severe, was climbed on 13th July 1955 by Michael North, Michael Grundy and John Roberts (all E.U.M.C.), using vibrams. The two belays above the first two pitches are only suited to line. The last pitch is hardest, but rock is perfectly sound. The route starts from Central Gully about where Mallory's Slab and Groove enters it. Michael North discussed the route afterwards with E. Wood-Johnston who considered that it was probably new and was roughly parallel to his own, though the first pitch, where an abseil sling and karabiner were found, was probably not new. The route starts at a point in Central Gully about 200 feet above the scree.

(1) 170 ft. over steep slabs, trending left near the top. No stance at top. (2) 80 ft. up and slightly to the right over very steep rocks. (3) 80 ft. on ascending rightward traverse leading to a prominent V in the upper rocks, as viewed from Central Gully, with good stance and belay above.

(The Editor of the "Skye" Guide Book points out that there are so many routes on this face now that it will presently not be feasible to record new variations.)

Sgurr Dearg, South Buttress, West Face, Mistaken Crack.—On 29th July 1955 Messrs G. S. Beattie and W. K. Divers (leading through), along with K. A. Sturrock, made this ascent on the west side of Sgurr Dearg, high above Lochan Coire Lagan. From the glaciated slabs at the outlet of the loch, high up on the left, is the west face of the South Buttress of Dearg; and

in the upper left corner are two chimneys, the right-hand and more obvious being Mistaken Crack.

Scramble up 30 ft. of easy rock to the bottom of the Crack. Climb chimney 60 ft. to overhanging block, passed by climbing on left wall. The following 70-ft. pitch is hard severe. Climb left wall close to crack to a chockstone, then over this to obvious stance and belay. Loose flake below and left of chockstone must be let alone. On the third severe 50-ft. pitch a piton was used as running belay. Climb past this over a chockstone to a small cave (stance). Climb left wall for 20 ft. and scramble to top of buttress.

Sgurr Ghreadaidh, Coire na Dorus: An Dorus Buttress.—350 feet, difficult, was climbed on 12th June 1955 by W. P. L. Thomson, A. G. Mitchell (through leads) and Shirley Martin.

This name was given to the buttress directly north of the Eag Dubh. Starting at the lowest rocks (cairn) a central route was followed throughout. The hardest climbing was almost severe but there is much scope for variation and some of the difficulties are (almost) certainly avoidable. There is much moderate scrambling on excellent rock.

Sgurr a Mhadaidh, Slanting Slab Variation.—Two good routes have been recorded on the steep slabby face to the left of Slanting Gully—Fox's Folly (*J.* 24, 326 (1951)) and Shining Cleft (*J.* 25, 165 (1953)). On 7th September 1955, owing to the very wet state of Slanting Gully, Dr and Mrs J. H. Bell made an intermediate route, starting at a point about 100 feet to the left of the foot of Slanting Gully.

It went straight up good gabbro slabs, at first moderate but steepening and leading to a severe 50-ft. pitch ending in a shallow trap groove. This groove was followed to the right (as it was overhung), rising gradually to the edge of Slanting Gully.

Subsequently, upwards along the left edge of the gully, easy for 100 ft. or so, then a hard 50-ft. crack and then easy to Fox's Rake. This part seems to be almost identical with the latter part of Fox's Folly.

The Old Man of Storr.—220 feet, Very Severe. First ascent 18th July 1955 by D. Whillans, J. Barber and G. J. Sutton. Start at the end of the Pinnacle facing the Storr Rock. Facing the Old Man, start just to the left of the corner on your right. A long time was occupied

in scouting around before finding the route, and Sutton went up 20 feet or so at the other end of the Pinnacle (facing Portree) without finding it possible to continue. It *might* be possible to make other routes, but given the quality of the rock, they would probably be both difficult and dangerous. The Storr Rock also seemed to offer possibilities, but as the summit of the Old Man was reached at 8 P.M., they were not investigated.

Go up about 20 ft. to a circular hole in the rock. A piton inserted but is useless, affording only doubtful protection. Then traverse left (the crux, both strenuous and extremely severe) to gain the top of a prominent nose in the centre of the face. Climb to a grassy cave directly above, then left again to a ledge of shattered blocks on the left edge of the pinnacle (70 ft.) The rest is easy. Move right above cave and continue diagonally for about 100 ft. Climb a corner chimney and then leftwards to the top, quite exposed and small, where a cairn was left with a couple of coins under it. The descent was made by two *rappels*, the first to the block ledge. For this, at least 200 ft. of rope is desirable. Whillans led the climb. (Accounts by both Whillans and Sutton received.)

GLENCOE.

Buachaille Etive Mor.

Dalness Chasm; Central Fork.—1,000 feet from junction with Left Fork, Very Severe. Two parties—J. R. Marshall, A. H. Hendry and D. Boston; L. S. Lovat and T. Weir. 21st August 1955.

The parties entered the Chasm from the south bank, at the point where the Central Fork springs up rightwards from the Left Fork, not far above the first bifurcation. The entire section below the point of entry had been climbed by previous parties, who had, however, been stopped by Pitch 3 of the Central Fork—the “Barrier” Pitch. The Left Fork was climbed on 2nd June 1951 by John Cunningham (C.D.M.C.) and Hamish McInnes and S. Jagger and C. White. Hard severe in rubbers. Loose and not recommended. Details will be provided in the forthcoming second edition of the “Glencoe” Guide. The Right Fork has not been climbed from the first bifurcation. It would appear that the total height

of this Chasm from its lowest point to the top of the Central Fork will be in the region of 2,000 feet, and to the tops of the Left and Right Forks not many hundred feet less.

To enter the Central Fork, leave the Left Fork by a rightward scramble round a corner to the foot of a steep water-worn pitch, 60 ft. severe. Straddle and gain left wall. The "barrier" pitch is immediately above. The left wall was climbed by an obvious cracked slab topped by an overhang. Above this, climb a steep open corner and embark on its left wall at about 60 ft. Go up and right on vegetatious ground and make to the right towards a small tree. Using the tree, traverse right across a little wall. Traverse a few feet right to the pool above the pitch, 100 ft. One piton was used and is in place at the overhang. The pitch was very severe at both piton and tree sections. Pitch 4 was climbed on the left and right walls, the former hard and the latter mild severe. A large number of pitches followed, of which about ten were interesting. Three below the change in the watercourse will bear mention, a wide chimney on the left with a traverse on to its right bounding rib (40 ft., very difficult); a red left-wall pitch with a rightward traverse below an overhang to the gully bed (30 ft., mild severe); and a red left-wall pitch with a leftward delicate traverse well up (30 ft., very difficult). Some distance above, the gully widens greatly with a false grassy continuation on the left and the watercourse coming down a rocky wall to the right. The true continuation of the gully follows the watercourse to a shelf above the wall. Follow it by a long chimney on the right (apparently an off-shoot) to the first moderate pitch. The parties were deceived here and gained the foot of the latter by scrambling up the grassy continuation and climbing a very loose chimney farther up the wall, until a strenuous pull on a spike and a right traverse was made round a vegetatious corner (severe). Higher up, beyond some easier pitches, the gully opens out on to the face of this large right wall and it is possible to see right down to the grassy trough. The water comes over a cave, well above. Climb broken rocks to an exposed line of good holds on distinctive grey rock, leading up to a point left of and above the cave. The gully deteriorates after this pitch. Pitches become shorter, shallower and easier, and scrambling leads to the top.

The party reckoned that, although the climb was longer and harder than the Chasm, it was probably less enjoyable as a route.

Rannoch Wall, Wappenshaw Wall—Variation to Pitch 1.—Severe. W. Smith and G. McIntosh (both C.D.M.C.). 5th June 1955.

This variation has the effect of adding a new pitch altogether because it goes for 85 ft. to the ledge at the original start of the route.



BUACHAILLE ETIVE MOR ; WAPPENSHAW WALL.

Begin to the left of Peasant's Passage at the rock pitch in Easy Gully and climb the right-angled corner there for 35 ft. Traverse right for 10 ft. where a line of holds leads back into the corner, which climb to the ledge at the original start.

Variation to Pitch 2.—Very Severe. J. R. Marshall and A. H. Hendry. July 1955.

This variation has the effect of straightening out Wappenshaw Wall route. From the top of the original Pitch 1 go up to and left of the big overhang and make a direct line obliquely right to the small overhang at the top of Pitch 2.

North Buttress, East Wall—Mainbrace Crack.—165 feet (to Green Gully), Very Severe. P. Walsh and W. Smith (both C.D.M.C.). August 1955.

Start at groove 12 ft. right of Crow's Nest Crack. Climb to small overhang at 10 ft. and continue up crack to below another overhang. Traverse left 12 ft. and up a fault to where a step left can be made to a belay at 80 ft. (just above the long upward step on Crow's Nest Crack). Continue up a wide crack 15 ft. and traverse right to small ledge below an arête, which climb to finish.

White Wall Crack.—170 feet (to Green Gully), Very Severe. W. Smith and G. McIntosh (both C.D.M.C.). August 1955.

Just left of Bottleneck Chimney an area of the wall is distinctively white. Climb a thin crack at the right edge of the white wall till, at 50 ft., a piton is inserted to permit a pull on to a sloping ledge, with a flake at the back. Make a long step on to a rib on the right and a climb to a ledge at 75 ft. where a belay can be arranged. Traverse left round corner and for a further 20 ft. and then climb up part of the open groove of Mainbrace Crack and by a leftward traverse reach the belay just above the long step on Crow's Nest Crack. Follow the wide crack of Mainbrace Crack and so to the arête, which leave by an awkward step down. Continue right for 15 ft. and climb a shallow rib to finish.

Pendulum.—130 feet (to Green Gully), Very Severe. P. Walsh and J. Cunningham (both C.D.M.C.). August 1955.

The route commences 15 ft. below the traverse of Gallows Route. Traverse left 8 ft. to a crack. Climb this and continue up to the foot of a small mossy slab. A piton was used. Then climb the right side of the slab on to a sloping ledge and move round to the left to a good stance and belay at 65 ft. Lasso a large loose flake above to the right, swing over and climb the rope to a mantelshelf. Get on

to top of flake, climb up a few feet, traverse across Bottleneck Chimney and finish up a fault on the left wall.

Garrotte.—100 feet (from Green Gully), Very Severe. J. Cunningham and M. Noon (both C.D.M.C.). 4th August 1955.

This is the prominent crack 10 ft. to the right of Hangman's Crack. Climb the crack (strenuous) for 40 ft. to a nook where a piton was inserted as a runner and continue (crux) for 30 ft. to a grassy ledge and stance. No belay. The remaining 30 ft., though involving a slight overhang, is easier than 1st pitch and the climb finishes on easy ledges.

Guillotine.—95 feet (from Green Gully), Very Severe. W. Smith and T. Paul (both C.D.M.C.). 4th August 1955.

Begin at a cairn 40 ft. to the right of Hangman's Crack. Climb a slightly overhanging wall with a thin crack and a fixed piton and make an awkward move on to a small shelf at 25 ft. Bear left on the groove above to finish.

Cuneiform Buttress—Overhanging Groove.—230 feet, Very Severe. D. Stevens (J.M.C.S.) and Ian Provan (Glencoe M.C.). April 1955.

The west flank of Cuneiform Buttress runs from the ordinary route near the north end to a small buttress abutting against the main face at the south end. The base is undercut, but the angle relents at the south extremity where a corner in the lower third near the small buttress leads into a groove. This is the line of the route:—

Climb the corner to below the overhang at 50 ft. (belay). Traverse left and down into a crack and pull up over the overhang (crux) and so up to a small cave and thread belay (40 ft. pitch). Go straight up the groove for another 40 ft. to an overhang. Climb the vertical wall to the right of the overhang and finish by easy slabs in a further 100 ft.

The Long Chimney.—350 feet, Severe. D. Stevens (J.M.C.S.) and Miss D. M. Lawrie. May 1955.

Climb the first third of the ordinary route to reach the grassy terrace. Traverse right and diagonally upwards into the long shallow chimney which is an obvious feature of the buttress. Continue in chimney (severe) to easier ground and belay. Then continue up the chimney a long way until a break with a slab on the left. Go up a little chimney, make a step right and ascend the wall above to the top of the buttress. Last section from little chimney also severe.

Great Gully Buttress, East Face—Trident Crack.—160 feet, Severe. W. Smith and J. Cunningham (both C.D.M.C.). 3rd August 1955.

Well on left side of the east face is a right-angled grass groove, below which is a steep slab split by a crack. Climb the crack to a large grass ledge below the groove at 40 ft. and belay. Go up the wide crack on the right and move rightwards to a stance and belay 30 ft. higher. The final pitch is 90 ft. Step down, traverse to the right for 20 ft., climb over some loose flakes, then a fault above, and finish by some slabs.

August Crack.—165 feet, Severe. W. Smith and J. Cunningham (both C.D.M.C.). 3rd August 1955.

Start 35 ft. right of Trident Crack on a grass ledge and cairn. Climb straight up to a stance and belay below a crack at 40 ft. Traverse left with a slight descent for 15 ft. to a thin crack, which climb to the stance and belay above Pitch 2 of Trident Crack. Climb the steep fault above and surmount some loose blocks to finish 60 ft. above.

Pedestal Arête.—250 feet, Severe. J. R. Marshall and L. S. Lovat. 23rd May 1955.

This is the arête east of and separated from Staircase Buttress by a gully which narrows to a chimney. It should not be confused with the arête of the East Chimney Variation of Rehabilitation Route, which is lower and to the right.

Climb numerous blocks and pinnacles to reach a prominent gap beyond a high *gendarme*. Cross the gap and make a delicate left traverse to a belay at the left edge of the vertical crux section. Climb the left edge and step round right to the face, which climb by a right diagonal traverse. Continue to a broad grassy ledge. A short but strenuous pull-up on the right wall ends at the right-angled corner at the left edge of the final wall of Staircase Buttress. Finish round to the left at the very exposed short chimney.

Bidean nam Bian.

Coire an Gabhail—Lost Valley Minor Buttress.—Chimney Route.—240 feet, Very Difficult. L. S. Lovat, W. J. R. Greaves (J.M.C.S.) and G. K. Armstrong. 18th September 1955.

This is the smaller buttress, very similar in appearance to Lost Valley Buttress but lying east of it near the lowest col at the head of the corrie. The corrie face of it is split by a very prominent chimney, attractive from a distance. Climb the chimney, which is very difficult in various places, and vile. Not recommended.

Left Wall Route.—290 feet, Very Severe. L. S. Lovat. 18th September 1955.

Begin at the wall left of the chimney 50 ft. below the start of the latter. From the first big platform traverse right to near the chimney. Make a leftward upward traverse on curious pock-like holds on good red rock till they peter out. The plausible bulge above is the crux. Then continue up steep lichenous rock of about difficult standard, always left of the chimney.

Gearr Aonach, East Face—Gully A.—400 feet, Very Difficult. L. S. Lovat and W. J. R. Greaves, A. G. Daley and G. A. Warmbath (J.M.C.S.). 15th May 1955.

This is the gully immediately left of Mome Rath Route (see *S.M.C.J.*, 1955), but beginning far below the terrace of that route. The first 150 ft. is artificial and uninteresting. The last 250 ft. is of a continuously steep order on excellent water-worn rock. A few very difficult situations. The right fork is the obvious route at the junction.

North-west Gully.—400 feet, Severe. T. Low, A. Ferguson and R. Simpson (Ochil M.C.). 5th June 1955.

This gully is situated on the north-west face of Gearr Aonach and is obvious from the road; 220 ft. of moderate rock leads artificially to a broad terrace above which the gully forms a Y. Take the left branch. Two pitches of 60 and 80 ft., very difficult and severe respectively, both strenuous, merit a mention. Finish by a 12-ft. difficult pitch. Dry weather only. Despite that, green slime for 30 ft. at steep section.

