

THE SCOTTISH
MOUNTAINEERING
CLUB JOURNAL

VOL. XXVII.

MAY 1960

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EDITED BY G. J. DUTTON

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SEVEN SHILLINGS AND SIXPENCE





J. D. B. Wilson

Dr Bell takes an easier chair, after 24 years.

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EDITORIAL

LET there be no qualms about beginning this volume with an Editorial. The last one occurred over twenty years ago. Editors, especially new ones, may be permitted a personal excursion at such decent intervals.

The major excuse for this particular one is, or has been since 5th December 1959, two-fold. The two subjects are Dr J. H. B. Bell and the *Journal*, until that date virtually indivisible in the minds of most of us. Now these formidable institutions may be treated separately. Let us attempt the younger first.

Dr Bell shall have no statistical pennings here, no dates, lists of climbs, feats done. He has passed beyond tedious chronicle into legend, almost into myth. Orion, the Long Climb, Diamond Buttress, Sgoran Dubh—routes classical and routes micaceously vegetable crowd out of the memory. And we know his influence in opening up the hills of Scotland (not just those of Glasgow or of Aberdeen) has been extraordinary, and his ventilation of Scottish climbing circles no less forthright. That glinting eye, clay pipe and black Clackmannan shag, those uncompromising boots and knickerbockers, and—above all—those unerringly pungent and deflatory comments, have combined with more easily recorded achievements to place Dr Bell among the greatest of the Giants with whom this Club has been so liberally blessed.

It is hardly surprising that these qualities have soaked into the *Journal* during the past twenty-four years. When he entered office he flung open windows immediately and presented articles linking Scottish mountaineering in all its aspects with the craft as practised abroad. He followed this up with histories of the Club and of climbing in Scotland, and with most valuable surveys of other Scottish clubs, whether suitably pedigreed or not. This way there came into these pages the first hints and glimpses of that Revolution in Mountaineering whose unctuous recounting now

seems obligatory to all clambering scribblers. Anyway, Dr Bell was aware from the first of those vagrant hordes unwashed, unshaven and chip-eating, sleepers in howffs and travellers in fish-lorries, those who—in their unselfconscious days—are the salt of the sport; the *Journal* benefitted accordingly, their climbs and doings appearing alongside white-collar accounts and together with those less spectacular (yet surely admirable) adjustments of clinometers and discreet doubtings whether X is visible from Y , or *vice versa*.

It is for maintaining the catholicity of the *Journal* over such a difficult period in the sport, for catering so well for both Salvationist and Ultramontane over twenty-four years and at the same time for so keeping up with Developments that we can swallow, in a couple of contemporary gulps, Greenland, Himalayas, Slessorian equations and Artificial Greeks—it is for holding all these different ropes so firmly, so competently and so regardless of distraction that every member of the Club is indebted to Dr Bell and that his successor in office deems it his first duty to record here his sincere gratitude and humble admiration.

Now for the *Journal*. This is, as we all know, a Most Expensive item. How Much It Costs The Individual Member (that harassed entity) has been well driven into our ears by the jumpings up and down of sundry mathematical gentlemen at the Annual General Meeting and even by our own Pocket Calculator. Forgetting how much it costs, we can ask—how much is it worth? The present writer believes it is worth very much more than even the most lugubrious figure created by the aforementioned Hon. Treasurer, and that is why, on Dr Bell's retiral, he ventured to take over, for a time at least and however ineffectively, that Guardianship of the Club's Fourth Dimension, the Editorial Chair.

Founded by J. G. Stott in 1890, the *Journal* aimed to provide members of the Club with information about the hills of Scotland and about the exploring of them. When complete exploration was achieved a speedy (and merciful) decease was forecast. As years passed, gross exploration blew itself into the Guides and became exhausted, but the *Journal* continued. Its own decease was indefinitely postponed because those of its contributors could not be; as, one by one, the founders and Early Lights of the Club passed away the only permanent record of their quirks, quarrels and Remarkable Adventures remained in the *Journal*. Only in the *Journal* can we now venture, alpenstocked and cautious, on to a convincingly virginal Buachaille; can we enjoy that supreme

Victorian event, the Yacht Meet of Easter 1897, with its desperate race back off the hill—not before the train left or the last transport rattled down the road—but before the Presidential Yacht sireded finality and proceeded majestically out of Loch Nevis. Again, herding his anxious cylinders up Glencoe, what literate member can forget those first Motoring Meets of the S.M.C., the triumphant gleam of brass and spectacles, the hisses of steam and satisfaction, as the Renault and the Arrol-Johnston of Gibbs and of Dr Inglis Clark breasted the heathery terrors of General Wade and drew up beneath a vulnerable Bidean? Nor the jeers of the 60-mile-peddallers, the tweed-wrapped-horse-tail-viewers and the railway-timetable-clutchers at this new, this Edinburgh, Artificial Aid to decent, clean, climbing? And what well-tailored renegade, adjusting his safety-bindings above Dead Man's Gulch, will not feel his conscience twitch to recall Naismith's slidings in 1892 across the Campsies and his grave prediction that 'in the Alps it is not unlikely that the sport may eventually become popular.'

But enough of whiskied, fire-poking reminiscence; sufficient that these *Journals* take us back to climbing in a Scotland that grows subtly more and more different. A slip in a burn and a wet seat provoke the same reactions in 1890 as in 1960: so does the final pitch; we might ourselves be scrambling with the party, even to the old breeks and doubtful hat—we know all the characters so well. But the country is so different. We are still in post-glacial Scotland, true, but the ice has just gone. Corries are new and mysterious, we poke heads into them for the first time, we shout enthusiastically, wield binoculars and theodolites, stuff pockets with stones and moss. And rush back and write about it in the *Journal*. It is impossible for anyone, even the most nonchalant *habitué* of the Upper Baltoro Glacier, not to be moved by this revelation of to-day's obvious. And to draw the correct conclusion.

The old *Journals*, then, are Well Worth It. They widen our climbing horizons, put us in perspective, etc., etc. We all agree on that, and must remember to read them sometime. But: what *they* are for us—are *we* for our successors? Is the *Journal* to-day as potentially valuable as it was of old? Exploration in Scotland, is it now anything more than the avoiding of someone else's crux; its literature anything else than needfully minute directions through vertical rights-of-way, with these being given names as facetiously irrelevant as possible? And feats outside Scotland, if important, are surely best read about in the International Glossies; if unimportant, are interesting enough for the local *Glasgow Courier*? Either way, the excitement of the early *Journals* is lost for good. So back to the pocket calculator and the slide rule. To think that lists

of new variations and of members-attending-club-meets costs Each Individual Member no less than . . . !

The Editor believes with all his predecessors right back to Stott in the Garden of Eden that such carping, wailing and decessomongering is but a stimulus to perfection. He will state his views and will welcome any shouts-from-below or stones-from-above that may help him and his successors towards that end. He will acknowledge the old truth that It All Depends On The Contributors. But to you, potential contributors, members and extramurals, some points must be made.

This is a Club journal. As Higgins hath said, we must get back to being a Club and cease drifting into an Association. The *Journal* can keep us a club. And the Club can keep us a journal—for does not the passage through time of the Club provide the sole continuity of these volumes and their final value? And does not the appearance and disappearance of its constituent characters against the slowly changing Scottish climbing scene constitute their only theme? Though of course there are no giants in these days it is surely up to us to preserve what dwarfs we have, that their shadows in turn may lengthen to the requisite proportions as the days draw on. Because of this, and although we may partly function as the public's Current Guide to New Climbs, we are truly the *Journal* of a Club and not just another open-air magazine. But we do admit, and welcome, the public to our own tales, boastings, arguments and first-hand descriptions of Scottish mountaineering; because the *Journal* is first-hand we believe it's of value to them. Yet it has to be of value to us, too, if we are to continue paying for it. Let us examine our aims, and then how we try to fulfil them.

This journal is of a club labelled 'Scottish Mountaineering.' It therefore (a) covers general mountaineering in Scotland by its own members; it should also (b) report all new routes in Scotland by both members and non-members, and (c) remark upon important climbs outwith Scotland by its own members or even, if important enough, by Scottish non-members. Every journal must have its unique scope, so that general readers will know where to look for particular information. The S.M.C. *Journal* has a certain international recognition and these are the fields in which it should be authoritative, and is indeed expected to be. There is nothing new in all this, but to state it again does no harm, and may jog certain consciences.

Now, how do we try to interpret these aims? Category (b) above is perhaps the best known at present. The Society for the Proliferation of Obscure and Unnecessary New Routes goes as strongly here as elsewhere, and for completeness' sake its more

significant proliferations must be recorded, however briefly. But fine original routes are still to be made (there are jewels in the heads of many Fannichs); such will be emphasised at the expense of embroiderers and wilful hammer-bangers, whose remorseless egos might serve us better by more unusual routes in more unusual areas.

Category (c) has also been well represented of late, with expeditions worthy of the characters plotting, and counter-plotting, them. Yet, since these characters are not consoling here the greater public of the *Alpine Journal* or the Usher Hall, we should have the benefit of preserving also their pleasant after-Dinner acrimonies in print. Or else our successors may confuse Lovat's Holiday with Slessor's Expedition, the dates being so alike.

The vital spot is Category (a)—the heart of the older *Journals*. As we've remarked, (b) and (c) could, at a pinch, be served by News Bulletins and by the Glossies respectively, but (a) is our own. . . . 'Played out' has been the refrain ever since Munro dismissed his squad. To us it seems incredible that such a wealth of variety could ever be 'played out.' Why, even the Himalaya are still going strong, grinding off the belt complete to the last snapped toe and the final reference to *chang*; only the name of mountain or author is occasionally different. *Gnug von den Achttausendern!* What have we here?

We have had an immense change in Scottish climbing. In routes, techniques, severities, in Vibram, crampons, hammers, in camping, howffing, bivouacking, in flirtations with ski-ing, in those historic J.M.C.S. bus-meets and their attendant horrors, in motor vans, in (inevitable) fish-lorries, in new ginger groups, in old, now respectably ungingered, groups, in new clubs of horribly rude and horribly capable youths, in decrepit, decadent, fiery, savagely poking old clubs, in toiling droves of gas-caped incompetents, in badges and barracks of Qualified Instructors—an endless clamouring throng of subjects that washes away *chang* and Base Camps and discarded toes. And how much of all this throng has got into the *Journal*—in spite of the pleas and cajolings of its Editor? Gey little. . . . Yet, one recent example, one of to-day's Scotland to be enjoyed years hence, was actually written by an individual well enough versed in *chang*, black feet and Royal Marines. . . . More like that—and there *are* more like that, hundreds of them, unwritten and peculiarly Scottish—and we can play our part in continuing a unique record of one curious aberrant society in this corner of the world, in this thrawn fragment of rock which, if never enamoured of becoming another Eden, could once recognise itself as *Tir nam beann 's nan gleann—'s nan gaisgeach*.

WITH ARNE RANDERS HEEN ON THE ROMSDALSHORN

By T. W. Patey

IN March 1959 I accompanied an official Marines' ski-ing course to central Norway. My performance on the 'boards' did not lead me to believe I was destined for stardom, so the prospect of a fortnight's training with Norwegian Army instructors was not encouraging. However, I knew the Romsdal Alps, a sort of Scandinavian Chamonix, to be within easy reach of our base at Dombås, and it seemed likely that I could arrange a week-end's leave.

On 10th March the Oslo express rolled into the tiny station of Dombås and disgorged a score of jubilant Marines; to the relief of the other passengers who had long since lost their enthusiasm for singing. We were met by two lean giants, who introduced themselves as our instructors (the cult of fitness is a disease indigenous to Norway). Jensen, the chief instructor, who spoke only a little English, delivered a brief speech of welcome: 'I like men who like ski-ing. It will be hard work, but you will be happy. Perhaps you will come again.'

Next day we were introduced to our skis. The courtship commenced with a 10-kilometre chase through a forest, in the course of which I lost the skin of both knees in a brief encounter with a tree. Fortunately the skis were unscratched so the incident passed without comment. Ski-ing in file at intervals of five yards is not without its hazards, and a single collision is transmitted like a chain reaction to the end of the line. One unlucky individual opened his eye on the ski stick of the man in front and was removed to hospital; as Jensen sadly commented: 'It is always the keenest ones who are hurt first.'

I was initiated in the mystic rituals of ski-waxing. It was grimly ironic to spend the early hours of the morning rubbing in wax in order to increase one's speed on the downhill. I had owned a pair of skis for several years, blissfully unaware of the existence of ski wax. Now it took a lot of experimentation to find a wax that made the skis slide more reluctantly, and I used this with some success for the duration of the course.

The evenings were no less hectic. Norwegians take their drinking as seriously as they do their ski-ing. Consequently the licensing laws forbid the sale of spirits after 6 P.M. Not that this causes much inconvenience: it is common practice to buy spirit from the nearest chemist and flavour to taste. Every family takes

a pride in its *Hjemmebrent*. It is despatched on its mission of havoc with a hoarse shout of *skol!*—one local word with which we were all familiar.