Aonach Dubh, East Face.—G. String.—140 feet, Hard Severe. W. Smith and W. Rowney (both C.D.M.C.). 18th June 1955.

Start at the terrace above the Weeping Wall Face, at an obvious tree to the right of Archer Ridge and directly under an overhang far above. From the tree traverse left into a groove at 35 ft., which climb to a large grass ledge and belay at 70 ft. Step round left into a steep groove, which climb to a grassy recess. Finish up crack at back of recess.

Lower North-east Nose (East Face).—Boomerang.—310 feet, Very Severe. J. Cunningham and M. Noon (both C.D.M.C.). 2nd August 1955.

The route starts at a very prominent crack on the white-glazed face in the corner of a large curving groove. Climb up a wall and part of the crack to stance and belay at 50 ft. The next 50 ft. is the

crux. Climb the crack to an overhanging nose, where a piton was used high up on the right as a runner, and climb the nose followed by a long left step on to rocky shelves and belay. Continue up crack for an easier 100 ft. to reach a small cave and chockstone belay. The remaining 110 ft. follows the crack, now grassy, to the top.

Little Boomerang.—220 feet, Severe. M. Noon and J. Cunningham (both C.D.M.C.). 2nd August 1955.

Start at a cairn 20 ft. left of Boomerang below a wide crack. Go up 15 ft. to foot of crack and high chockstone belay. Climb the crack, passing a small chockstone, till a long left step is made. Climb straight over a bulge (crux) to easier rocks. Scramble to stance and spike belay 45 ft. above first belay. Continue up crack for 115 ft. to small ash tree and go left 5 ft. to belay. Traverse diagonally right to bulging crack, which climb to top.

Aonach Dubh, North Face.—Waterfall Wall.—400 feet, Hard Severe. D. Goldie and R. Goldie (J.M.C.S.). 17th September 1955.

This route runs up the left wall of the great waterfall gully which cuts down rightwards across the foot of Sloping Shelf. To reach the foot of the wall go up towards Sloping Shelf and enter the gully at that level. Thence climb the first short pitch of the gully and start on the wall at a cairn.

Climb, trending rather left for 30 ft., and make an awkward step left at a piton runner, continuing for 80 ft. to belay. Continue 60 ft. to a large detached block. Traverse 30 ft. right on a rock shelf and go up 40 ft. to a sloping ledge with a piton belay. Go up a short wall to the right and so to near the top of the buttress by a long, very difficult run-out. Finish by 40 ft. of moderate rock to a cairn.

Fingal's Chimney.—300 feet (to Pleasant Terrace), Very Severe. Joe Brown (Rock and Ice Club) and L. S. Lovat. 4th December 1955.

The route follows the prominent clean-cut chimney on the wall to the right of Ossian's Cave. It connects with West Chimney at Pleasant Terrace, thus facilitating a route of about 500 ft. (*Vide* the Guide: "The West Chimney also cuts the cliff below the terrace to within 100 ft. of Sloping Shelf, and can be descended thus far. But the bottom 100 ft. remain unclimbed." This bottom pitch has now been climbed.)

A big corner falls away below the foot of the chimney. Start from Sloping Shelf just to the right of the corner, where a short vegetational leftward scramble leads to the grassy top of a pinnacle set against the face. (Belay.) Climb up a few feet, traverse hard

left below a small overhang and descend left 2 or 3 ft. (very severe) into a recess. Continue left traverse round main corner (whole traverse from belay about 20 ft.) and up a little to foot of 7-ft. right-angled corner (crux, very severe). Straddle. Climb up, trending left to foot of chimney and belay. The chimney is steep and narrow but sound and very difficult or severe in a few places. It goes for about 200 ft. to Pleasant Terrace, but the last short section is artificial, the natural line being to scramble leftwards to near the amphitheatre below the "Corridor" of Shadbolt's Chimney. It is then possible either to go up right to Pleasant Terrace and complete the whole route by climbing West Chimney, or, as the party did, to go up left and climb the "Corridor" (200 ft.). The former is safer and a better route.

Stob Coire nan Lochan—North Buttress, North Face.—First winter ascent. L. S. Lovat and K. Bryan (J.M.C.S.). 29th January 1956.

The summer route was followed into the recess well up the face. The obvious winter-line was the steep groove springing up from the left end of the ledge. Go left on to the nose at the top of the groove and so to the narrow arête mentioned in the *Guide*. Then the short wall to the top. At no point very hard but uniformly steep. The face can hold a lot of snow and ice and is safer in winter than in summer. Time taken 2 hours.

Bidean, Church Door Buttress, West Chimney.—180 feet, Very Difficult. L. S. Lovat and A. S. Dick (J.M.C.S.). 11th September 1955.

Go to the bay in "the angle between the west face and the wide projecting spur of the buttress" (*Guide*, p. 83) to where this chimney springs up to the immediate right of the West Face Route. Climb the chimney, which is vile, for 100 ft. to two huge chockstones. Climb these and in 20 ft. gain the foot of a very loose overhang. Go up steep rock to the left and enter a cave. Descend to the back of this half-dark cave and go up excellent rock, emerging through a hole in the roof. Easy climbing leads to the Arch of Flake Route. Not recommended.

The Cobbler, Sesame Groove, Direct Start.

This new variation was effected on 26th September 1955 by R. Barclay and G. Adams, starting about 60 ft. left of grassy terrace in prominent 20-ft. crack behind large flake. Crack, hard severe in nails, led to grassy platform below overhang (thread belay on right). Climb small rib right of overhang and so easier climbing to foot of Sesame Groove. Length about 110 ft.

BEN NEVIS AND CREAG MEAGHAIDH.

Zero Gully.—This well-known gully was first ascended throughout on 27th August 1955 by W. Smith, G. McIntosh and M. Noon of the Creag Dhu Club, using vibrams. They rated the climb a hard severe, and it took $3\frac{1}{2}$ hours. The first 200 feet or so was climbed unroped. After roping up, the next 300 to 400 feet involved a run-out of 120 feet with poor belays. The crux demanded a run-out of 140 feet at about half-way up the gully. Thereafter the climbing became easier and belays more numerous, a few short pitches maintaining the interest.

Point Five Gully.—This gully separates Rubicon Wall and Observatory Buttress from the precipitous slabby face of Observatory Ridge. It was first climbed on 28th August 1955 by M. Noon and G. McIntosh (C.D.C.), who found it very severe, using nailed boots. Pitons used as belays were removed. The following are the details:—

(1) 110 ft. Climb gully to ledge and belay on left. (2) 120 ft. Continue up gully until an awkward move must be made to the right on to an overhanging groove. Climb this and traverse left. Several mantelshelves lead to good ledge (piton belay). (3) The crux, 120 ft. Climb direct to overhang. Move right on small holds to rib. Up this and left into gully. Climb steep wall on right to another rib, followed to small spike belay. (4) 20 ft. Up rib to block belay on right. (5) 120 ft. Go left and climb chimney. (6) 20 ft. To belay on right. (7) 120 ft. Short overhanging walls above are climbed. (8) 120 ft. Climb gully to large ledge, belay on left. (9) 120 ft. Continue up to small scoop, but no belay. (10) 50 ft. Climb the scoop to a ledge. (11) 60 ft. The steep chimney above climbed to chockstone, then back and foot up the outer edge. Easy climbing leads to the top in about 400 ft.

North-eastern Grooves.—965 feet, just Very Severe. First Ascent: 17th and 21st June 1955; R. O. Downes, M. J. O'Hara (leading through), with E. D. G. Langmuir on last four pitches. It takes the prominent crack line, well seen from the C.I.C. Hut, up Minus One Buttress, with an unfortunate deviation on to Minus Two Buttress at half height. The final pitches, although

artificial, make a good finish. Start: At the base and in the middle of Minus One Buttress.

Up into a right-angled corner, to a platform on the right at 70 ft. Above on the left is a triangular flake. Climb this by the crack on its right with the aid of a sling. Work diagonally left, then straight up to a vast plinth (225 ft.). Step left into a wet groove and climb this for 75 ft. To turn the overhang, traverse left (above the stance) under a steep nose until one can climb this. Arrive on large ledges level with the overhangs on the right. (Efforts to traverse right here failed.) So descend into Minus Two Gully and climb the easy rocks on its far side. Emerge on to a glacis where the gully lies back. Enormous cairn (575 ft.). Traverse an obvious line to the right, back on to Minus One Buttress (hard to start). Climb up to a stook of perched bollards; step past them gingerly and climb the chimney groove on the right (continuation of lower line) for 30 ft. Move right, along a ledge on to the open crest of the buttress above the overhangs. Running belay; bridge strenuously up a groove to a spacious terrace (735 ft.). Climb to the top of a 40-ft. pinnacle. Up easily for another 100 ft. to a leaning pedestal, curiously poised. The knife-edge arête beyond makes a delightful finish, joining North-east Buttress above the Second Platform. A pitch by pitch description is given in the C.I.C. Log Book.

(Several other routes in the hardest class were done by the above party on Ben Nevis in 1954 and 1955. The sequence of events runs as follows: Minus Two Buttress, Left-hand route by party of four in 1954. On 19th June 1955, Downes and O'Hara did Gardy Loo Buttress (very severe, alternately strenuous, delicate and exposed too), also Long Climb (Orion) and lower part of N.E. Grooves on Minus One Buttress. These were done on consecutive days. Langmuir joined them and they did Route II (Carn Dearg). Then, Right-hand Route (Minus Two Buttress), very severe, open and delicate, and harder than Left-hand Route, but Gardy Loo is more sustained than Right-hand Route. They then finished with the upper part of N.E. Grooves. Rather a complex story! Fuller notes will appear in *Cambridge Mountaineering*, 1956.)

Carn Dearg, North Trident Buttress; Neptune Gully.—Climbed by A. J. Bennet and J. Clarkson (Edinburgh J.M.C.S.) on 15th February 1956. As seen from the C.I.C. Hut, this gully runs directly downwards from near the top of North Trident Buttress. It was



March 1932

THE MAMORES FROM BEN NEVIS LOOKING S.S.E.

J. Y. MacDonald

1—Beinn Creachan
2—Beinn Achaladair
3—Na Gruagaichean

4—Ben More
5—Beinn an Dothaidh
6—An Gearanach

7—Beinn Doireann
8—Meall a' Bhuiridh
9—Stob Coire a' Chairn

10—Buachaille Etive Mor
11—Ben Lui
12—Am Bodach
13—Sgurr a' Mhaim

approached by steep snow slopes to the left of Moonlight Gully, and was reached above the first ice pitch by a leftward traverse.

After climbing a minor ice-pitch, a 15-ft. almost vertical column of ice was encountered, to avoid which the party climbed to a ledge on the left, and then a hard corner, to re-enter the gully. Shortly above, a longer ice-pitch was avoided by open ice-bound rocks on the left. The gully was then easier, and hard snow led between steep buttresses to the last ice-pitch of about 25 ft. It finished at a large horizontal platform overlooking No. 5 Gully, and the top of the mountain was reached by an easy ridge and steep snow on the extreme left of the corrie above No. 5 Gully. This gully afforded an excellent climb which was not unduly difficult. The snow was in perfect condition, and step-cutting was required from below the start, right to the summit.

The South Post of Coire Ardair.—This challenging fissure, about 1,100 feet in height, was first climbed under winter conditions by N. S. Tennant and C. G. M. Slesser on 10th February 1956. The climb took 6 hours. It was the first day of frost after a six-day thaw. The *coulair* was in perfect condition, nearly the whole of it hard snow, snow-ice or, occasionally, bare ice.

The bottom ice-pitch was so eroded with melt water that it was necessary to enter the *coulair* above it, by a leftward traverse on the easily accessible snow slope below the foot of the Centre Post and the B. Buttress.

The route made a steep snow and ice climb in magnificent scenery. It is not suitable (or safe) after fresh snowfall on account of its steepness and the risk of avalanche. There are no possible or feasible escape routes.

(1) Steep but shallow *coulair* for about 300 ft. leading to (2) First Bulge (over *rimaye*) at an angle of about 70 degrees for 100 ft. The *coulair* now steepens and passes between narrow parallel walls, opening out above (250 ft.) and offering a choice of two ways. To the right of exposed rock by a vertical 150 ft. ice-pitch or to the left up less steep ground. (3) Left-hand route taken up very steep snow for 100 ft. to an emplacement by rock (security from avalanche risk). (4) Then an even steeper wall of snow-ice or ice, traversing right to the level of top of right-hand ice-pitch (100 ft.). (5) Climb obliquely right again on very steep snow to the final bulge (200 ft.). (6) Ascend 30 ft. bulge and finish up 70 ft. slope to plateau edge.

ARRAN.

Ben Nuis Chimney.—430 feet. Anyone who has read Oppenheimer's account (*Journal*, Vol. 7) of the first ascent of this chimney will recall the desperate nature of the enterprise. The near-suicidal manœuvres executed on that occasion probably induced the great majority of climbers to give the route a wide berth, while a very small number might have been attracted to the climb in order to find out what all the fuss was about. The original route wandered on to the faces on either side of the chimney to a considerable extent. A direct ascent was made in August 1955 by J. M. Johnstone and W. C. Harrison (J.M.C.S.), leading alternately. The foot of the chimney is marked by a prominent cone of turf which terminates at a repulsive scoop of decomposing granite.

(1) 70 ft. Scramble up to a small grass platform above which the scoop perceptibly steepens. There are holds for a few feet and then one is confronted with the slime-streaked, holdless chimney bed lying at a high angle between smooth walls too far apart to straddle. Combined tactics on the first ascent were used here, but it is preferable to drive knife-blade type pitons into the incipient groove on the right-hand side (4 required). *Etriers*, or stirrups, are essential because it is difficult to find points where the pitons will stay in! After 10 ft. the angle eases considerably, and some 20 ft. farther up the mossy bed there is a narrow crack on the left wall suitable for a piton belay.

(2) 50 ft. Proceed back and foot (face right) until it is possible to use the bed. Pass beneath large jammed block and get on to the latter from behind (face left). Good stance and belay.

(3) 90 ft. Climb up the vertical back wall of the chimney until shortage of holds forces the adoption of back and foot tactics (face left), by which means one gains a small platform above the vertical wall. For 30 ft. the angle of the bed is such that it can be used for footholds. Thereafter proceed back and foot (face right) up to and under a group of jammed blocks. A through route leads to a good stance and belay.

(4) 40 ft. The first 20 ft. of this pitch consists of grass and moss leading up to an awkward overhanging block which is scaled by leaning out on the large undercut hold on the left wall. Above the overhang, the chimney narrows and is cluttered with aircraft wreckage. Much of the latter seems safely wedged but is not recommended as an aid to the ascent. Surmount the jammed blocks terminating the pitch by the left wall. Large stance above.

(5) 50 ft. A rib of rock now divides the back of the chimney. Climb the deeply cut left branch to a jammed block. Use the latter

as a stance and belay on a piton. This pitch is very strenuous as the cleft admits the body sideways with little to spare for manœuvre. Stout climbers may be tempted to climb up the right wall and succeeding slabs to a point level with the chockstone, but the traverse to the latter is so hazardous that they should risk becoming permanently wedged in the cleft.

(6) 70 ft. Proceed back and foot (face right) until the chimney again narrows to a short cleft. Climb the cleft by excellent hidden handholds on right wall and enter a small cave. Escape to open ground above by right wall.

(7) 60 ft. Fifty feet of steep grass brings one to a barrier of enormous blocks, and an entertaining through route, invisible from below, terminates the climb.

Grading is as follows: Pitch 1, Very Severe; Pitches 2 to 6, Severe; Pitch 7, Moderate. Apart from the artificial passage, pitons should be carried for belays (static and running). All pitons were removed. Vibrams were worn and proved satisfactory, despite the fact that Pitches 1 and 2 were slightly wet.

Goatfell—Rosa Slabs.—800 feet. From the Glen Rosa track the vast area of slabs flowing down from Goatfell is not properly seen, and it is necessary to mount the opposite slopes to appreciate their extent. The western slabs are separated from their minor extension to the south by a small hanging corrie. The watercourse draining the latter is the landmark to aim for. The climb begins at the lowest slab, a gigantic undercut specimen, lying to the left or north of the watercourse. The general line of the route goes diagonally across the face—that is from bottom right to top left. J. M. Johnstone and W. C. Harrison led alternately in August 1955.

(1) 100 ft. Climb right-hand edge of undercut slab and head for a distinctive crescent-shaped eave of rock which will be seen on the port quarter. (2) 80 ft. Pass to the right of the "half moon" and traverse above into a shallow gully, bounded on the left by a steep slab. A horizontal ledge runs across the slab a few feet above the point of entry into the gully. (3) 60 ft. Step up on ledge and climb wall above by an incipient groove. When this runs out move rightwards on small holds to the top. Traverse left a few feet and gain a niche by going up and over a rounded spur. (4) 70 ft. From the niche a shallow scoop leads upwards. Follow this until broken

ground on the left gives easy access to the First Terrace, an ill-defined grassy rake running across the face at right angles to the general line of the route.

(5) 80 ft. Some 60 ft. above the Terrace a projecting boss of rock shaped like a pillbox or gun turret will be noticed. Climb up the wall of slabs coming down to the right of the pillbox to a grass ledge aligned towards the latter and then traverse upwards on tiny holds across intervening slab. Large block belay above pillbox. (6) 80 ft. Scramble up easy ground to foot of a short overhanging wall which forms the lower edge of a massive slab coming down from the left. (7) 50 ft. Surmount overhang by a convenient crack, go up 10 ft. and reach small spike belay by a zigzag.

(8) 100 ft. Go up 30 ft. of easy ground, trending leftwards to the Second Terrace which is better defined. A series of cracks and grooves leads up to a platform on which rests a large flake, shaped like a gravestone, a good thread belay. (9) 60 ft. Enter groove above the gravestone and follow it (grassy in upper part) straight up to a pile of large blocks jammed against slab on the left. (10) 60 ft. Twin diédres, one set below the other, lead upwards. Traverse into lower right-hand one, and layback up it. The corner crack gives out before the top, but an excellent hold for left hand will be found on top of the upper slab. Adequate holds lead to a short wall. Climb over wall a few feet to the left and walk up slab to spike belay. (11) 60 ft. Go straight up to a short overhang. Gain the slab above and cross this to a second overhang. Surmount this, using a flake, to the right of a sharp nose of rock. This finishes the climb. Entertaining scrambling may be had on a ridge of blocks leading from the top of the slabs to the final slope below the summit of Goatfell. The standard of the pitches varies. Average grading, Mild Severe.

Readers may refer back to *Journal*, Vol. 23 (1947), p. 421, for a Note on the first ascent of Rosa Slabs. It is clear that the original party did not select the most interesting route on the lower section, being well to the left of Mr Johnstone's line. It is likely that the two routes were pretty close together on the upper part of the climb. The same difficulty occurred when trying to compare features of the 1945 route of the Editor's party with that of Mr Jenkins in 1946. This account is, at any rate, the first detailed one of a complete linear route on these slabs.—ED.

In Memoriam.

ALEXANDER FRASER,

1874-1955.

By the death of Alexander Fraser on 25th June 1955 the Club has lost one of its oldest members. He joined in 1895. Though he seldom attended meets he took a deep interest in the Club, following closely its growth and all aspects of Scottish climbing as the many new ascents and routes were recorded in the *Journal*.

He was a true lover of the hills, both Highland and Lowland, and knew them well. Some of his earlier expeditions, which he loved to recall and which I was privileged to share, were a week in Glencoe in August 1895, when we climbed Bidean, traversed Aonach Eagach and made a call at Ossian's Cave.

Two years later came a memorable day's walk in May over the four main Cairngorm summits. We left by the night train from Edinburgh. After an early breakfast we left Aviemore, a long tramp up Glen Einich followed by a delightful climb and wander over the four main tops in cloudless weather, a descent to Glenmore and tramp to Coylum Bridge for supper, after which we returned by the next midnight train. The Coire an Lochain was in winter conditions of ice and snow with a cornice under the Braeriach plateau, which was a vast snow-field, but no snow at all on the summit of Cairngorm.

Next year, 1898, Skye called and we enjoyed the new experience of rock climbing, traversing most of the ridges, but taking an off-day to watch Harold Raeburn working out a route up the face of the Bhasteir Tooth.

A few years later his health failed and forbade further mountaineering, but he maintained his keen interest in the Club and all that pertained to it, enjoying in memory his many visits to the hills and lengthy cycle

runs through Highland glens such as Glen Tilt, Glen Affric to Loch Duich, and the upper Spey Valley to Glen Roy, for he was a strong cyclist and a grand companion on the hills, as the writer knows so well.

He was a well-known actuary by profession (F.S.A. and F.F.A.), and for many years Actuary to the Life Association of Scotland. He was a great chess player, too, and carried his pocket chess-board with him, carrying on games from one hill-top to the next.

ARTHUR W. RUSSELL.

ALEXANDER MORRICE MACKAY

(The Honourable Lord Mackay),

1875-1955.

PRESS notices recording the recent death of Lord Mackay dealt largely, and naturally, with the legal side of his long and distinguished career. Tribute was also paid to his interest and proficiency in both indoor and outdoor sports and games, but it was not generally realised that in his early days, fifty or sixty years ago, he was an extremely capable mountaineer. Indeed, in the opinion of that august personage Geoffrey Winthrop Young—a lifelong friend of "Sandy" Mackay and happily still with us—he had in his time no superior as a mountaineer, not excepting even the great stalwarts of the past, members of our own Club, whose names spring readily to mind. No one who has climbed Mackay's Chimney on Salisbury Crags will dispute his ability as a cragsman.

From his boyhood he was a climber. At first he roamed the Cairngorms in his native Aberdeenshire. On going up to Cambridge in 1895 he soon found kindred spirits among the roof-climbing fraternity there, and it was Mackay who actually drew the plans for Winthrop Young's "Guide to the Trinity Roofs." Later on he teamed up with Young and embarked on a campaign of pioneer work (there was unlimited scope for new climbs in those

days) in Switzerland, North Wales, Lakeland, and to a less extent in Scotland. That was round about the year 1900. No papers or diaries relative to his activities are extant. Almost only in Young's books—"On High Hills" (1927) and "Mountains with a Difference" (recent)—and in the pages of our own *Journal* can we find details of some of Mackay's exploits. Many of these climbs were based on Concordia or Belalp and were almost entirely guideless. The Finsteraarhorn, up and down in $7\frac{1}{2}$ hours, was regarded in fine weather as a training walk, after which, in the stuffy atmosphere of the hut, Young declares "Mackay slept sonorously." The Fusshörner then afforded scope for much new exploration. There was a notable traverse of the Dent Blanche via the Viereselgrat. Incidentally, Mackay is reputed to have climbed the Matterhorn by three different routes within 24 hours! On one occasion the Jungfrau was traversed from the Roththal side, the descent being made by an unusual route involving a huge jump from the upper lip of the bergschrund to the lower. Mackay attempted to repeat such a leap when sometime later he was descending the BC rib of Cir Mhor into A gully, but Scottish snow in January is not so accommodating as Alpine snow in July, and he sustained a broken leg. It was at first badly set and had to be rebroken.

Henceforward there were no more heroics on the hills. Nevertheless the injury did not debar Mackay from winning the Scottish Lawn Tennis Singles Championships in 1905, 1906 and 1907. At all ball games he was an adept of the Leslie Balfour-Melville, A. G. G. Asher type. Even when he was nearly eighty hardly anybody could be found to beat him at croquet.

Mackay joined the Club in 1898 (a Vice-Presidency was accepted in 1929), and many stout expeditions at meets and at other times are to his credit. When Raeburn and he climbed together it was interesting to watch their differing techniques. Naismith and Mackay were the pair who straightened out the last unclimbed section of the Coolin Ridge. Articles in the *Journal* from Mackay's pen included "The Northern Pinnacles of Liathach"

(Vol. 6), "Tarmachan and the Craig na Caillich Gully" (Vol. 7), "Sail Garbh and its Barrel Buttress" (Vol. 18), each of which reveals his strong personality and gives proof of the intense delight which suffused all his climbing, were it in fair weather or foul. The qualities which helped to make so fine a mountaineer are readily detectable when it comes to assessing the value of his long and successful career at the Bar and on the Bench. Phrases such as "Mackay's never-failing composure," his "imperturbable optimism" constantly recur in Young's books. His inspiring companionship on the hills is indeed a treasured memory to those few who can still remember having climbed with him. Well do I recollect what was possibly Mackay's last adventure on the Arran granite when, as late as 1909, we had a modest face climb together on Cir Mhor, finishing up, however, with a tough squirm in Bell's Groove.

How better to bring it all into focus than to quote Mackay himself and to express the *credo* with which he concluded his delightful "Vignettes" (*Journal*, 1950): "It has been my luck to be fairly to the fore in many sports and pastimes. I have loved them all, but I have ever said, and now repeat, that with its pleasure, its struggle, its marvellous colour and pageant of nature, and its call for true comradeship at all stages, mountaineering is the finest sport of them all."

The Club has in truth lost from its firmament one of its brightest stars.

STUART CUMMING.

JOHN F. A. BURT,

1894-1955.

MOST members who habitually attended the Club Meets in the inter-war years will remember Jack Burt as a most companionable soul, both on the hills and at the fireside. His climbing was of a very moderate standard, especially as understood nowadays, but he had a very genuine

affection and enthusiasm for the hills, seasoned with a due respect. Two *Journal* articles from his pen—"The Inferior Mountains" (22, 240) and "The Scottish Mountains in Art" (23, 172), both well written and to the point—describe his attitude, and the lighter side appears in a set of verses—"Southward Bound" (20, 58).

He joined the Club in 1925, but he had been walking and climbing on the Arran hills from the age of 14. A graduate of Glasgow University with first-class honours in English, he taught in the Glasgow High School from 1922-35, during which period he was the first and a very active President of the School F.P. Mountaineering Club, introducing many young men to our sport, including Tom McKinnon on his first traverse of the Cobbler. From 1935 until his retirement in 1954 he was head of the English department in Hillhead Academy.

Most of his climbing was on the Scottish hills. With a trustworthy leader he would go on rock, but he preferred snow and hill traversing under all conditions. Once or twice he climbed abroad, usually with his sister and with a guide on serious expeditions, though they always trained by themselves on passes. In 1925 several peaks were done in Corsica, followed by a visit to Arolla and another in 1926, when with Antoine Georges most of the Arolla peaks were climbed. They then crossed to Zermatt by the Col de Bertol and the Tête Blanche. There I joined them, my first responsibility as leader of an Alpine party, in the traverse of the Monte Rosa peaks and a last day on Castor. Jack always remembered the wonderful sunset from the Margherita Hut.

He served on the Committee from 1938 and throughout the war. His last good climb was an impressive snow and ice gully on the Driesh (Clova) with Dr Myles in 1941. After the war his health was not equal to the demands of climbing, but every summer holiday he spent at Newton on Loch Fyne, where he could still regard the hills with delight and where he died last summer.

J. H. B. BELL.

GEOFFREY ELIOT HOWARD,**1877-1956.**

IT is not easy to write an obituary notice about Geoffrey Howard because most of his contemporary climbing companions have, alas, preceded him to the grave. Howard first visited the Alps in 1897 (before the present writer was born!) and in addition to other Alpine holidays he visited Norway in 1902 and 1903, the Pyrenees in 1905, 1906 and 1907 and went in 1908 with the Alpine Club of Canada to the Selkirks. He had two more seasons in the Rockies. He was elected a member of the Alpine Club in 1907 and was Vice-President in 1952-53. His father was a member of the Alpine Club, elected in 1867, and Geoffrey was proposed by F. F. Tuckett. With his other family connections he formed a link with the early days and the Golden Age of mountaineering. From our records he seems first to have attended an Easter Meet of the S.M.C. in 1908, and later that year was elected a member. He attended a few Easter Meets and was rather a Salvationist than an Ultramontane. From 1920 to 1922 he served on the committee. He also climbed in Wales and the Lake District.

It was not for his distinction as a climber that he was known and liked, but for his personality, his wit and his good humour, which must have made him a genial companion on the hills.

His honesty of purpose, sincerity, and absolute integrity earned him the respect of all who knew him, not only amongst climbers, but in the business world, where he succeeded to the family firm and was a leading figure in the pharmaceutical section of the chemical industry.

He contributed many articles to different journals, including one, "The Rain of Peace," to our own *Journal* (15, 20). He was at his best in gently debunking some of the more extreme views of various climbing fanatics with his characteristic urbanity. His quiet humour and suavity were conducive to a more reasonable outlook on

controversial matters. He attended indoor meetings of the Alpine Club quite regularly, and with our late member and ex-President P. J. H. Unna, formed a perfect combination in discussions.

G. GRAHAM MACPHEE.

WILSON H. HEY, F.R.C.S.

THE late Mr Wilson H. Hey was not a member of the Scottish Mountaineering Club but his great work on behalf of the Mountain Rescue Committee was of such value to mountaineers that it is fitting to pay tribute to him in our *Journal*.

He was an eminent surgeon who loved mountains and mountaineering with a boundless enthusiasm. This found its most durable form in the creation of the Mountain Rescue Committee of which body he was chairman for seventeen years. In this capacity he fought for and ultimately won for the injured on the hills the use of morphia; for many years providing this drug at the rescue posts himself. For this he will always be remembered with gratitude by those whose painful journey down a rough hillside on a stretcher is eased by its use.

He also served on the council of the Alpine Club and had been President of the Rucksack Club and the Manchester University Mountaineering Club. He died on 15th January, aged 73 years.

A. I. L. MAITLAND.

We deeply regret to announce the death of **Robert Jeffrey**, a past President of the Club, which occurred on 19th March. The "In Memoriam" article will appear in our next number. We also learn with regret of the death, last July, of **R. M. Scott**, who joined the Club in 1932 and was a frequent attender of Meets before the war.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

EASTER MEET, 1955—KINLOCHEWE.

THE good weather which has favoured the last few Easter Meets failed us this year and conditions were generally disappointing throughout the Meet. Above 2,000 feet thick mist prevailed, breaking down into heavy driving rain by the afternoon. The principal event of the Meet was the opening on Saturday, 9th April, of the Ling Hut in Glen Torridon, of which a report appeared in the last issue of the Journal. In the evening the President and twenty-one members entertained Mrs Glover to dinner at Kinlochewe. Kinlochewe Hotel was most comfortable and provided excellent fare and adequate drying facilities.

The following members and guests were present at the Meet:—

At Kinlochewe Hotel: E. C. Thomson (President); J. Logan Aikman, W. J. Bannister, J. W. Baxter, D. Campbell, I. M. Campbell, W. C. Carmichael, M. H. Cooke, J. M. Hartog, R. M. Gall Inglis, J. S. M. Jack, J. N. Ledingham, G. Graham Macphee, R. W. Martin, M. Morrison, A. G. Murray, T. Nicholson, F. E. O'Riordan, W. B. Speirs, T. Evershed Thomson (members); A. H. B. Speirs (guest).

At the Ling Hut: G. Peat, G. S. Roger, W. Bennet, D. J. Fraser, R. R. S. Higgins, A. Horne, G. S. Johnstone, J. McK. Stewart (members); D. G. Horne, W. A. Read, B. Soep, J. White (guests). Caravanning at Kinlochewe: P. D. Baird.

The following expeditions were recorded:—

Monday, 4th, and Tuesday, 5th April.—Hartog: Beinn Alligin and Ruadh-Stac Mor, Coinneach Mhor and Spidean Coire nan Clach on Beinn Eighe.

Wednesday, 6th, and Thursday, 7th April.—E. C. Thomson and Inglis: Moruisg and Beinn Liath Mhor.