I prefer the phonetic 'ski-ing' to the more correct 'she-ing.' The latter leads to confusion with an entirely different sport—a sport which was practised with enthusiasm by most of my fellow-Marines. The local hotel housed sixty Swedish girls, who were also on a ski-ing course: it was well patronised in the evenings, and many a jaded skier found a new Valhalla.

Our antics on ski were a source of some amusement to the local toddlers. They would have been better occupied at school, had they not been under age; the yells of derision as they flashed across our ski tips tended to interrupt our concentration.

After a week's *langlauf* practice we were ready for the 10-kilometre race—the 'passing-out parade.' Sixty-five minutes was the maximum time allotted—50 minutes earned a silver medal and 40 minutes a gold medal or, conversely, a visit to the hospital. The route had been planned with Machiavellian cunning; every straight run terminated in an abrupt bend to avoid a pond or ditch. The instructors skied gravely alongside, occasionally doubling back to round up a straggler and reappearing in time to thrust a glucose drink into our hands as we crossed the finishing line. The track was a ribbon of ice and once committed to the deeply rutted tramlines, it was only necessary to lean forward in the prescribed fashion and leave the rest to gravity. Negotiating the 'points' was much more difficult and inevitably ended in disaster. I had, however, evolved a formula for success, which stood me in good stead. A smoothly executed fall at each bend saved one from overshooting the track like many more fancied competitors and wasted less time. Progress was spasmodic, but I qualified with a few seconds to spare and upset the form books.

Fortified by my unexpected success, it occurred to me that I had now earned a brief respite, and laid plans for Romsdal accordingly. Sam Bemrose, the gay Lothario, joined the expedition for a different reason, although he too was in search of 'fresh fields and pastures new.' Henry Berg, one of the instructors, completed the trio. He was a member of the Norwegian team who reached the summit of Tirich Mir in 1950—a determined-looking individual with a craggy profile which might have been hewn from his native Romsdal.

We covered the 60 miles from Dombås to Aandalsnes in Henry's ancient box car, which we named the Thin Wall Special. It was held together by bits of rope and the hand of Odin, but as the journey was downhill all the way we made quite good time.

Aandalsnes, a thriving fishing port, is at the head of a long fiord and surrounded by some of the finest scenery north of the Alps. The Romsdal Alps rise sheer from the sea to a height of 5000 to 6000 feet. The gorge carrying the road and rail link to Dombås cleaves the heart of the range and is hemmed in by mighty precipices. On one side is the famous Romsdalshorn, on the other the Trolltinder Wall, claimed to be the greatest face in Europe. There are only two routes on the 5000-foot Wall, both led by the local guide Randers Heen—of whom, more anon.

For Sam's introduction to mountaineering Henry Berg had selected the Vengetind (6000 feet). We left at 7 A.M. and motored for some miles along the side of the fiord. A short distance up a side valley the snow plough appeared to have given up the struggle, and all tracks ended. Here Henry announced, with evident relish, that we should proceed henceforth on ski. This was a cruel blow, reference to the map indicating plainly that 6 miles and 2000 feet of ascent lay between us and the start of our route. We toiled up through the forest, letting our guide break trail in the soft snow. Fortunately he knew no English, and to each wrathful enquiry 'How far now?' he smiled impressively and replied 'Ja ja.'

After 2 hours we entered a steep gully where an ice-axe would have been more useful than a ski stick. Here without regret we abandoned the skis, though only after I had slithered back some distance in what is probably termed 'reverse snow plough position.'

After our poor showing on the boards I was determined to vindicate our climbing ability. Consequently Henry and I ploughed parallel troughs in the snow as far as the head of the gully, when I was still in the lead by a short head. Here it became necessary for Sam to rope up, and by the time I had tied his bowline Henry had forged ahead and I found myself second on the rope.

We followed a graceful snow arête which swept serenely upwards for 1000 feet to terminate in the beautifully symmetrical summit cone. The climbing was interesting if not very exciting, and the exposure on either side quite remarkable.

At 2 P.M. we duly arrived on the top and were greeted with a view extending from Snöhetta to the Jotunheimen. It was ample reward for the long tiring slog, 6000 feet in all. The descent passed without incident, a long glissade followed by the now familiar spasmodic ski-run down to the valley.

After supper Henry proposed that we should pay a call on Herr Arne Randers Heen, perhaps Norway's most celebrated climber. Later in the evening we would adjourn to a nearby dance hall and so justify Sam's week-end. Unhappily for Sam the fates and Randers Heen willed it otherwise.





Our host was a dynamic personality. Adam Watson senior had already told me a lot about him, and it was apparent that his approval of our plans would be tantamount to a Papal blessing. His humble abode was a shrine to the memory of every Norwegian climber, alive or dead. Every wall was festooned with portraits and relics. The broken stump of Slingsby's ice-axe was there, so too was a sardine tin from which Carl Hall had once supped—each item neatly tabulated. The most recent exhibit was a piton 'used on the Trolltinder Wall by Heen on the occasion of his memorable ascent.' Most of the climbing books in his vast library were inscribed by the authors to 'A. R. H.' In order to digest every iota of available climbing literature he had taught himself four different languages.

During the Occupation it was Arne who organised the local resistance movement. When the British landings at Aandalsnes failed, Nazi bombers devastated the town and obliterated his home with its already formidable library. All that remained was the charred stump of Slingsby's axe, which he unearthed triumphantly from the *débris*.

Nothing could quench his flow of anecdote. Held as a hostage by the Nazis and awaiting possible execution, he had written a book of poems to while away the time. This book he now produced and undertook the considerable task of translating all the poems into English for the benefit of his audience, appealing to Sam when a phrase slipped his memory. The sounds of revelry across the street faded in intensity and finally ceased altogether. At 1 A.M. Arne poured the last libation and announced that I would shortly be accompanying him on a winter ascent of his favourite mountain, the Romsdalshorn. We would leave early, he explained, in order to overtake the rest of the party who were already sleeping in a small hut at the foot of the mountain. Henry promised to have me up and ready for the road at 6 A.M.

In fact it was 5 A.M. when we set out, as Norwegian Summer Time had been in operation since midnight. As we followed the previous day's tracks up the valley Arne discoursed at some length on his favourite topic, the Romsdalshorn. It was, of course, Norway's finest peak—he had climbed it 125 times, so he ought to know. In winter it was a much sterner problem and had only yielded on seven occasions, six of these ascents led by himself. To-day was a special occasion, for I was the first alien to attempt the climb in winter.

At the hut we discovered the rest of the party still in their beds. They refused to adjust their watches to the new time and were in no mood to respond to Arne's impetuosity. We were off again

almost immediately, leaving the others to pursue us at their own discretion.

Only one of them accepted the challenge and overtook us at the foot of the face. Arne introduced him as the 'Pupil,' and I never learned his name. He was a tigerish-looking individual, bursting with suppressed energy, and appeared to merit a fairly tight rein.

We cramponned briskly up a 50-degree slope for several hundred feet until Arne announced that we had climbed far enough for a fall to have fatal consequences and should therefore rope up. The Pupil was to lead, and so further his education.

It is difficult to recall the salient features of the route : I was more concerned in watching my companions. The Pupil was climbing with such fire that Arne seldom had time to find a belay before the rope ran out and he had to start off again. Naturally my rope received scant attention ; I would have accepted this as a compliment had the route been easier. It was no worse than Observatory Ridge in foul conditions, but I thought it merited a token respect.

The Pupil had now learned two words of English and bellowed 'Kom Toom!' whenever he noticed any hesitation on my part. Eventually, in desperation, I slung caution to the winds and surrendered to the impetus of the party. We climbed in line abreast, yards of loose rope snagging on every projection.

Presently came a hoarse shout from Arne, our middle man on the rope. A mischievous coil of nylon rope had encircled his throat, and gone taut. The classic tableau of Laocöon and his sons trapped in the python's coils seemed commonplace by comparison.

'What are we using this rope for, anyway?' I demanded suddenly. The elder statesman considered the question seriously, 'Because one of us might fall,' he replied cautiously. 'That's what I'm afraid of,' I confessed, 'perhaps it would be safer without the rope?' For a second he looked blank and then roared with laughter, translating 'the joke' for the Pupil's benefit. 'Most amusing,' they agreed, 'but with the rope we are safe.' I sighed—there was no point in pursuing the argument.

Two hours later we had overcome the icy lower ramparts and entered a long snow gully—the Hall's Rinne—running up towards a notch on the skyline, close to the actual summit of the peak. I now found myself, quite inexplicably, in the middle of the procession. Two taut ropes disappearing into the mist exerted equal and opposite pulls, threatening to tear me apart. One came from the Pupil who had spurted ahead on reaching easier ground, the other led back to Arne, who had chosen the wrong route and wished to descend. There was only one solution, as all my shouts were

answered by redoubled tugs from both ropes ; I applied a firm tension to the Pupil's rope, and breathed again. Fortunately he was not on difficult ground.

Somewhere over to the left was the route by which the Romsdalshorn was first climbed in 1826. The pioneers were a local blacksmith and farmer, and the feat was the result of a wager made during 'a merry drinking bout.' They proved the authenticity of their ascent by leaving a large cairn on the top, and there it remained 'to the wonder and amazement of beholders' till Hall's party made the second ascent in 1881—a sequel to at least a dozen unsuccessful attempts by noted mountaineers of the day.

Two hundred feet below the notch the gully narrowed to a vertical glazed chimney, which the Pupil overcame in fine style ; Arne and I pulled ourselves up the fixed rope to save time. It was attached to one of his bolts, which had been cemented into position at strategic points on the tourist route and had, no doubt, averted several catastrophies. He had the right to safeguard his own mountain, he maintained stoutly, and I saw no reason to doubt his judgment.

At three in the afternoon we emerged on the summit, a lofty acre of wind-swept scree, cut off on every side by plunging precipices. It was our first halt since leaving the car. We dined in the summit hut, an excellent house capable of sheltering three dwarfs in comparative comfort. There was even a stove and chimney—no firewood was supplied, but this could be obtained by descending 3000 feet to the valley. When I asked whose hands had wrought the miracle the oracle smiled broadly. 'Need you ask ? But I am more proud of the garden.' He dug energetically in the snowfield for several minutes and, finally reassured, straightened up. 'Look there,' he pointed triumphantly. At the bottom of the hole was a tiny frozen blob. 'One of my Alpine rock plants,' he announced, 'soon it will bloom again.'

I was more impressed by the fine array of summit cairns. There was only one to which he laid no claim ; this was the original cairn of 1826. One commemorated his hundredth ascent of the Romsdalshorn, another the centenary of the Norske Tindeklub.

It seems the latter occasion was celebrated with all necessary respect. Arne had insisted on a climber of every nationality attending, so all the nearby hotels were combed for potential ambassadors. Thus it was that Adam Watson senior found himself representing Scotland at the dinner, and also on top of the Romsdalshorn ; the ascent of the peak completing the night's festivities.

Before leaving the top we signed our names in the Visitors' Book,

or rather Arne did, since it was his property, adding 'First non-Norwegian winter ascent of the Romsdalshorn.' 'This must be a great moment for you,' he said. I nodded weakly.

The descent was fast, frantic and furious. I leapt from one *rappel* into the next, struggling to keep abreast of the field. Many of the abseils were superfluous, but Arne wished to test some of the more recently fixed bolts, to determine whether the cement had set properly.

Once off the mountain they allowed me half an hour's start on ski, arranging a rendezvous in the valley. One ski arrived punctually—the other ski and its owner some minutes later. By this time Arne had phoned for a vehicle to collect us, and an excellent meal awaited us in Aandsnes on our return.

As I relaxed in the train *en route* for Dombås it occurred to me that my week-end's respite from ski-ing had turned into something of a busman's holiday. I opened my pristine copy of the 'Romsdal' Guide, edited by a certain A. R. Heen. In it I read as follows: 'The Romsdalshorn—undoubtedly the finest peak in Norway. Even by the tourist route it is an entertaining scramble, beset with amusing little problems.'

'Amusing little problems. . . .' By comparison, the winter ascent is positively hilarious!

[Readers of the above who know the irrepressible Patey will recognise that a few grains of salt are necessary, but we must warn others (especially their numerous devotees!) that this genial flying of Norway's famous peak and her even more famous mountaineer must not be taken seriously!—HON. EDITOR.]

THE BAT AND THE WICKED

By Robin Smith

You got to go with the times. I went by the Halfway Lochan over the shoulder of Ben Nevis and I got to the Hut about two in the morning. Dick was there before me; we had to talk in whispers because old men were sleeping in the other beds. Next day we went up Sassenach and Centurion to spy on the little secrets hidden between them. We came down in the dark, and so next day it was so late before we were back on the hill that the big heat of our wicked scheme was fizzling away.