Friday, 8th April.—E. C. Thomson, T. E. Thomson, Inglis and Cooke were attending to arrangements for the opening of the Ling Hut. Macphee and Hartog: Nine tops of An Teallach, omitting

Glas Mheall Liath. Campbell, Martin, Nicholson and O'Riordan: Spidean Coire nan Clach on Beinn Eighe; Nicholson and O'Riordan going on to Coinneach Mhor and Ruadh-Stac Mor. Baxter and D. Campbell: Fionn Bheinn.

Saturday, 9th April.—Thirty-two members and guests were present at the formal opening of the Ling Hut by Mrs Glover. The thanks of the Club is due to George Roger (Huts Convener) and George Peat (Custodian) for the excellent arrangements made for this occasion and also for providing coffee and biscuits afterwards. Thereafter we all went our several ways on the hills.

A. G. Murray, W. B. Speirs and A. H. B. Speirs: Ruadh-Stac Mor, Coinneach Mhor and Spidean Coire nan Clach on Beinn Eighe. Aikman, Baxter and D. Campbell: Beinn Dearg. Macphee and Hartog: Meall Dearg on Liathach by the North Ridge, thus completing Macphee's ascent of all the subsidiary tops in addition to all the Munros. E. C. Thomson, T. E. Thomson, Inglis, Nicholson, Martin, Bannister, I. M. Campbell, Ledingham, Morrison and Bennet: Beinn Alligin. Peat, Roger, Stewart and Soep: Complete traverse of Liathach. Fraser, A. Horne, D. G. Horne and Johnstone: Ruadh-Stac Mor from Coire Mhic Fhearchair and Coinneach Mhor of Beinn Eighe. Carmichael, Cooke, Jack and O'Riordan visited Inverewe.

Sunday, 10th April.—Aikman, Baxter and D. Campbell: Moruisg. Ledingham, Murray, Nicholson, O'Riordan, W. B. and A. H. B. Speirs: Stùc a' Choire Dhuibh Bhig and Spidean a' Choire Leith of Liathach. E. C. Thomson and Bannister: Fionn Bheinn. Carmichael, Jack and Morrison: Meall a' Ghuibhais. Inglis and T. E. Thomson: Ruadh-Stac Mor to Spidean Coire nan Clach on Beinn Eighe. Bennet, Peat, Roger, Stewart and Soep: Slioch. Fraser, A. and D. G. Horne: Liathach including Mullach an Rathain by the Northern Pinnacles, following ridge over Am Fasarinen to Spidean a' Choire Leith and Bidean Toll a' Mhuic. Johnstone and Read: Beinn Alligin. Higgins and White: A' Mhaighdean, Beinn Tarsuinn, Mullach Coire Mhic Fhearchair and Sgurr Bàn. I. M. Campbell, Cooke, Martin and Macphee attended church in the morning and visited Inverewe in the afternoon.

Monday, 11th April.—Johnstone and Read: Liathach by the crags of Coire na Caimè making what they consider to be a new rock climb to the left of P.C. Buttress. Bannister, Baxter and D. Campbell: Creag Dubh (Beinn Eighe). Ledingham, Nicholson and Baird: Spidean Coire nan Clach, Sgurr Bàn, Sgurr a' Fhìr Duibhe and Creag Dubh; Carmichael and Morrison: The first three of those tops just listed.

The C.I.C. Hut Meet was attended by E. S. Chapman and N. Ream (guest). On Sunday, 10th April, they ascended Ben Nevis by the arête, leaving next day on account of bad weather.

NEW YEAR MEET, 1956—BALLACHULISH AND GLENCOE.

THE main centre of the Meet was at the Ballachulish Hotel where twenty-four members and four guests were present: three other members were at Craigrannoch Boarding House, two at Kingshouse, three at Blackrock and one at Lagangarbh. The weather was mild and sometimes stormy with considerable rain and mist, but the Meet was a great success. There was little hilarity on hogmanay. A party went to Clachaig where the New Year was discreetly toasted (among the L.S.C.C. presumably).

The following were at the Ballachulish Hotel: E. C. Thomson (President); George Arthur, J. W. Baxter, M. H. Cooke, Arthur Dixon, C. V. Dodgson, R. R. Elton, A. H. Hendry, R. R. S. Higgins, E. W. Hodge, R. M. G. Inglis, J. S. M. Jack, R. Jeffrey, A. W. Laughland, R. W. Martin, J. Y. Macdonald, J. E. MacEwen, G. G. Macphee, G. Peat, F. E. O'Riordan, G. J. Ritchie, W. B. Speirs, T. E. Thomson, W. Waddell (members), with A. H. B. and J. G. Speirs, Colin Macdonald and J. M. Steven (guests).

W. C. Carmichael, J. N. Ledingham and F. R. Wylie were at the Craigrannoch Hotel. E. S. Chapman, G. S. Johnstone and J. D. B. Wilson were at Blackrock Cottage. P. D. Baird and D. H. M'Pherson were at Kingshouse. Only J. R. Marshall was at Lagangarbh. T. Nicholson was at Bridge of Orchy.

The following expeditions were reported:—

Friday, 30th December.—Baxter, Cooke and Jack were on Ben Sgulaire.

Saturday, 31st December.—Jack, Inglis, Thomson and Martin were on Ben Starav. The Speirs and Steven on Stob Garbh; Baxter, Cooke, Dixon and Waddell on Sgurr na h'Ulaidh; the President and Jeffrey on Sgorr Dhonuill; Elton and MacEwen on Sgorr Dhonuill and Sgorr Dhearg; the Macdonalds on Ben Dothaidh; Peat, Hendry and Ritchie climbed No. 4 Buttress on Stob Coire nam Beith; M'Pherson and Macphee were on Stob Ghabhar; Baird and son up No. 6 Gully of Sron Creise and over Clachlet and Meall a' Bhuiridh; Nicholson and son on last-named peak; G. S. Johnstone was on Stob Coire nan Lochan.

Sunday, 1st January.—The President, Baxter, Cooke, Dixon and Waddell walked round Ben Bheithir by Glen Duro; the Macdonalds were on Meall a' Bhuiridh; Elton, Martin, the Speirs and Steven on Sgor nam Fiannaidh; Higgins, Dodgson, Laughland and O'Riordan on Ben Sgulaire; MacEwen and Wilson ascended Sron Creise by the central couloir and went over Clachlet and Meall a' Bhuiridh, the latter peak also ascended by Chapman; Nicholson and son were over Beinn Dothaidh and Achaladair.

Monday, 2nd January.—Peat, Hendry and C. G. Macdonald were on the lower Bow and Quiver Rib on the east face of Aonach Dubh; Dixon, Waddell and Baxter were on Ben Bheithir; the President, Inglis, Thomson and Martin were on Sgorr Dhearg and Sgorr Dhonuill; Elton and MacEwen on Buachaille Etive; Dodgson, Higgins and O'Riordan on Bidean nam Bian; Ritchie and Marshall climbed the Twisting Gully on Stob Coire nan Lochan; Nicholson, Baird and sons with M'Pherson ascended Buachaille by Curved Ridge; Wilson traversed Aonach Eagach; Chapman and Johnstone were on Beinn a' Bheithir. Ladies were in last two parties. Carmichael, Ledingham and Wylie were also on Ben a' Bheithir.

Annual General Meeting.

THE 67th A.G.M. of the Club was held in the Central Hotel, Glasgow, on Saturday, 3rd December 1955, at 5 P.M. Mr E. C. Thomson, President, occupied the chair, and about seventy members were present. Office-bearers' reports, of which only the salient points are here quoted, were accepted with few comments and full approval. In particular, W. B. Speirs, who retired from the Treasurership after a term of six years, was cordially thanked by the President.

The *Hon. Treasurer* reported a small deficit of 10s. for the year on general account. The Funds at the close of the year, however, showed a considerable increase, mainly owing to *Guide Book* account where sales exceeded expenditure, as no publication costs were incurred, although several *Guides* were in varying stages of preparation. Hut accounts were also accumulating a surplus, the Ling Hut having been equipped from the legacy of W. N. Ling (£100) and a gift of £100 from Mrs Glover. Expenditure was increased during the year by the publication of a list of members, the purchase of a new projector for the West of Scotland (£40) and a slow rise in printing costs.

The *Hon. Secretary* reported the death of four members—J. W. Burns, J. F. A. Burt, Lord Mackay and Alexander Fraser. Two older members had resigned. The Committee elected fourteen new members at their October meeting, the average age of the applicants being 28 years, with five of them aged under 25—a gratifying feature. The membership total is now 333.

In this connection the Secretary earnestly requested all proposers of candidates for membership to send in application forms before 30th September each year. This was essential, to enable the scrutinising sub-committee to report on candidates' qualifications, and also for the membership to be circularised for comments on the candidates before the mid-October Committee meeting.

The Club extends a welcome to the following new members (addresses already circulated): John M. Brockway, Donald J. Bennet, William L. G. Duff, Robert G. Folkard, Daniel Goldie, Kenneth A. Grassick, Ian D. Haig, George Hood, Miles Hutchinson, Eric D. G. Langmuir, George K. McLeod, James R. Marshall, Jeffrey Mason, Arthur G. Waldie.

The Hon. Secretary now spoke on the proposed Skye Hut. He recalled the British Mountaineering Council's War Memorial Appeal which, after the recent war, raised about £900. The committee in control of this fund asked for suggestions as to the erection of a hut which would be of maximum service to British climbers. We were able, through the inquiries of W. M. Mackenzie, to assure the B.M.C. that permission of the proprietor would be granted for the erection of such a hut at Glenbrittle. They agreed that the site was ideal. In response to their request our Committee agreed that we should be prepared to assume responsibility for the erection and equipment, and to take over the administration of the hut when it was ready for use, provided that no financial contribution would be required from us other than an initial response to any further appeal for additional funds which would doubtless be required.

The *Hon. Editor* reported on No. 146 of the *Journal*, completing Vol. 25 of which the index would appear with the next issue. Total

costs were approximately £332, including blocks (£21. 17s.) and reprint of "Mountain Rescue" article (500 copies, £5. 10s.). Advertisement revenue brought in approximately £82, thanks to the work of George Ritchie who now hands over the post to John Ferrier after years of good work. Sales revenue was about £111. The net cost of the *Journal* to members works out at 9s. We printed 900 copies. The J.M.C.S. took 262.

The *Guide Books General Editor* reported a year of field work and preparation on the part of local editors: "Glencoe," the second edition expected to be in 2 vols., one for Buachaille Etive and the other for the rest of Glencoe and Ardgour; "Arran," not expected to appear until 1957; "Cairngorms" (rock climbing), to be printed as soon as possible; "Skye," making good progress. A new edition of the Cuillin Map was published during the year. Sales have been satisfactory. Thanks are due to L. S. Lovat, J. M. Johnstone, W. M. Mackenzie and Tom Patey for their editorial activities.

The *Convener for Huts*, G. S. Roger, reported the satisfactory number of 417 bed-nights in the C.I.C. Hut, the building being good, and P. L. J. Heron being concerned with rendering it burglar-proof. Mr Sinclair of Rhu Mhor is thanked for keeping the keys.

Lagangarbh Hut is in good order and regular use, showing 467 bed-nights, a decrease from the previous year. William Bennet and his helpers have installed a new "Courtier" stove and improved walls and ceiling. Trees have been planted near the hut and fenced off. The first-aid kit is at Altnafeidh and the stretcher in the hut. Mr and Mrs Cameron are most helpful in keeping the keys.

The Ling Hut in Glen Torridon was opened at Easter by Mrs Glover, whose generous gift, as well as others from members, are gratefully acknowledged. Improvements have been carried out—a new kitchen stove, calor gas, etc. Already 225 hut-nights have been recorded, about half of these during the spring.

District Conveners' Reports.—G. C. Williams (East) reported on the lecture programme with an average attendance of forty-five. This included two film shows. The 1955-56 programme was well in hand. L. S. Lovat (West) reported regular use of the Glasgow Club Room, which was also made available to the J.M.C.S. and L.S.C.C. Various additions were made to the Library and forty-seven volumes borrowed during the year. A new projector was purchased, and could be hired by members at fixed charges (5s. use in private house, 15s. elsewhere and 2s. 6d. for screen only). No joint bus meets were held with J.M.C.S. as plenty of cars were usually available. Lectures at a high level both of speech and picture were held in Rowan's Smoke Room and well attended. Ian Ogilvie (London) reports that combined meetings with other Clubs were carried on, generally, however, with poor attendance, except for J. M. Wordie's lecture, "Climbing at High Latitudes." No outside meets could be arranged.

First-Aid Committee.—Dr Maitland, Convener, reported one new post installed by Scottish Ski Club at Meall a' Bhuidh. Coylum Bridge kit is obtainable from Rothiemurchus Estate. The Mountain Rescue Committee have provided plaques to mark site of rescue kits. Reprints of the article on "Rescue" (*Journal*, 1955) are available to those interested. The Convener wishes to thank wardens of posts and also the R.A.F. Mountain Rescue Service for their willing and excellent work.

Librarian and Slide Custodian.—F. G. Bennett reports that the use of the Library is still confined to the same few members. Mr Don Harris (U.S.A. Consulate, Glasgow) donated a number of maps of American mountain areas. A list of additions to Library has been circulated to members. Robert Grieve reported ten requests for slides, including four requests for the new 2-in. collection, during the year. This collection grows rapidly by donations, and numbers about 200. Thanks are due particularly to J. F. Hamilton for fifty colour slides and transparencies, and to W. H. Murray for a donation of £2. 2s.

Meets.—Committee recommendations for 1957 were jettisoned by the Annual Meeting, which decided as follows: New Year at Arrochar and Lagangarbh; Easter at Spean Bridge, Roy Bridge and C.I.C. Hut.

Office-Bearers and Committee.—The Committee's nominations were accepted. They involve the following changes:—

Vice-President: W. H. MURRAY in place of A. G. Murray.

Hon. Treasurer: G. J. RITCHIE in place of W. B. Speirs.

Committee: L. S. LOVAT and THEO NICOLSON in place of G. J. Ritchie and R. Anderson.

Advertising Manager: JOHN FERRIER.

Assistant Secretary: P. E. MACFARLANE (who continues to deal with *Journal* distribution) in place of F. E. O'Riordan.

Huts Sub-Committee: Custodian C.I.C. Hut J. S. BERKELEY in place of A. Hendry. Also J. R. WOOD in place of J. R. Marshall.

Western Sub-Committee: G. K. ARMSTRONG and I. D. MACNICOL in place of J. F. Hamilton and D. C. Hutchison.

A.G.M. 1956 to be held in Edinburgh on 1st December.

Reception and Dinner.

The Reception was held at 2.30 P.M. The guests were received by the President and Mrs Thomson. Nearly 180 members and guests saw Mr Charles Evans

show his film of the Kangchenjunga Expedition and accorded him an enthusiastic vote of thanks at the close.

The Dinner was attended by 117 members and guests, who included Charles Evans and Joe Brown. Stuart Jack sang the Club song for what he firmly intimated was the last time.

The toast of "Our Guests" was proposed by Stanley Stewart. Evans responded with a nicely balanced combination of wit and sincerity. Jack Osborne proposed the health of Willy Speirs, the retiring Treasurer. The evening terminated with a recitation in the Doric from Bob Grieve on his friend Tom MacKinnon.

Following the Dinner many climbers and guests went to Inverarnan and enjoyed a Sunday on the hills.

Welcome Back to Tom Mackinnon.

(Recited at the Annual Dinner, 1955, by BOAB.)

LOSH, Tam, you're lookin' fine an'	Still, Tam, ye ken, ye're jist the
braw	same,
Your naked broo like Rannoch Wa',	Wi' maybe jist a wee less wame,
An' twa-three hairs mair gane awa'	An' maybe jist a wee mair fame
Frae aff your heid,	Than 'fore ye gaed.
Tae mark the frichts an' sterts an' a'	We're thankfu', tho', a Sherpa dame
On Himal dreid.	Ye didna wed!
It maun hae been an awfu' fash	Man, Tam, it's grand tae hae this
Tae scart an' howk an' kick an'	nicht
bash,	O' Evans an' Joe Broon a sicht,
Whiles listenin' tae the fearfu' crash	An' a' aroun' the room sae bricht
O' thundrous snaw.	Wi' meat an' drink.
An' maybe feelin' no' sae brash	An' worth it if we a' get ticht
At whit ye saw.	An' land in clink.

So here we pour a muckle dram,
An' haud it oot at length o' arm,
An' raise it up frae oot o' harm
O' graspin' freen.
Then put it whaur it works a charm
An' lights the e'en.

THE SPELL O' THE HILLS.

I'm growin' auld, I'm growin' cauld,
My bluid rins sluggish noo;
Nae mair my hert is like to stert
The flush upon my broo.
And, fegs, it's lang sin' lass or sang
Has gart me catch my breith,
But still ae spell, it's truth to tell,
Will last undimmed till deith.

It's the auld spell, the young spell,
The spell the Hielands cast,
The lang spell, the strang spell,
That aye for me will last;
The clear spell, the dear spell,
I canna lang resist
O' the fair hills, the bare hills,
In sun, snaw or mist.

I've settled down upon the toun,
I warsle on wi' thrift
At mean pursuits, while reek pol-
lutes
The grey, unhailsome lift;
But whiles I see afore my e'e
A vision o' the glens.
It's then I lang to rise and gang
Among the michty bens.

Oh the green hills, the clean hills,
I lo'e them weel aneuch,
But mair still the bare hills
Wi' mony a craig and cleugh;
The ouch hills, the teuch hills
That froun dour and grim,
The hie hills, the stey hills,
They daur ye to sclim.

It's weel I ken in thonder glen
The birks are gleamin' bricht,
The burn louns down sae brisk and
broun
And sparkles in the licht;
The braes ablow wi' heather glow,
The peak that soars abune
Will fin', I hope, upon its slope
My dodderin' fitsteps sune.

For the auld spell, the young spell
Is coost on me again,
The lang spell, the strang spell
That has me aye to hain;
The fair hills, the bare hills,
The hills wild and free,
Will ca' me and draw me
Until the day I dee.

D. J. FRASER.

THE JUNIOR MOUNTAINEERING CLUB OF SCOTLAND

Annual General Meeting, Dinner and Meet.

THE A.G.M. was held in the Lochearnhead Hotel on 3rd March, this centre having been chosen by the Perth Section as hosts. It was also the first time that the Club had met in this area. There were present twenty-one members from Glasgow, eight from Edinburgh and fourteen from Perth. London and Lochaber were not represented, but they sent apologies and reports. Regrets were expressed at the absence of the men of Fort William who missed a chance for pushing the sale of J.M.C.S. badges amongst the Edinburgh and Glasgow members.

After an excellent dinner the members met in the comfortable lounge, where the meeting took place under

the chairmanship of A. Rae, President of the Perth Section. The alteration to Rule 12 proposed by Glasgow was withdrawn when it was pointed out that the smaller sections had no difficulty in obtaining a quorum for committee meetings. Perth proposed that the Latin tag on our literature should be changed from "*Ascendite Escales*" to "*Ascendite Ascendentes*," the former suggesting "Get up them stairs" whereas the latter was more suitable, "Go up by climbing." This was agreed to. After the business a very enjoyable sing-song was held with some excellent individual contributions from members of each section.

The meeting broke up near midnight, Glasgow members heading for points to westward, as far as Glencoe. Edinburgh and several Perth members remained in order to climb the Perthshire hills. The weather on Sunday started off with bright sunshine and blue skies, but scattered showers appeared in the afternoon. The next A.G.M. will be organised by the Edinburgh Section.

Edinburgh Section.—Fourteen week-end bus meets have been held to places including Glencoe, Kinlochleven, Black Mount, Glen Etive, Glen Lyon, Glen Clova and Glen Finnan. Fortnightly meets were not financially successful, but latterly monthly meets succeeded better, with average attendance of 27. In the summer, parties visited the French and Swiss Alps, finding much rain. Those who climbed in Scotland fared better. The S.M.C. lectures have been much enjoyed. The Annual Dinner was held at the Peacock Hotel, Newhaven. The membership stands at 61, with 10 associates, and the annual subscription is 10s. Honorary Officials are J. Russell (President) and R. MacLennan (Vice-President). The President is Hamish Robertson and the Secretary is J. Clarkson, 12 Transy Place, Dunfermline, Fife.

London Section.—Early in the year a questionnaire was circulated to all members of the Section asking them what kind of activities they preferred. The replies were encouraging, but most of the people who indicated their preferences failed to appear when suitable meets were arranged. However, the Section's honour was undoubtedly saved by the zeal of its photographers, who produced nearly sixty prints at the A.G.M. and Dinner. The work of Tony Greene was outstanding and his award of a 12s. 6d. book token well earned.

Members climbed at all the British centres during the year. Harry Wells made guided ascents of several peaks in the Tyrol, and we believe Arthur Idle gained the coveted Matterhorn. Two of us,

who shall be nameless, made their first (unguided!) snow ascent of No. 4 Gully on Nevis, proceeding from rock island to rock island with great trepidation and excitement. Their final conquest of the 3-ft. cornices will, we are sure, live for ever in the saga of the London Section. Can the Himalaya give such simple joys as the easier Nevis snow climbs? We doubt it!

Our Section membership is still fairly static at 55. Due to increasing costs we have increased our annual subscription to 15s. The increased income will also be used to complete our stock of climbing guides and to defray such incidental meet expenses as the committee may from time to time approve. Our Honorary President is Charles Gorrie and Vice-President Angus Smith. The Section President is Charles Kemp, and the Secretary and Treasurer R. Cornish. We send to all our friends in Scotland sincere good wishes for a happy and successful climbing year.

Perth Section.—The past year has been the most successful the Perth Section has had as far as membership is concerned; this reached the 40 mark, the highest we have attained. During the year we held 15 meets, all well attended, and even made a profit on the bus outings. The areas covered were all within the 90-mile radius from Perth, which is our limit for a day outing. Three week-end outings were held at Derry Lodge, always a popular venue with members. In December an enjoyable dinner was held in the Spittal of Glenshee Hotel when 40 members and friends turned up. During the winter film shows were held and some members projected colour slides of their climbing activities during the previous year.

The officials for 1956 are W. H. Murray (Honorary President), J. Anton (Honorary Vice-President), A. Rae (President), W. Thomson (Vice-President). Secretary: J. Grant, 37 Burghmuir Road, Perth.

Lochaber Section.—The Section continues to flourish, although with its local members not as active as our unique position would warrant. Membership stands at approximately 40, with, however, only about half of these living in Scotland. The Section's financial position is excellent, all loans for the manufacture of badges having now been paid off.

Steill has had its most popular year so far, and is our best paying asset. Repairs and replacements of equipment and bedding, etc., have still to be made and will, we fear, be expensive. The bridge over the River Nevis has finally been completed, replacing the old bridge which became dangerous more than two years ago. The new bridge is situated about half a mile from the eastern end of the Nevis Gorge, almost opposite Steill.

A highly successful Section Dinner was held at the Imperial Hotel, at which the guest and speaker was Mr George Roger, S.M.C. Ski-ing is the most popular week-end activity during the winter and spring, but several members have continued to climb and walk among the hills throughout Scotland, impervious to the attractions

of the more spectacular sport. Notable among those is our most active member, Miles Hutchinson, who has now completed all the Munros and tops. Quite a number of the locals sought "pastures new" abroad and the climbing spirit seems to reach quite a high level during the holiday season.

The Office-bearers of the Section are: Hon. Presidents, J. F. Hamilton and J. Ness; Hon. Vice-President, D. G. Duff; President, J. Musto; Treasurer, J. Sutherland, c/o British Linen Bank, Fort William; Secretary and Hut Custodian, J. Wyne, The Croft, Glen Nevis, Fort William.

Glasgow Section.—The Club planned 14 car meets, of which 6 were cancelled, the attendance of those which ran being extremely variable. Members, however, were able to get away at any time, as some car owners can be relied on to take passengers every week-end. Glencoe, as usual, is the most popular meeting place.

Ten lectures and a film show were held jointly with the S.M.C. in Rowan's smoke-room and were well attended. Considering the quality of the catering, Thursday lunches at the Georgie, Union Street, are surprisingly popular. The Club Library, however, receives poor support.

Last year's Annual Dinner was held in the Ca'doro on 4th March 1955 with Bill Murray, our first honorary member, as the guest of honour, and this year's, in the same place, with Tom McKinnon as guest of honour, was held on 17th February 1956. Both were extremely successful and in the best J.M.C.S. tradition.

No photographic competition was held last year, but this will take place on 13th April. Financially the Section is on rather firmer ground, largely due to the change-over from bus to car meets. There is a small core of active members who climb all over Scotland, and many were abroad this year during the heat-wave at home. A few minor injuries have been suffered by members on the hills, but rather more damage has been sustained while getting there.

The Section A.G.M. was held on 2nd December 1955 in the Bath Hotel. Membership remains at about 210 members, of whom 183 are ordinary members, 27 associate members and 1 honorary member. Honorary Officials are J. Donaldson, S.M.C. (President), and Douglas Scott, S.M.C. (Vice-President). The President is Alec Gold and the Secretary is W. Harrison, 136 Weirwood Avenue, Garrowhill, Baillieston.

S.M.C. and J.M.C.S. ABROAD.**Himalayas.**

Arthur H. Read sends the following account, having recently returned from Kashmir after taking part in the Harvard M.C. 1955 Karakoram Expedition.

The objects of the expedition were to explore the little-known area of the Ghondakoro and Chogolisa Glaciers at the head of the Hushe Valley and to climb among the mountains bordering upon them. The party was led by Henry Francis of the American Alpine Club and consisted of six climbing members, with the addition of two botanists and an officer of the Pakistan Army. We left Skardu at the end of June and after an 8-day march we set up our base camp about 8 miles above the village of Hushe at the foot of the Ghondakoro and Chogolisa Glaciers. At Doghani, half-way between Skardu and Hushe, we met the New Zealand expedition led by Stanley Conway returning from its attempt on Masherbrum. This expedition had been dogged by bad weather, and it must have been bitter for them to hear later of the uniformly brilliant weather which we experienced through July and August.

We spent most of July exploring the Ghondakoro. After an expedition to a high basin of the East Masherbrum Glacier (from which we hoped misguidedly to climb one of the subsidiary peaks of the Masherbrum group) we penetrated to the northern head of the main glacier. Few of the jagged peaks in the area seem to be climbable, but we did reach a summit of about 20,500 ft. overlooking the Vigne Glacier and yielding remarkable views of K2 and the Gasherbrum peaks.

From the lower part of the Ghondakoro Glacier we had seen views of an elegant mountain away to the south which much attracted us. Through lack of a better name it became known as "Harry's Snow Peak," and much argument raged concerning its height and true map position. The only point of agreement was that it would be a highly desirable mountain to climb, but we were baffled by the problem of how to approach it. However, at the end of July we returned to base camp and moved a camp up to the confluence of the north and east branches of the Chogolisa. From there we reconnoitred the upper section of the East Chogolisa and discovered a hidden tributary glacier leading up through an icefall to the coveted peak. Much of August was spent in an attempt to climb the mountain, which we finally agreed to be about 21,500 ft. high. We set up a camp at about 19,000 ft., above the icefall, and spent several days working on the final ridge. This was heavily corniced on its eastern side, and plunged in a steep ice sheet towards the Hushe Valley to the west. We ultimately gave up the attempt about 500 ft. below the summit, through sheer weariness of cutting steps. Once again we had

magnificent views, taking in K2, the Mustagh Tower, Broad Peak, Masherbrum, and even Nanga Parbat.

Bad weather moved in as soon as we evacuated our high camp. Although it lasted only for about 3 days, the consequent floods washed away two bridges over the Hushe River and destroyed parts of the trail on the right bank. Our escape from the valley was made only by enlisting most of the male population of the village of Kande as a road construction gang.

D. J. Bennet and D. D. Stewart (J.M.C.S.) took part in the Royal Air Force Mountaineering Association's expedition to the Himalayas in the summer of 1955. The object of the expedition was to explore, survey and climb 20,000-ft. mountains in the Kulu-Lahoul-Spiti area, roughly midway between Nanda Devi and Nanga Parbat.

The expedition started from Manali, a village at the head of the Kulu Valley, and crossed the Hamtah Pass, 14,000 ft. into the Chandra Valley. Stewart took part in a reconnaissance up the valley to the Bara Shigri Glacier, finding the conditions of soft snow and avalanche débris very trying. Meanwhile Bennet returned to Manali by the Rotang Pass with Smyth, the leader of the expedition, and the Sherpas for fresh supplies and porters.

As a result of the combined experiences of these two parties it was decided to modify the objective and go up the Kulti Valley towards the centre of Lahoul. The expedition split into two halves—one to survey, the other to climb. Stewart and Bennet were in the climbing party, which also included Smyth and J. R. Lees. On 6th June this party went up the Kulti Valley and on the 8th June established a camp at 17,500 ft. just below the watershed at the head of the valley, and giving access to a vast glacier plateau on the far side of the watershed.

Stewart and Bennet stayed at this camp for a week and, climbing together, made ascents of five mountains between 18,800 ft. and 21,000 ft. Four of these were snow mountains, involving comparatively easy climbing in crampons, but the fifth entailed the ascent of a steep and rotten rock ridge, finely led by Stewart. J. Emmerson took part in the last two of these climbs.

Towards the end of June, Stewart, Bennet and Lees went down the Chandra Valley for 15 miles and climbed Shikar Beh (20,340 ft.). This was the hardest climb of the expedition, involving two large icefalls and a narrow ice ridge to the summit. The ascent took 3 days from the village of Sissu, 10,000 ft. below the summit.

The expedition lasted only 5 weeks in the field, and altogether eight mountains between 18,000 and 21,000 ft. were climbed, all first ascents, in country seldom visited. The district of Lahoul would seem to be ideal for small parties, or parties with limited time, for it is easy of access. The weather is good and there are many 20,000-ft. mountains yet unclimbed.

Alps, Norway, etc.

J. M. Johnstone spent the first 3 weeks of July at Chamonix in the company of A. S. Dick and W. C. Harrison (both J.M.C.S.). Unsettled weather during the entire period put the *grandes courses* out of reach. Completed climbs comprised the Aiguilles du Plan, Midi, Peigne, l'M. and Pointe Albert, the Grépon and the Nonne. Descent from the Midi by *téléferique* was exhilarating. The Grépon traverse was enlivened by wintry conditions and a narrow escape from lightning on the summit. The discharge occurred after roping down to the ledge leading to the Brèche Balfour. Uncompleted ascents were those of the Aiguille Verte, frustrated by snow avalanches in Whymper *couloir*; Aiguille du Moine defeated by snowstorm on south-west ridge; and the Géant where Dick was unwell.

Eric D. G. Langmuir writes as follows: From our camp at La Bérarde we made a circuit of the Dauphiné, climbing the Sialouze by the south ridge, the Pelvoux, the Écrins and finishing off with the south face of the Dibona. This last deserves special mention as it is a superb route on rough, sound granite, all too rare in this range.

The four of us, Geoff. Sutton (Climbers C.), Alan Blackshaw (A.C.), Bob Downes (C.U.M.C.) and I, were to be guests at the École Nationale in Chamonix. We duly presented ourselves on 15th July, fit but slightly the worse for wear. Our accommodation was palatial and the food excellent. The staff and amenities of the school were placed at our disposal.

We started off with the Ménégaux on the Aiguille de l'M. which we all thought more enjoyable than the west face of the Albert. Then Blackshaw and I did the north ridge of the Peigne followed by the République arête of the Charmoz, while Sutton and Downes did the Gervasutti *couloir* on Mont Blanc du Tacul.