Càrn Dearg Buttress sits like a black haystack split up the front by two great lines. Centurion rises straight up the middle, 500 feet in a vast corner running out into slabs and over the traverse of Route II and 200 feet threading the roofs above. Sassenach is close to the clean-cut right edge of the cliff, 200 feet through a barrier of

overhangs, 200 feet in an overhanging chimney and 500 feet in a wide broken slowly easing corner. At the bottom a great dripping overhang leans out over the 100 feet of intervening ground. Above this, tiers of overlapping shelves like armour plating sweep out of the corner of Centurion diagonally up to the right to peter out against the monstrous bulge of the wall on the left of the Sassenach chimney. And hung in the middle of this bulging wall is the Corner, cutting through 100 feet of the bulge. Dick and I lay and swithered on a flat stone. We wanted to find a way out of Centurion over the shelves and over the bulge into the Corner and up the Corner and straight on by a line of grooves running all the way over the top of the Buttress, only now it was after two in the afternoon.

But we thought we ought to just have a look, so we climbed the first pitch of Centurion, 50 feet to a ledge on the left. The first twisted shelf on the right was not at all for us, so we followed the corner a little farther and broke out rightwards over a slab on a wandering line of holds, and as the slab heeled over into the overlap below, a break in the overlap above led to the start of a higher shelf and we followed this till it tapered away to a jammed block poking into the monstrous bulge above. For a little while Dick had a theory that he felt unlike leading, but I put on all the running belays just before the hard bits so that he was in for the bigger swing away down over the bottom dripping overhang. We were so frightened that we shattered ourselves fiddling pebbles and jamming knots for runners. We swung down backwards in to an overlap and down to the right to a lower shelf and followed it over a fiendish step to crouch on a tiny triangular slab tucked under the bulge, and here we could just unfold enough to reach into a V-groove cutting through the bottom of the bulge and letting us out on a slab on the right just left of the Sassenach chimney.

And so we had found a way over the shelves, but only to go into orbit round the bulging wall with still about 40 feet of bulge between us and the bottom of the Corner now up on the left. The way to go was very plain to see, a crooked little lichenous overhanging groove looking as happy as a hoodie crow. But it looked as though it was getting late and all the belays we could see were very lousy and we might get up the groove and then have to abseil and underneath were 200 feet of overhangs and anyway we would be back in the morning. We could just see the top of the Corner leering down at us over the bulge as we slunk round the edge on the right to the foot of the Sassenach chimney. A great old-fashioned battle with fearful constrictions and rattling chockstones brought us out of the chimney into night, and from there we groped our way on our memory of the day before, leading through in 150-foot run-outs

and looking for belays and failing to find them and tying on to lumps of grass and little stones lying on the ledges. When we came over the top we made away to the left and down the bed of Number Five Gully to find the door of the Hut in the wee small hours.

We woke in the afternoon to the whine of the Death Wind fleeing down the Allt a' Mhuillin. Fingery mists were creeping in at the five windows. Great grey spirals of rain were boring into the Buttress. We stuck our hands in our pockets and our heads between our shoulders and stomped off down the path under our rucksacks into the bright lights of the big city.

Well the summer went away and we all went to the Alps. (Dick had gone and failed his exams and was living in a hole until the re-sits, he was scrubbed.) The rest of the boys were extradited earlier than I was, sweeping north from the Channel with a pause in Wales in the Llanberis Pass at a daily rate of four apiece of climbs that Englishmen call X.S. (X is a variable, from exceptionally or extremely through very or hardily to merely or mildly severe.) From there they never stopped until they came to Fort William, but the big black Ben was sitting in clouds in the huff and bucketing rain and the rocks never dried until their holidays ended and I came home and only students and wasters were left on the hill.

Well I was the only climber Dougal could find and the only climber I could find was Dougal, so we swallowed a very mutual aversion to gain the greater end of a sort of start over the rest of the field. Even so we had little time for the Ben. We could no more go for a week-end than anyone else, for as from the time that a fellow Cunningham showed us the rules we were drawn like iron filings to Jacksonville in the shadow of the Buachaille for the big-time inter-city pontoon school of a Saturday night. And then we had no transport and Dougal was living on the dole, and so to my disgust he would leave me on a Wednesday to hitch-hike back to Edinburgh in time to pick up his moneys on a Thursday. The first time we went away we had a bad Saturday night, we were late getting out on the Buachaille on Sunday and came down in the dark in a bit of rain. But the rain came to nothing, so we made our way to the Fort on Monday thinking of climbing to the Hut for the night; only there was something great showing at the pictures and then we went for chip suppers and then there were the birds and the juke-box and the slot machines and we ended up in a back-garden shed. But on Tuesday we got up in the morning, and since Dougal was going home next day we took nothing for the Hut, just our climbing gear like a bundle of stings and a bee-line for Càrn Dearg Buttress.

This time we went over the shelves no bother at all, until we

stood looking into the little green hoodie groove. It ran into a roof and from under the roof we would have to get out on the left on to what looked as though it might be a slab crossing to the bottom of the Corner. I was scheming to myself, now the groove will be terrible but nothing to the Corner and I will surely have to lead the crux, but Dougal shamed me with indifference and sent me round the edge on the right to find a decent belay under the Sassenach chimney. There it was very peaceful, I could see none of the tighering, only the red stripes down the side of Càrn Mòr Dearg running into the Allt a' Mhuillin that was putting me to sleep if there hadn't been odd faint snarls and scrabbings and little bits of rope once in a while tugging round the small of my back. But once Dougal was up he took in so much slack that I had to go and follow it myself. Half-way up he told me, you lean away out and loop a sling over the tip of a spike and do a can-can move to get a foot in the sling and reach for the sling with both hands as you lurch out of the groove and when you stop swinging climb up the sling until you can step back into the groove; and his sling had rolled off the spike as he left it, so I would have to put it on again. I came out at the top of the groove in a row of convulsions, which multiplied like Asdic as I took in the new perspective.

Dougal was belayed to pitons on the slab under the Corner. The slab and the left retaining wall went tapering down for 20 feet till they merged and all heeled over into the general bulge. Above, the Corner balanced over Dougal like a blank open book with a rubber under the binding. The only big break in the bareness of the walls was a clean-cut black roof barring the width of the right wall. The crack went into the right wall, about six inches wide but tightly packed with bits of filling; and thus it rose in two leaps, 35 feet to the black roof, then out four horizontal feet and straight up 35 feet again; and then it widened for the last 30 feet as the right wall came swelling out in a bulge to meet the top of the great arc of the sky-line edge of the left wall. And if we could only get there then all the climb would surely be in the bag.