Laden with supplies from the École we journeyed to Courmayeur and installed ourselves at La Palud. After 4 days of storm and one day wasted looking for the Rébuffat on the Aiguille de la Brenva we managed to snatch the south face of the Gugliammina between snowstorms. Unfortunately we were caught in one on the descent and were forced to bivouac near the summit without adequate food or clothing.

The annual Badile north-face fever got hold of us and we decided to make a flying visit before returning to Chamonix. Again we were unbelievably lucky with the weather and enjoyed what we unanimously declared to be the finest rock climb we had ever done.

Back at Chamonix, bad luck and bad manners on the part of a well-known German party, already involved in more serious disputes, foiled my attempts with Sutton on the Capucin and with E. A. Wrangham (A.C.) on the South Pillar of the Grand Dru. We completed three-quarters of the latter before retreating in the face of

ominous weather signs which, needless to say, were never realised. Meanwhile Blackshaw and Downes had polished off the north face of the Triolet in five hours.

G. J. Ritchie was at Courmayeur with John Wilkinson and Dennis Moore. On 24th July they climbed the Frontier Ridge of Mont Maudit from the Col de la Fourche with two Italians from Turin (one of whom was on the first ascent of the Grand Capucin). The snow scenery was magnificent, but the snow was avalanching from every steep slope and conditions were very dangerous. We had to climb the *gendarme* on the upper part of the ridge and, as the *rappel* to the *brèche* would have ended on a puff of unstable snow, we resorted to pendulum tactics and a Tyrolean traverse. The ascent to the summit was done on rock with *verglas* in thick fog. We reached the Aiguille du Midi Hut over Mont Blanc de Tacul in conditions of breaking crust in over 16 hours. I was told that this was the first ascent of the season. Then the weather broke and storms continued for a week. I cut my losses and returned by the Col de la Seigne.

T. W. Patey and F. R. Malcolm (Etchachan Club) had 10 days of mixed fortune in Chamonix in the middle of July. The first climb, the north face of the Aiguille du Plan, was also the best. It gave a fine 12-hour climb on mixed terrain—rock, snow and ice. In the upper part a prudent decision to adjourn to the iced rocks of the Aiguille des Deux Aigles and off the main line of the glacier was justified only minutes later by a colossal avalanche. Two days later, on a 15-hour round trip from Chamonix, they climbed the north-west (Ryan-Lochmatter) ridge of the Aiguille de Blaitière, a fine route that can be recommended, although the Vallot description is hard to follow. Malcolm then returned to the Cairngorms but Patey, now with L. S. Lovat, essayed the north-east face of Pain de Sucre. Things were going well till they observed another party falling 800 ft. down the Ryan-Lochmatter *couloir*. The descent and subsequent rescue were not without incident, but ultimately both injured men were in hospital that evening. Along with D. Briggs, Patey went up to try the Nant Blanc face of the Verte, but a thaw set in almost at the outset and forced a retreat. Similarly a rather speculative attempt on the north face of the Dru, which was sheathed in ice, did not get far. Ultimately the loss of a return railway ticket brought the holiday to an abrupt and sad termination.

L. S. Lovat, whose narrative interlocks with those of Tom Patey, A. Hendry and J. R. Marshall (J.M.C.S.), was in the Chamonix district from 19th July. They encountered much bad weather and other minor misfortunes. With Patey on 19th July on Ménégaux route on west face of the M., retreated under stone-fire of a party above. On 21st July with Patey was thwarted on north-east face of

Pain de Sucre by obligation to rescue two Englishmen who slid an alarming distance into the séracs from a position below his party. This was unfortunate as progress and conditions were alike good up to this point. On 24th July with Ron. Moseley (Rock and Ice Club) and a lady, they climbed the north ridge of the Peigne—*route intégrale* as first done in 1949 (1,300 ft. to the foot of the great *dièdre*, and then 700 ft. of very hard and sustained rock). The following week provided hopeless weather. On 31st July with Marshall up the République, where all succeeded up to the summit block, which demands lasso technique and more rope than the party carried. So they thought, anyway, having misread the Guide Book directions. Encountered avalanche conditions on the following day with Marshall when making for East Buttress of Pain de Sucre, so decided against attempt on *coulair* of access. It did avalanche half an hour later! On 4th August, after more bad weather, we suffered an enforced retreat from the east ridge of the Crocodile.

Hendry and Marshall went up the north-north-east ridge of the M., ascended to the Col du Triolet and climbed the Moine by the south-west ridge, descending by the north ridge (three separate expeditions).

G. G. Freeman was a member of a Climbers' Club party, climbing on the eastern fringe of the Mont Blanc massif from 31st July to 8th August. The party was based on La Fouly in the Val Ferret. Frank Monkhouse and Freeman (leading through) and two other C.C. ropes climbed the Grand Darrey from the Cabane Dufour by the south-east ridge and descended to the Cabane de Saleina. From this hut, Freeman, Monkhouse and Geoffrey Barker climbed the Grande Fourche by the south ridge, descending by the same route to Praz de Fort. Five members of the party climbed Mont Dolent from the Rifugio Élena via Col Petit Ferret, glacier Pré de Bar and the south ridge. Finally, in indifferent conditions, Freeman and others ascended the Aiguille de Triolet from the Rifugio C. Dalmazzi by the glacier de Triolet and the south ridge, returning to the hut after a 16-hour day. Little climbing was being done at this time and the presence of fresh snowfalls added to the interest of the route over unmarked glaciers.

(Freeman also spent a few weeks in June in the U.S.A. on business, without available time for climbing, but enjoying a trip to Lake George in the Adirondack Mountains. The numerous islands and steep, wooded mountains reminded him of Loch Lomond. On a previous visit in the autumn of 1953 he journeyed by train from Chicago to San Francisco by Cheyenne, Salt Lake City and Reno, with outstanding memories of the colouring and rock architecture of the Rockies and the beauty of the wooded valleys of the Sierra range. The return trip by air to New Orleans took him at a height of 18,000 ft. over Mount Whitney, 14,495 ft., the highest mountain in California.)



Easter 1955

THE OPENING OF THE LING HUT

(see page 77)

J. Clarkson, W. M. MacLeod (both Edinburgh J.M.C.S.) and R. J. Tanton were in the French Alps from 17th July to 7th August, and started at Chamonix. During the first week they traversed the Petits Charmoz, the Aiguille de l'M, and the Grands Charmoz, then across the Aiguille de Béranger, Domes de Miage and the Aiguille de Bionnassay to the Mont Blanc. With rather more ambitious plans, an ascent was made to the Refuge-Bivouac Périades, which is finely situated on a jagged rock arête, with tremendous views of the north face of the Grandes Jorasses. Then there were 5 days of more or less continued rain or snow. A retreat was made to the Réquin Hut and, 2 days later, a start for the Dent du Réquin. MacLeod then had to return home. Clarkson and Tanton went to the Dauphiné and enjoyed a week's climbing in perfect weather and conditions, with an ascent of the Tête Soud du Replat (south-west arête), traverse of the Rateau, the Pointe des Chamois (north arête) and the classic traverse of the Meije.

Malcolm Slessor writes as follows: With my wife and W. S. B. Paterson (J.M.C.S.) I camped at Argentière from 7th to 28th July. On 9th July from Albert I Hut we tried West Ridge of Aiguille du Tour, finding the rock rotten. On the 10th, Paterson and I traversed the Chardonnet by Arête Forbes in splendid weather and snow. Bad weather and Paterson's sprained ankle now held up climbing. On 15th July my wife and I ascended the Moine by the south face. Next day Paterson and I gained the Col des Cristaux. Finding the snow dangerous for the Mummery we traversed Les Courtes. Descent from Col de la Tour des Courtes impeded by avalanches forcing us to wait till dusk. On the 18th we climbed Rocher de la Corde of the Blaitière. G. F. Dutton then joined us, but bad weather held us up till the 23rd when Dutton, my wife and I climbed the Aiguille des Grands Montets from the valley, said to be the first British guideless ascent of the season. Next day Paterson and I traversed the Grépon.

Bad weather followed, so my wife and I left for North Italy and Jugoslavia. Dutton ascended the Argentière with A. G. Waldie a few days later.

From 15th to 24th August my wife and I had good weather in the Julian Alps, except on Triglav, which we climbed from Bohinj by the Koca na Dolici Hut. Skrlatica was climbed from Alajev Dom and Prisonk by the window from Ursic. Returning homewards we bagged the Gross Glockner from the motor road and finished with an attempt on the Tödi from the Findelen Hut, foiled by bad weather.

G. Graham Macphee had 3 weeks of unsettled weather in the Alps and all he climbed in the first 8 days was the Wellenkuppe. The second week he got the Dom and, with a guide, the Dürrenhorn-Hohberghorn traverse in a snowstorm, and the Weisshorn (hut, 2 A.M.; summit, 7.20 to 7.50 A.M.; back at hut, 10 A.M.). The third week, with some Swiss companions, he climbed the south-west

ridge of the Fusshorn (not to the top), the Aletschhorn, the Schienhorn, the Nesthorn, and crossed, in bad weather, the Gredetschjoch, the Baltschiederlücke and the Baltschiederjoch, having to abandon the traverse of the Bietschhorn owing to bad conditions and an impending storm.

In October Dr Macphee was in Greece. With a local guide he ascended Mount Parnassus, near Delphi, a long and tedious ascent. Rubber soles were very slippery on the smooth, marbly rock and scree, especially in mist and rain. Mount Olympus was on the programme, but not ascended as it demanded 3 days to itself.

J. Bell and H. Robertson (both Edinburgh J.M.C.S.) spent the middle fortnight of July in Arolla and Zermatt. From Arolla they climbed the Petite Dent de Veisivi, then proceeded to the Aiguilles Rouges Hut from which they traversed the south and centre peaks of the Aiguilles Rouges. From the Vignettes Hut, they climbed Mont Collon, and next day traversed Pigne d'Arolla and Mont Blanc de Seilon, returning to Arolla. From Zermatt they climbed the Matterhorn by the Hörnli Arête. Wet, thundery weather prevented further ascents.

R. Jeffrey and Mrs Jeffrey were in Zinal for 8 days from mid-July. In reasonably good weather they visited the upper levels of the Durand Glacier, the Col de la Lex, Roc de la Vache and Arpitetta Alp. Moving to Bel Alp, they got the Sparrhorn in their only good day, after which they went to Pontresina and visited Muottas Muraigl, Diavolezza, Maloja Pass and Lago Cavloccio.

Myles Morrison, finding himself at Interlaken with a week-end available but no climbing kit or companion, rang up the manager of the Hotel Jungfrau, Herr Sommer. The latter arranged everything, including equipment and guide, so that he had only to go up by train on Saturday and enjoy a delightful ascent of the Jungfrau the next day with gleaming fresh snow and solitude on the mountain. It was expensive but worth it.

Ross Higgins was with F. Spencer Chapman and J. C. van Meurs in the Central Pyrénées from 10th to 25th July. Apart from a thunderstorm each day, the weather was mainly fair, and they climbed the Pic d'Aneto, Perigorde, Hautgarde and other peaks in the Venasque, Porte d'Oo and Garvanie regions.

The huts were good and, on the Spanish side particularly, inexpensive.

Adam Watson and A. Watson (sen.) travelled by car to Finnish Lapland in July by the Gulf of Bothnia. The trip lasted 3 weeks and involved 3,300 miles of motoring. It was a very late spring with an unusual amount of snow on the mountains. They climbed on

unglaciated peaks up to 4,000 ft. in height in a country very rich in bird life. They were later in Lyngen Fjord, but serious climbing was impossible on account of very heavy snow cover and bad weather. A peak near Jeggevarre and one near Narvik were climbed. Later, A. Watson (sen.) went to Jotunheim and climbed Dyrhaugstind by the Bandet Ridge with Gunnar Wold (Norsk Tinderklub).

M. P. Cunningham and D. C. Hutchison (together with Miss M. Fleming and J. Campbell, non-members) spent 12 days at Turtagro Hotel in the Jotunheim after 6th August. (Hotel reconstructed and to be recommended.) Storen was climbed by several routes from the "Hjornet." Cunningham and Hutchison traversed the Skagastolsryggen from Nebett to Storen and subsequently combined a traverse of the Maradal Ridge with this route. On the south-west ridge of Storen they climbed an 800-ft. buttress, to the right of J. S. Orr's route of 1951. It may possibly be a first ascent!

NOTES.

Accident List, 1955-1956.

19th March.—Aubrey Denton, O.U.M.C. Injury to leg. Ben Nevis.

15th May.—John Low. Fractured leg. Meall a' Bhuiridh. Ski-ing.

22nd May.—Fred Haddon, 21 years, E.U.M.C.; Robert Woodburn, 21 years. Both fatal. Tower Ridge, Ben Nevis.

7th August.—Grace Hamilton, Injuries. Cir Mhor, Arran.

30th August.—Rodney Smith, 17 years. Head injury. Clachaig Gully.

4th September.—Graham Willison. Head injuries. Crowberry Gully, Buachaille Etive Mor.

24th September.—Rex Aldridge. General injuries. A. Nightingale. Injured knee. An Gearanach.

29th December.—Four cadets of E.U.O.T.C. General injuries. Coire Cas.

1st January 1956.—R. W. B. Morris, S.M.C. Injuries. Buachaille Etive.

2nd January.—Duncan McNicol, J.M.C.S. Multiple injuries. Bidean nam Bian.

Two Long Hill Traverses.

Two long hill traverses, one of the Scottish 4,000-ft. tops and the other of the nine Cairngorms above 3,750 ft., were effected in the summers of 1954 and 1955.

On the first the party left Achintee at 9.23 A.M. on 30th June 1955

and reached Glenmore Lodge at 6.22 A.M. on 2nd July 1955. The route was by Ben Nevis, Carn Mor Dearg, Aonach Beag, Corrour siding, Bealach Dubh, Dalwhinnie, Glen Tromie, Glen Feshie Lodge, Great Moss, Cairn Toul, Braeriach, Macdhuil and Cairngorm. An interesting point was the time taken from Cairn Toul to Glenmore Lodge—7 hours 32 minutes. During the expedition ten tins of irradiated milk and 6 lb. of Glucose "D" were the mainstay. The former caused a certain amount of alimentary disturbance towards the end but was an undoubted success.

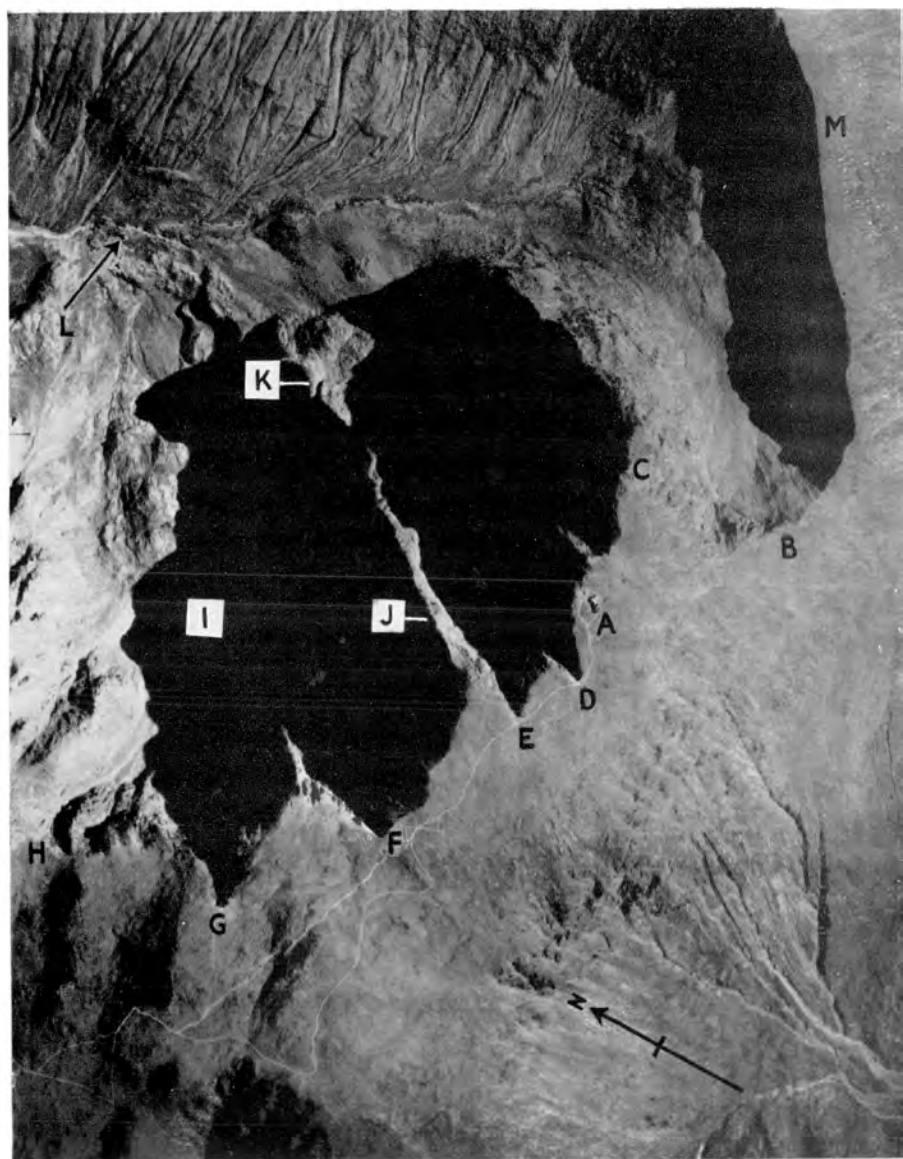
In the nine Cairngorms expedition two of us left Glenmore Lodge at midnight on 5th June 1954. The route was by Cairngorm, Ben a' Bhuid, Ben A'an, Ben a' Bhuid, Ben Mheadhoin, Derry Cairngorm, Macdhuil, Ben Bhrotain, Cairn Toul and Braeriach—the latter being reached at 11.57 P.M. the same day. We had previously traversed the seven highest tops and returned to base—Glenmore—in 22 hours 42 minutes on 17th to 18th May 1953. The party on the first trip consisted of William Brown (E.U.M.C.), William Wallace (J.M.C.S.), Hugh Simpson (E.U.M.C.), and on the second consisted of Alastair Bonar (G.U.M.C.) and Hugh Simpson.

The Carn Mor Dearg Arête of Ben Nevis: Warning Posts.—Again referring readers to Dr Duff's article "Midwinter Ice and Boots" (*Journal* 1954, p. 287) and a brief note on direction posts (*J.* 1955, p. 389), it is clear that these posts erected by Dr Duff did not prevent a fatal accident on 19th December 1954 when five naval cadets lost their lives by sliding over the edge and over rocks into upper Coire Leis.

Five members of the H.M.S. *Fulmar* Mountaineering Club have now erected four posts, 6 ft. high, and two tripod warning notices marked "Danger. Keep to the Posts." The uppermost notice is 150 yds. from the summit cairn on a bearing 120° (magnetic). The correct heading for the arête is 140° (mag.). The posts are about 20 yds. apart on a bearing of 160° (mag.). The two 3-ft. wooden posts previously erected by Dr Duff have been moved to positions between the top warning notice and the first post. (*From a note received from D. Harding, Lieut., R.N.*) (See aerial photo of Summit Plateau of Ben Nevis.)

Torridon Sandstone on Beinn Eighe.—G. H. Kitchen (J.M.C.S.) states that this rock forms the summit of the small unnamed top about one-quarter mile west of Spidean Coire nan Clach and extends as far as the lowest point between these tops. In the *Guide* (1953 edition), page 38, it is claimed that the sandstone only attains ridge level on Beinn Eighe at the col between Sail Mhor and Coinneach Mhor.

The Munros and Tops.—Miles Hutchinson of Kinlochleven writes to announce a double event—the completion of the Munros on 15th August 1955 and of the Tops on the ensuing 20th November.



THE SUMMIT PLATEAU OF BEN NEVIS

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The task was unwittingly commenced in the year 1938 at the age of 12. Dr G. G. Macphee finished all his Tops at the 1955 Easter Meet (see p. 77).

Glencoe and Ardgour Guide.—The compilation of the second edition is now proceeding. All MSS. are required to be in the hands of the General Editor (R. G. Inglis) by May 1956 and all *addenda* by October. The District Editor, L. S. Lovat (40 Hillhead Street, Glasgow, W.2.), would welcome notes of routes, comments and criticism on the first edition and any photographs which would be of assistance for making diagrams.

THE SUMMIT PLATEAU OF BEN NEVIS

A composite picture, from two aerial photographs, of the summit of Ben Nevis.

A, Observatory.	H, No. 4 Gully.
B, Start of Carn Mor Dearg Arête.	I, Coire na Ciste.
C, Summit of N.E. Buttress.	J, Great Tower, Tower Ridge.
D, Gardyloo Gully.	K, Douglas Boulder, Tower Ridge.
E, Tower Gully.	L, C.I.C. Hut.
F, No. 2 Gully.	M, Carn Mor Dearg Arête.
G, No. 3 Gully.	

This photograph shows that the obvious crest line of the crags near the Observatory runs towards the N.E. Buttress and not towards the Carn Mor Dearg Arête. If climbers searching for the arête find themselves mistakenly approaching the summit of the N.E. Buttress they should return to the Observatory and follow the line of approach to the arête recommended in the climber's "Guide to Ben Nevis," as the traverse from C to B is over sloping ground which is known to be dangerous, especially under winter conditions. The recommended route (130° true bearing from the Observatory) is the direct line between A and B on the photograph.

The north point shown is only approximate.

LIBRARY, BOOKS AND JOURNALS.

A Selection of Some 900 British and Irish Mountain Tops.
Compiled by Wm. McKnight Docherty. (124 pp., 9 panoramas.)
For private circulation only, but a copy has been presented to the Club and is in the Library.

This is a list of 364 independent 2,500-foot mountains in the British Isles together with their 405 subsidiary tops, as well as 99 mountains and tops of interest below 2,500 feet. The Munros of England, Wales and Ireland, together with their tops, are also included. Map references of every eminence and numerous observations on col heights are also given, including complete index. The mountain panoramas are quite remarkable in their extent and quality; each is composed from no less than between seven and fourteen component prints, embracing generally over 140 degrees in extent and in one case 225 degrees. This publication by our fellow member is a worthy addition to the Tables of the Scottish mountains already published by the Club.

R. G. INGLIS.

THE OLD CLIMBER.

I TO the hills will lift mine eyes
Where once my feet have trod,
And in that vision that ne'er dies,
And bears the soul to climb the skies
To temples high of God.

When laggard feet and failing heart
Forbid the slopes on high,
Pictures and print can still impart,
And mem'ries they again can start,
To feed the inward eye.

By J. S. M. JACK on seeing the splendid panoramas in "900 British and Irish Mountain Tops" by W. McK. Docherty.

The Ben Nevis Races, a booklet written and published by Charles Steel of Fort William (1s. net.), has very complete details of all races up the mountain from 1895 to 1955, while a sketch of the course has been drawn by Robert Anderson. Last year there were thirty competitors, including men from English cross-country clubs. The course from the Fort William Playing Fields to the summit and back is almost 14 miles. The record time by Brian Kearney of Fort William—1 hour, 47 minutes—seems almost incredible.

Starlight and Storm. By Gaston Rébuffat, translated by Wilfred Noyce and Sir John Hunt. (Dent, 18s., 122 pp., 37 illustrations and 6 diagrams). This book, with a foreword by Sir John Hunt, describes

the ascent of six great north faces of the Alps—Grandes Jorasses (by the Walker Spur and also by the Central Spur), Piz Badile, the Drus, the Matterhorn, Cima Grande di Lavaredo and the Eiger.

It is an exciting and fascinating book which could be considered as the third member of a trilogy of modern Alpine adventure, starting with "Climbs on Mont Blanc" by the Lépinceys, then "Climbs of my Youth" by André Roch, and now this book, which is surely about the last word in the overcoming of the supreme problems of Alpine technique. Of course, mechanised methods are used, but evidently where absolutely necessary; and serious risks are incurred, but the author claims that every necessary preparation had been made and no undue risks run. The final comment on the North face of the Matterhorn is revealing—"What disagreeable climbing, and yet what a splendid climb!" The most fascinating chapters are those on the Jorasses and the Eigerwand. On the latter climb they had foul weather, avalanches and *verglas*. The climbers won through by a miracle of endurance, but surely by a small enough margin, which might well have gone the other way.

The diagrams, in association with the photo illustrations, are clear and adequate, but the style of the writing is so vivid, simple and enthusiastic that illustrations are almost unnecessary for a mountaineering reader.

K2, The Savage Mountain. By Houston and Bates. (Collins. 25s. 192 pp., 22 plates, 1 diagram.)

The Ascent of K2. By Professor Ardito Desio. (Elek Books. 21s. 239 pp., numerous half tones.)

The first of these came too late for the 1955 *Journal*. A thrilling story of a glorious failure and a noble attempt to rescue a comrade will long live in mountaineering history. The successful Italian expedition of 1954 was on a large scale, complete with scientific detachments. From its base camp at 17,700 feet to the summit, 28,250 feet, reached by a party of two on 31st July, no less than nine camps were used, many being small transit camps on ledges of the Abruzzi Ridge. Oxygen was reserved for the final stages, but the supply gave out on the last lap. Much bad weather was encountered but, although one man died from illness early on, good weather enabled the final parties to complete the job and return safely. It is a good book, well illustrated.

East of Katmandu. By Tom Weir. (Oliver & Boyd. 16s. 138 pp., 90 illustrations, 2 maps.)

An absorbing and colourful account of the first Scottish Nepal Expedition in the inimitable style of the author. Reading a book like this almost makes one feel that one has been with them, so real does it seem. A most enjoyable account of a new region, its people, and its mountaineering possibilities.

The Ascent of Rum Doodle. By W. E. Bowman. (Max Parrish. 10s. 6d. 141 pp., 16 illustrations.)

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Library Additions from December 1955 to April 1956.

(Books reviewed are also in the Library.)

Road to Rakaposhi. By George Band. (Hodder & Stoughton. 192 pp., 47 plates, 4 maps.)

Mountain World, 1955. By M. Kurz. (Allen & Unwin. 222 pp., 55 plates and maps.)

Commando Climber. By Mike Banks. (Dent. 240 pp., 20 plates, sketches, and maps.)

Rock Climbs in Norway. Norway Travel Association. (Addendum.)

Avalanche Handbook. U.S. Forest Service. (146 pp., 41 photos, etc.)

Mountaineering. By Janet Adam Smith. (National Book League, Reader's Guides—a bibliography. 24 pp.)

Ski-ing in Scotland. Scottish Ski Club. (60 pp., numerous maps and illustrations.)

We beg to acknowledge with thanks the receipt of the following Journals of kindred clubs, most of these by exchange arrangements: *Wayfarers' Club Journal*, 1954; *Mountaineering*, 1955; National Trust for Scotland Annual Report, 1955; *Tararua Tramper*, 1955; *Tararua Annual*, 1955; *Fell and Rock C.C. Journal*, 1955; *Alpine Journal*, 1955; *Ladies' Alpine Club Journal*, 1956; *Etchachan Club Journal*, 1955; *Polar Record*, 1956; *Sierra Club Bulletin*, 1955; *Scottish Ski Club Journal*, 1955; *Appalachia*, 1955; *Mitteilungen des D.A.*, 1955; 1956; *Jahrbuch des D.A.*, 1955; *Rivista Mensile C.A.I.*, 1955; *Cairngorm C. Journal*, 1956; *New Zealand Alpine Journal*, 1955; *Sheffield U.M.C. Journal* (An excellent article on climbing ethics, "Out of the Wasteland," by A. Shutt), December 1955.



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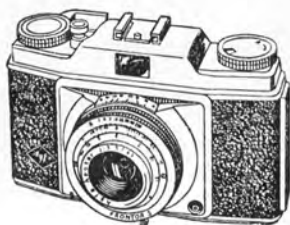
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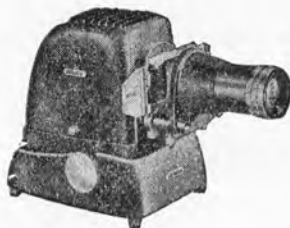
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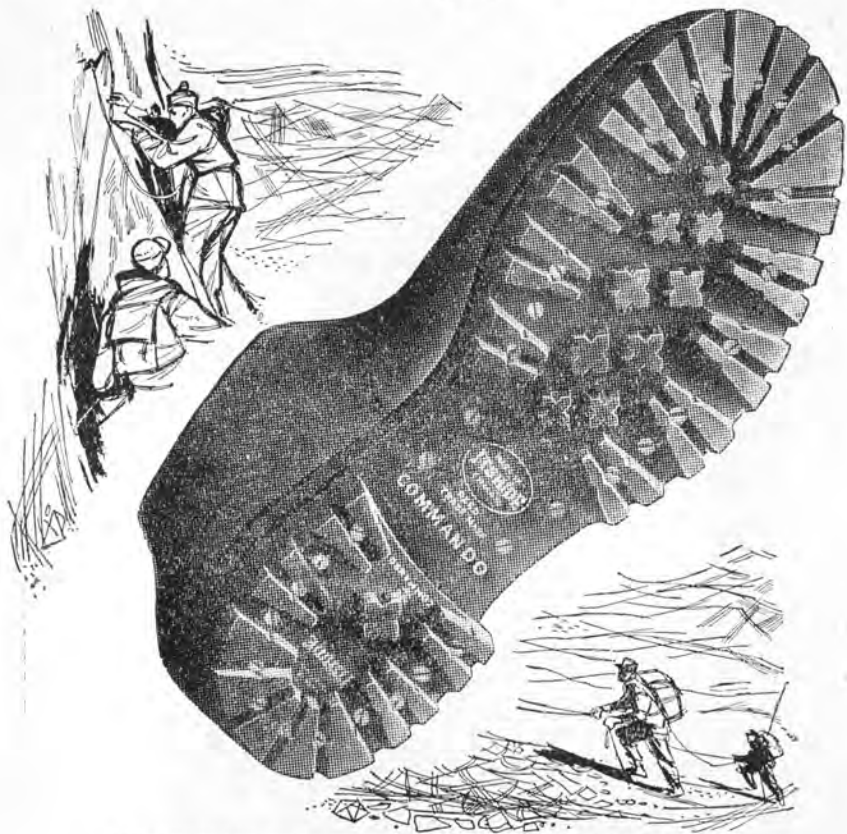
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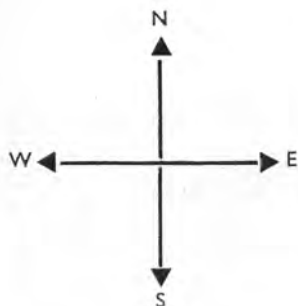
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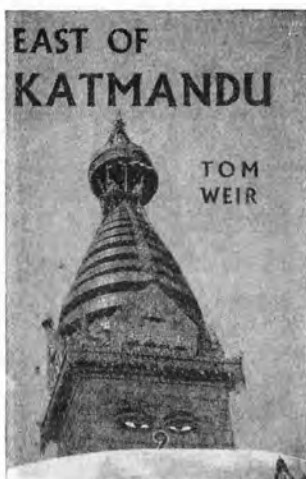
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CONTENTS.

(Names of Authors in Italics.)