Well I had stolen the lead, only some time before I had been to a place called Harrison's Rocks and some or other fellow out of London had made off with my P.A.'s. Now P.A.'s are the Achilles' Heel of all the new men, they buckle your feet into claws and turn you into a tiger, but here I had only a flabby pair of klettersschuh with nails sticking out on both sides of the soles, and so I worked on Dougal to change footwear at which he was not pleased because we stood on a steep slab with one little ledge for feet and a vision before us of retreating in our socks. We had two full-weight ropes. Dougal had one rope that was old before its time, it had once been

120 feet long but it lost 5 feet during an experiment on the Currie Railway Walls. (This last word to sound like 'Woz.') A Glaswegian who was a friend had one day loaned us the other, and so it was even older, and he mentioned that it had been stretched a little, indeed it was 130 feet long, and so Dougal at the bottom had quickly tied on to an end of each rope which left me with 15 feet on the one to get rid of round and round my middle to make the two ropes even. This was confusing, since I had a good dozen slings and karabiners round my neck and two bunches of pitons like bananas at my waist and a wooden wedge and a piton hammer swinging about and three or four spare karabiners and a big sling knotted into steps.

But I could still get my hands to the rock, and I made slow progress as far as the black roof. I left about six feeble running belays on the way, mainly so that I would be able to breathe. And as there seemed little chance of runners above and little value in those below and nowhere to stand just under the roof and next to no chance of moving up for a while, I took a fat channel peg and drove it to the hilt into the corner crack as high under the roof as I could and fixed it as a runner and hung the knotted sling from it and stood with my right foot in the sling. Thus with my hands in the crack where it came out horizontally under the roof, I could plant my left foot fictitiously away out on the left wall and peer round over the roof into the Corner above. Deep dismay. The crack looked very useless and the walls utterly bare and I shrunk under the roof into the sling. Shortly I leaned away out again to ponder a certain move and a little twist and then something else to get me 10 feet up, but what would I do then, and then the prepondering angle sent me scuttling back like a crab into shelter. In a while I got a grip and left the sling and heaved up half-way round the roof and sent a hand up the Corner exploring for a hold, but I thought, no no there is nothing at all, and I came down scarting with a foot under the roof feverishly fishing for the sling. And there I hung like a brooding ape, maybe there's a runner 10 feet up, or a secret keyhole for the fingers, but how are you ever to know for sitting primevally here, so for shame now where's your boldness, see how good your piton is, and what's in a peel, think of the Club, think of the glory, be a devil. I found a notch under the roof in which to jam the knot of a sling which made another runner, and I tried going up a few more times like a ball stopping bouncing until I realised I was going nowhere and trying nothing at all. So I jacked it in and left all the runners for Dougal and Dougal let out slack and I dribbled down to join him on the slab.

Here I sat a while and blew, then I took my coat of mail and

put it on Dougal and Dougal wanted his P.A.'s back and we untied to swop our ends of rope so that Dougal could use my runners and I tied myself on to the stance while Dougal rotated into the tail end of the longer rope and the time went by. But Dougal caught it up a little by rushing up to the black roof while I pulleyed in the slack. And here we had a plan. Just above the lip of the roof, the crack opened into a pocket about an inch and a quarter wide. There should have been a chockstone in it, only there was not, and we could find none the right size to insert. If there had been trees on the Ben the way there are in Wales there would have been a tree growing out of the pocket, or at least down at the stance or close to hand so that we could have lopped off a branch and stuck it in the pocket. But here we had a wooden wedge tapering just to the right size and surely it once grew in a tree and so maybe it would not be very artificial to see if it could be made to stick in the pocket. Blows of the hammer did this thing, and Dougal clipped in a karabiner and threaded a sling and the two ropes and pulled up to stand in the sling so that he could reach well over the roof and look about at ease. And sure enough he could see a winking ledge, about 25 feet up on the right wall.

Now Dougal is a bit thick and very bold, he never stopped to think, he put bits of left arm and leg in the crack and the rest of him over the right wall and beat the rock ferociously and moved in staccato shuffles out of the sling and up the Corner. I shifted uneasily upon my slab which tapered into the overhangs, making eyes at my two little piton belays. As Dougal neared his ledge he was slowing down but flailing all the more, left fingers clawing at grass in the crack and right leg scything moss on the wall. I pulled down the sleeves of my jersey over my hands and took a great grip of the ropes. Then there came a sort of squawk as Dougal found that his ledge was not. He got a hand on it but it all sloped. Rattling sounds came from his throat or nails or something. In his last throes trying to bridge he threw his right foot at a straw away out on the right wall. Then his fingers went to butter. It began under control as the bit of news 'I'm off,' but it must have caught in the wind, for it grew like a wailing siren to a blood-curdling scream as a black and bat-like shape came hurtling over the roof with legs splayed like webbed wings and hands hooked like a vampire. I flattened my ears and curled up rigid into a bristling ball, then I was lifted off my slab and rose 5 feet in the air until we met head to foot and buffered to a stop hanging from the runners at the roof. I could have sworn that his teeth were fangs and his eyes were big red orbs. We lowered ourselves to the slab, and there we sat in a swoond while the shadows grew.

But indeed it was getting very late, and so I being a little less shattered heaved up on the ropes to retrieve the gear, leaving the wedge and the piton at the roof. We fixed a sling to one of the belay pitons and abseiled down the groove below with tails between our legs and a swing at the bottom to take us round to the foot of the Sassenach chimney. By now it was dusk and we thought it would be chaos in the chimney and just below it was very overhanging, but I knew a traversing line above the great roof of Sassenach leading to the clean-cut right edge of the cliff. My kletterschuh kept slipping about and I was climbing like a stiff and I put in two or three tips of pitons for psychological runners before I made the 50 feet of progress to peer around the edge. But it looked a good 200 feet to the shadowy screes at the bottom, and I scuffled back in half a panic out of the frying pan into the chimney. Then two English voices that were living in a tent came up the hill to ask if we were worried. We said we were laughing but what was the time, and they said it would soon be the middle of the night, and when we thought about the 700 feet of Sassenach above and all the shambles round the side to get to our big boots sitting at the bottom of the cliff, we thought we would just slide to the end of the rope.

So I went back to the edge and round the right angle and down a bit of the wall on the far side to a ledge and a fat crack for a piton. By the time Dougal joined me we could only see a few dismal stars and sky-lines and a light in the English tent. Dougal vanished down a single rope while I belayed him on the other, and just as the belaying rope ran out I heard a long squelch and murky oaths. He seemed to be down and so I followed. Suddenly my feet shot away and I swung in under the great roof and spiralled down till I landed up to my knees in a black bog. We found our boots under Centurion and made off down the hill past the English tent to tell them we were living. When we hit the streets we followed our noses straight to our sleeping-bags in the shed, leaving the city night life alone.

The next Sunday we left a lot of enemies in Jacksonville and took a lift with the Mountain Rescue round to Fort William. They were saying they might be back to take us away as well. We had thick wads of notes but nothing to eat, and so we had to wait in the city to buy stores on Monday, and we got to the Hut so late that we thought we would house our energies to give us the chance of an early start in the morning. Even so we might have slept right through Tuesday but for the din of a mighty file of pilgrims winding up the Allt a' Mhuillin making for Ben Nevis. We stumbled out rubbing our eyes and stood looking evil in the doorway, so that

nobody called in, and then we ate and went out late in the day to the big black Buttress.

This time we went over the shelves and up the hoodie groove no bother at all. It was my turn to go into the Corner. By now I had a pair of P.A.'s. I climbed to the black roof and made three runners with a jammed knot, the piton and the wooden wedge and stood in a sling clipped to the wedge. Dougal's ledge was fluttering above but it fooled nobody now. At full stretch I could reach two pebbles sitting in a thin bit of the crack and pinched them together to jam. Then I felt a lurch in my stomach like flying through an air pocket. When I looked at the wedge I could have sworn it had moved. I seized a baby nylon sling and desperately threaded it round the pebbles. And then I was gracefully plucked from the rock to stop 20 feet under the roof hanging from the piton and the jammed knot with the traitor wedge hanging from me and a sling round the pebbles sticking out of the Corner far above. I rushed back to the roof in a rage and made a strange manoeuvre to get round the roof and reach the sling and clip in a karabiner and various ropes, then trying not to think I hauled up to sit in slings which seemed like a table of kings all to come down from the same two pebbles. I moved on hastily, but I felt neither strong nor bold, and so I took a piton and hammered it into the Corner about 20 feet above the roof. Happily I pulled up, and it leaped out with a squeal of delight and gave me no time to squeal at all before I found myself swinging about under the miserable roof again. The pebbles had held firm, but that meant I hung straight down from the lip of the roof and out from the Corner below so that Dougal had to lower me right to the bottom.

By now the night was creeping in. Peels were no longer upsetting, but Dougal was fed up with sitting on a slab and wanted to go down for a brew. But that was all very well, he was going home in the morning, and then coming back for a whole week with a host of terrible tigers when I would have to be sitting exams. So I was very sly and said we had to get the gear and climbed past the roof to the sling at the pebbles leaving all the gear in place. There I was so exhausted that I put in a piton, only it was very low, and I thought, so am I, *peccavi, peccabo*, and I put in another and rose indiscriminately until to my surprise I was past Dougal's ledge and still on the rock in a place to rest beside a solid chockstone. Sweat was poring out of me, frosting at my waist in the frozen mutterings flowing up the rope from Dougal. Overhead the right wall was swelling out like a bull-frog, but the crack grew to a tight shallow chimney in which it was even blacker than the rest of the night. I squeezed in and pulled on a real hold, and a vast block

slid down and sat on my head. Dougal tried to hide on his slab, I wobbled my head and the block rolled down my back, and then there was a deathly hush until it thundered on to the screes and made for the Hut like a fire-ball. I wriggled my last slings round chockstones and myself round the last of the bulges and I came out of the Corner fighting into the light of half a moon rising over the North East Buttress. All around there were ledges and great good holds and bewildering easy angles, and I lashed myself to about six belays.

Dougal followed in the moon-shade, in too great a hurry and too blinded and miserable to pass the time taking out the pitons, and so they are still there turning to rust, creeping up the cliff like poison ivy. Heated up by the time he passed me, Dougal went into a long groove out of the moon but not steep and brought me up to the left end of a terrace above the chimney of Sassenach. We could see the grooves we should have climbed in a long line above us, but only as thick black shadows against the shiny bulges, and so we went right and grovelled up in the final corner of Sassenach where I knew the way to go. The wall on the left kept sticking out and stealing all the moonlight, but we took our belays right out on the clean-cut right edge of the cliff so that we could squat in the moon and peer at the fabulous sights. When we came over the top we hobbled down the screes on the left to get out of our P.A.'s into our boots and back to the Hut from as late a night as any, so late you could hardly call it a bed-night.

Some time next day Dougal beetled off and I slowly followed to face the examiners. The tigers all came for their week. On the first day Dougal and the elder Marshall climbed Sassenach until they were one pitch up from the Terrace above the chimney, and then they thought of going left and finished by the new line of grooves. Overnight the big black clouds rolled over and drummed out the summer and it rained all week and hardly stopped until it started to snow and we put away our P.A.'s and went for hill-walks waiting for the winter. They say the grooves were very nice and not very hard. All that was needed to make a whole new climb was one pitch from the terrace above the chimney, until we decided that the way we had been leaving the terrace as from the time that Dick found it when we first climbed Sassenach was not really part of Sassenach at all. By this means we put an end to this unscrupulous first ascent. The next team will climb it all no bother at all, except that they will complain that they couldn't get their fingers into the holds filled up with pitons.

LOCHNAGAR

By Tom Weir

A MARCH night in Glen Muick. Snow sparkling in the headlights, and the green eyes of hundreds of hungry deer luminous in the woods. 'How far would we be able to get?' Norman Tennent, Graham Nicol and I wondered as we bumped through the drifts, giving thanks to the unknown vehicle that had broken a trail up the glen. We were heading for Lochnagar, with sleeping-bags and food for two days, hoping to get to the bothy at the end of Loch Muick. No hope of getting there when the tracks stopped and we saw before us nothing but snowdrifted mountainside, impassable to anything but a 'weasel.' We found that the vehicle tracks turned up to a house, and there we were invited to stay in the adjacent barn for the night, so we were cosy despite the unseasonable temperature of 20 degrees of frost which sent us into our sleeping-bags the moment we had tossed down our scrambled eggs.

One of the advantages of going to bed with all your clothes on is that it makes it easier to get up in the morning, and Nicol was determined we would not sleep in by asking me the time at 5.45 A.M. We rose at 6 and were away by 7.45, into a dull morning of lowering mists and a soot-and-whitewash landscape, enlivened by the crowing of grouse and the chuckling music of a water ouzel singing its heart out from the stones of a black burn in the snow. It cheered us up as we took turns at breaking a trail, sinking up to the calf at each step and going over the knees in the deeper drifts.