	PAGE
King George VI	1
The Forgotten Corrie. <i>By C. M. Dixon</i>	2
New Year Howffs. <i>By B. H. Humble</i>	14
Alone on Ben More, Mull. <i>By Ian W. Craig</i>	19
Norwegian Mountains:	
Storen in Mist. <i>By J. Stewart Orr</i>	21
Lofoten. <i>By Tom Weir</i>	26
Stedtind. <i>By Richard A. Brown</i>	29
Return. (Verse.) <i>By Wilfred Noyce</i>	34
New Ways on Beinn Lair	35
List of Scottish Mountains 2,500 Feet and under 3,000 Feet	
in Height. <i>By J. Rooke Corbett</i>	45, 136
Freedom of the Hills. (Verse.) <i>By D. J. Fraser</i>	52
The Corroul Tragedy	53
I Love the Hills. (Verse.) <i>By J. S. M. Jack</i>	76
Winter Climbing on Lochnagar and the Cairngorms. <i>By</i> <i>Wm. D. Brooker</i>	101
Parallel Gully "B," Lochnagar. <i>By Tom Patcy</i>	115
A Far Cry to Lochow. <i>By J. F. A. Burt</i>	120
A Cairngorm Odyssey. <i>By R. B. Frere</i>	124
Some Observations on "Munro's Tables." <i>By R. M. Gall</i> <i>Inglis</i>	132
Third on the Rope. <i>By G. S. Ritchie</i>	137
Back Bearings on Merrick. <i>By I. W. Craig</i>	142
Looking After your Climbing Boots. <i>By Fred Lang</i>	146
The Meteorology of the Scottish Mountains. <i>By K. K. Hunter</i>	193
Nepal Himalaya, 1952. <i>By Tom Weir</i>	214
Beinn a' Bhaile. <i>By R. W. MacLennan</i>	221
Climbing Munros makes one Fit. <i>By P. L. J. Heron</i>	223
Notes on Climbing in Harris. <i>By G. Scott Johnstone</i>	225
The Kingdom of the Snow. (Verse.) <i>By D. J. Fraser</i>	254
On Ancient Hills. (Verse.) <i>By Jeff Mason</i>	254
Mountain Lover. (Verse.) <i>By K. G. P. Hendrie</i>	275
Photography for Mountaineers. <i>By D. J. Fraser</i>	293
The Forgotten Corrie Again. <i>By C. M. Dixon</i>	307
Attempt on Ushba. <i>By Harold Raeburn</i>	315

	PAGE
First Aid and Mountain Rescue. <i>By A. I. L. Maitland</i>	327
On Disappointing Summers. <i>By Professor G. Manley</i>	334
We Sail Again. <i>By E. W. Hodge</i>	342
Opening of the Ling Hut	368
Epistle to Tom Mackinnon. (Verse.) <i>By Boab</i>	391

ILLUSTRATIONS—

Crack of Dawn, Sgurr Mhic Coinnich	1
The Cliffs of Coireachan Ruadha. <i>Sketch</i>	5
Fluted Buttress, Sgurr Mhic Choinnich	8
Beinn Airidh a' Charr	8
Rulten, Lofoten	32
Fhada Cliffs, Beinn Lair. <i>Sketch</i>	37
Fionn Cliff, Beinn Lair. <i>Photos and Sketch</i>	41
A' Mhaighdean, Pillar Buttress. <i>Sketch</i>	63
The Ben Lui Range from above Inversnaid	73
Beinn Dubhchraig	80
Loch Laggan and Creag Meaghaidh	101
Lochnagar in Winter	108
Shadow Buttress "A," Lochnagar	118
Parallel Gully "B," Lochnagar (lower half)	118
Slopes of Beinn Dubhchraig	123
Rothiemurchus Forest, Lower Glen Einich	125
Coigach Peaks from An Stac	132
Sgorr na Caorach, Cioch, N. Wall Route	149
Creag an Dubh Loch, N.W. Gully	149
Creag an Dubh Loch: Central Gully, False Gully, N.W. Gully	156
Garbh-Bheinn Ardgour, S. Wall of Great Ridge	156
Lochan na h'Earba, Creag a' Chuir	175
Newtonmore Meet, 1953	178
Mackinnon's Peak, Nepal Himalaya	193
Broken Spectre, Liathach	200
The 20,000-foot Peak of South Rolwaling	209
Nepal Himalaya. <i>Sketch Map</i>	215
Gauri Sankar	216
New Year on Stob Ghabhar	233
Chimney Arête, Cobbler, N. Peak	240
Cluanie Once More!	250
Climbing Friends—Ling and Glover	255
The Saddle	264
On Beinn Laoigh	273
The Summit of Stuc a' Chroin	293
On the Carn Mor Dearg Arête	300
The Cliffs of Bealach Buttress	309
The Routes of Bealach Buttress. <i>Two Sketches and Key</i>	310, 311
Ushba from the South-west	316

Contents.

vii

ILLUSTRATIONS—continued.

PAGE

Ushba. <i>Sketch Map</i>	320
Summit of North Rona	341
Whiten Head, Sutherland	341
The Clam, Lochnagar	348
Douglas Gully, Lochnagar, the 200-foot Upper Wall	348
A' Cheir Gorm, Foinaven	357
Harry MacRobert	364
Cairngorms Nature Reserve, Map of	388

IN MEMORIAM—

Geo. P. Baker	71
Robt. S. Low	73
Jas. E. McLaren	74
Lord Macmillan	169
Louis St Clair Bartholomew	170
John C. James and Crichton Allan (J.M.C.S.)	172
William N. Ling	255
George T. Glover	257
Harrison Barrow	259
Hugh J. Craig	260
James McCoss	261
J. J. St Clair	262
Herbert Tomkinson; Cecil E. E. Riley; J. Neil Orr; John E. Blow; C. G. Andrews	262
Harry MacRobert	364
Walter Barrow	366
Stair A. Gillon	367
J. Walter Buchan; J. C. Maclaurin; R. T. Sellar	368

MOUNTAIN ACCIDENTS	97, 190, 286, 385
NEW CLIMBS	58, 147, 230, 347
NOTES AND EXCURSIONS	98, 190, 287, 387
S.M.C. AND J.M.C.S. ABROAD	88, 184, 276, 378
BOOKS AND JOURNALS	99, 191, 291, 390
PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB	77, 173, 263, 369
J.M.C.S.	85, 181, 272, 375

INDEX.

The following abbreviations have been used:—

ar.	= Arête.
asc.	= ascent, ascended.
B.	= Ben, Beinn.
Bidean	= Bidean nam Bian.
Buachaille	= Buachaille Etive Mor.
Butt.	= buttress.
C.	= Carn, Cairn.
chim.	= chimney.
co.	= corrie, Coire.
Cr.	= Creag.
desc.	= described, description.
diag.	= diagram.
fr.	= from.
Gl.	= Glen.
Gu.	= gully.
ill.	= illustrated, illustration.

L.	= Loch.
M.	= Meall.
mt.	= mountain, Mount.
mtg.	= mountaineering.
necess.	= necessary, necessity.
obit.	= obituary.
pinn.	= pinnacle.
pk.	= peak.
ref.	= reference, referred.
reqd.	= required.
sect.	= section.
sep.	= separate.
Sg.	= Sgurr.
trav.	= traverse.
var.	= variation.

ACCIDENTS, 97, 190, 286, 385

Alone on Ben More, Mull, 19

A' Mhaighdean, new climbs, 63, 64

An Caisteal, Coolin, N. Butt., 239

Andrews, C. G., in mem., 262

Aonach Beag, new climbs, 166

Ardgour, Garbh Bheinn, new climbs, 167, 358

S. Wall, photo, 156

Ardgour, Sron a' Garbh Co. Bhig, climbs on, 358

Back Bearings on Merrick, 142

Baker, Geo. P., in mem., 71

Barra, Muldoanich, 345

Barrow, H., in mem., 259

Barrow, W., in mem., 366

Bartholomew, L. St C., in mem., 170

B. Airidh a' Charr, climbs on, 65; photo, 8

B. Arcuil, S. Rib, 66

B. a' Bhaile, 221

B. Bhan, Applecross, A' Chioch, N. Gu., 231

B. Bhrotain, Fingal's Butt., 251

B. a' Bhuird, new climbs, 245, 249, 349

B. a' Chasgain Mor, new climbs, 148, 356

B. Dearg Mor, new climbs on, 149, 233

B. Dubheraig, photos, 80, 123

B. Eighe, Co. Mhic Fhearchair, 354

B. Fhada, Kintail, new climbs, 70, 153

B. Klibreck, new climbs on, 191

B. Lair, New Ways on, 35

B. Lair, new climbs, 35, 150, 234

cliffs and route photos, 37, 41

B. Lui, Couloir, photo, 273

Range from Inversnaid, photo, 73

B. Macdhuil, new climbs, 158, 250, 351

B. a' Mhuinidh, new climbs, 62, 235

B. Nevis, new climbs, 69, 244, 357

Descent to Carn Mor Dearg Arête in winter, note and warning, 287, 389

B. Tarsuinn, Arran, Caisteal Co. nam Meann, 168

Bidean nam Bian—

Aonach Dubh, new climbs, 68, 162, 241, 363

Gearr Aonach, new climbs, 241, 361

St. Co. nam Beith, Red Caves Gu., 362

St. Co. nan Lochan, new climbs, 164, 243, 362

Winter ascents, 360

Blow, J. E., in mem., 262

- Boots, Care of**, 146
and midwinter ice, 287
Braeriach, new climbs, 67, 252, 353
Broad Cairn, Coffin Chimney, 158
Brocken Spectre, photo, 200
Buachaille, new climbs, 159, 191, 239, 360
Buchan, J. W., in mem., 368
- Cairngorm Odyssey**, 124
Cairngorm, Coire an't-Sneachda, new climbs, 246, 353
Cairngorms, Cuillin seen from ?, 98, 388
Nature Reserve and Map, 387
Carn Etchachan, new climbs, 112, 352
Carn Mor Dearg Arête, notes, 287, 389; photo, 300
Caucasus Range—
Attempt on Ushba, map and photo, 315
Cir Mhor, Rosa Pinn., E. Wall, 70
Climbing in Harris, 225
Climbing Munros makes one Fit, 223
Cluanie Inn, photo, 250
Cobbler, N. Pk., Chim. ar., photo, 240
Coigach Peaks from An Stac, photo, 132
Coireachan Ruadha, Skye, new climbs, 11, 237, 307, 310
Corbett's Tables of the 2,500-foot Mountains of Scotland, 45
note on, 136
Corrwall Cliffs, climbing on, 288
Corrour Tragedy, 53
Creag—
a' Chuir, Ardverikie, photo, 175
a' Co. Etchachan, The Bastion, 246, 351
an Dubh Loch, new climbs, 68, 156, 347; photos, 149, 156
Meaghaidh, photo, 101
Shomairle, Sutherland, new climb, 236
Craig, H. J., in mem., 260
Craig Herrich, Caenlochan Glen, new climb, 247
Cuillin Main Ridge Traverse times, 388
Cuillins seen from Cairngorms ?, 98, 388
- Disappointing Summers**, 334
- Epistle to Tom Mackinnon**, verses, 391
Exposure tragedies, 56
- Far Cry to Lochow**, 120
First Aid and Mountain Rescue, 327
Foinaven, Cr. Dionard, new climbs, 67, 355
A' Cheir Gorm, new climbs and photo, 356
Forgotten Corrie, The, 2, 307
Freedom of the Hills, verses, 52
Fuar Toll, Mainrachean Butt., 152
- GARBH BHEINN, Ardgour**, climbs, 167, 243, 358
Gt. Ridge, S. Wall, photo, 156
Gillon, Stair A., in mem., 367
Glen Einich, photo, 125
Glen Lyon, shielings in, 289
Glover, G. T., in mem. and photo, 255
- HANDA**, notes on, 344
Harris, new climbs, 225-229
Himalaya, Nepal (1952), 214
Gauri Sankar, photo, 216
Mackinnon's Pk., photo, 193
S. Rolwaling, photo, 209
- I Love the Hills**, verses, 76
- J.M.C.S.**, 85, 181, 272, 375
- KING George VI**, in mem., 1
Kingdom of the Snow, verses, 254
- LIATHACH**, new climbs, 152, 190, 191
Ling, W. N., in mem. and photo, 255
Loch Avon, Kiwi Slabs, 247
Lochan na h-Earba, photo, 175
Lochnagar, Clam, photo, 348
Douglas Gully, photo, 348
New climbs, 67, 153, 244, 248, 348
Parallel Gully "B", 115; photo, 118
Shadow Butt. "A", photo, 118
Winter Climbing on, 101; photo, 108

- Lomond Hills, Carlin Maggie, asc., 98
 Low, Robt. S., in mem., 73
- Mackinnon, Tom, Epistle to,** verses, 391
 Maclaren, Jas. E., in mem., 74
 Maclaurin, J. C., in mem., 368
 Macmillan, Lord, in mem., 169
 MacRobert, H., in mem. and photo, 364
 Maoile Lunndaidh (Monar), new climb, 357
 Marsco, W.S.W. Crag, Cent. Butt., 239
 Mayar, Co. Fee, new climb, 159
 Meall Gorm, Applecross, new climb, 232
Merrick, Back Bearings on, 142
Meteorology of the Scottish Mts., 193
 Midwinter Ice and Boots, 287
 Mingulay, 344
Mountain Rescue and First Aid, 327
Munro's Tables, Observations on, 132
 Munros and tops, ascent of, 289, 389
- New Ways on Beinn Lair,** 35
New Year Howffs, 14
Norwegian Mountains, 21
 Rulten, Lofoten, photo, 32
- On Ancient Hills,** verse, 254
 Orr, J. N., in mem., 262
- Photography for Mountaineers,** 293
- QUINAG, Climb on Butt. to E. of**
 Barrel Butt., 67
- Return,** verses, 34
 Reviews, 99, 191, 291, 390
 Riley, C. E. E., in mem., 262
 Rona, North, notes on, 342
 summit, photo, 341
 Ruadh Stac Mor, new climbs, 148
 Rum, new climbs, 61
- SADDLE, The,** photo, 264
 St Clair, J. J., in mem., 262
 Scottish Mountaineering Club—
 Abroad, 88, 184, 276, 378
 Annual Meeting and Dinner, 81,
 177, 269, 372
 Ling Hut, opening, 368
 Meets, 77, 173, 263, 370
 photo at Newtonmore, 178
 Sellar, R. T., in mem., 368
 Sgor, Sgurr—
 Banachdich, new climbs, 58, 237
 na Caorach, new climbs, 151, 230
 Cioch, N. Wall, photo, 149
 Dearg, new climbs, 166, 238
 nam Fiannaidh, Clachaig Gu., 243
 na Laocainn, Torr na Iolair, new
 climbs, 65
 a' Mhadaidh, new climbs, 59, 165
 Mhic Coinnich, **The Forgotten**
 Corrie, 2, 237, 307
 Coireachan Ruadha cliffs, sketch
 of climbs, 5, 310, 311; photo,
 309
 Crack of Dawn, photo, 1
 Fluted Butt., photo, 8
 Sgumain, new climbs, 58, 61
 Thearlaich, Quiver, 61
 Sgoran Dubh, 3 Butt., new climb, 159
 Sr. a' Garbh Co. Bhig, Ardgour, new
 climbs, 358
 na Ciche, new climbs, 59, 61, 166,
 236
 Stac Polly, new climb, 235
 Stob Ghabhar, Upper Couloir Key-
 hole, 98, 164
 New Year on, photo, 233
 Strath na Shellag, new climbs, 148,
 232, 234
 Stuc a' Chroin, summit, photo, 293
Summers, Disappointing, 334
- TEALLACH, An, Sgurr Ruadh,** new
 climb, 233
Third on the Rope, 137
 Tomkinson, H., in mem., 262
 Treshnish Isles, Dun Cruit, 345
- We Sail Again,** 342
Winter Climbing on Lochnagar
 and the Cairngorms, 101
 Whiten Head, Sutherland, caves and
 stacks, 343; photo, 341

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