We were wishing we had brought skis, to slide easily over this tiring surface, but as events were to turn out in the hard fight for that summit we could not have used them in the darkness of the descent. With three of us breaking the trail the work was not too exhausting, and as always the snow became firmer as we climbed, though it was not until we were nearing the col beneath the Meikle Pap that it would bear our weight. With lightness in our step we looked over the narrow barrier to the frozen loch and the icy rampart of cliffs we had come to climb.

The Aberdeen climbers sing a song which compares Lochnagar to the Himalayan giants. It goes something like :

Gasherbrum, Masherbrum, Distighil Sar,
They're very good training for Dark Lochnagar.

Never having done a winter climb on these cliffs which they regard as the finest in Scotland, superior even to Nevis, it was a thrill for me to see the *cirque* in its most Alpine form, buttresses

submerged in frost crystals and *coulours* showing the bottle-green of ice ; the huge finger of the Black Spout Pinnacle looming dimly through a scarf of mist twining its jagged top. The walk to the corrie had taken us twice the normal time, so the reward was great when suddenly the sun burst through the lowering cloud, sparkling on summit cornices and giving texture to everything, while across the Dee peaks appeared one by one until the huge range of the Cairngorms floated through a curious haze which gave a violet light to the snow.

Now we asked Nicol what he thought we should climb, with the emphasis on 'nothing too hard.' Nicol is a disciple of Patey. With Tom he made climbing history doing Zero Gully of Nevis in winter, following it up with Sticil Face on the Shelter Stone Crag on Christmas Eve and then climbing Polyphemus Gully on Lochnagar during February of 1958, a route much coveted by tigers of Aberdeen for it had been done only twice before.

'I'm just wondering what Patey would take you up if he was here,' said Nicol. 'The mountain is in terrific condition and you don't want to waste it by doing anything too easy.' It was at this point I was foolish enough to ask him if there was any route he had not done, so that we could all have something new. 'Yes, Parallel Gully A,' he said. 'There it is !' And following his finger I saw the narrow thread of a shallow scoop winding out of sight between the iced rocks to appear again as the merest channel in the very steep summit crags.

'Looks hard to me,' I said.

'And to me !' exclaimed Tennent.

'Now, Graham, I don't want to spend all day in a gully when the sun is shining on the tops, so let's hear your estimate of how long it's going to take.'

'No more than three hours,' answered Nicol, so positively that the two old-timers of the party felt slightly ashamed as we followed the younger generation to the foot of the gully.

I wore crampons on a Scottish climb for the first time in my life that day. Nicol advised it and was himself equipped with twelve-pointers. Only Tennent wore tricounis. Carrying 240 feet of rope, two ice-axes, a piton hammer and a jangle of rock and ice pegs, the leader advanced to what he called 'the easy lower rocks.' We said they didn't look easy to us, but Nicol was confident in his opinion even when it took him half an hour to advance 20 feet, and by the time another hour was past we were beginning to have misgivings about this 3-hour climb for he had not yet reached a belay.

There were diversions, however, in the squeals and clockwork

creakings of ptarmigan, suddenly silenced when an eagle swung into view over the cliffs and sailed round, lifting one broad wing, then the other, as it rocked on the updraught, wheeling in tight spirals. Not until five minutes after it disappeared did the ptarmigan start up again, like the switching on of a machine, and we could see them fly over the loch like white doves.

Then came another sound, the ring of the piton hammer, as Nicol battered a peg into a crack, and with numb hands I started up a horrible pitch of powder snow lying on a slippery mixture of *verglas* and frozen turf. The leader had fought for every inch of the way up this abominably dangerous 100 feet, the only positive holds being little notches cut in the turf; otherwise it was pressure holds on the glazed rock, with crampons scraping.

We were not yet in the gully, but separated from it by a bulge of mountain wall over which we had to edge a delicate way by cutting hand and footholds round an awkward corner. The first sight of the gully came here, and it was a shock, rising as a cascade of ice stretching as far as the eye could see. Luckily the ice was so deep we could hammer in an iron spike a foot long and so provide anchorage for the next pitch.

Nicol wasted not a moment in getting hammering with his hand-axe, and in 35 minutes had climbed 110 feet, cutting the absolute minimum of hand and footholds and using the points of his crampons to bridge the gaps. It was the ideal place for claws, but I hammered out intermediate steps on the way up for the man who was not wearing them. Above our heads Nicol was flimsily anchored to another ice-peg and, while I brought up Tennent, he raced ahead on the only easy ground we were to meet that day, about 200 feet of it.

Now we were faced with another ice-wall, steeper than anything we had met so far and compressed between two slabs of granite sheeted in ice and powder snow. Just where we would go at the top of this ice-wall we could not imagine, but Nicol was not going to put off time thinking. Balanced on his lobster points he was making do with the very minimum needed to keep balance when a foot slipped and for a moment his body hung uncertainly. Somehow he arrested the slip, looking down at us with a cheery grin, and then after some difficult moves he was hard against the barrier rocks and hammering in a belay.

Our situation was now rather desperate. The time was 5.30 P.M. It would be dark in less than 2 hours, and looming ahead of us was the hardest climbing of the day, 200 feet of it with no possibility of escape. The normal route was out of the question, on exposed ice-glazed rocks overlaid with powder snow. I favoured an attempt

on the direct line to the summit, beginning on an ice-chimney. Nicol favoured that line also, and Tennent was in no position to see it. In 1 hour Nicol had climbed only 30 feet ; with little perceptible movement in the next half-hour, as the clouds came down to envelope us.

Feet and hands senseless with cold in a misty world, there was nothing I could do except advise the leader to retreat if it looked hopeless above. The reply ' To retreat is to die ! ' not delivered as a joke, was enough to convince me that a life and death struggle was going on up there, but a cheery voice shouting, ' Don't worry, a few hard moves and I think I'm up,' was reassuring. Next moment an axe and a shower of ice-blocks came shooting over my head, not followed by Nicol as I half-expected, body braced to withstand the jerk of a 70-foot fall.

A short silence and I heard the scrape of his second ice-axe. Tennent, a rope-length below, was stamping his feet and waving his arms to restore circulation, but on my minute ledge cut in the ice I could do no more than just stand and watch the rope snaking out inch by inch. It was nearly all out when I heard that ringing music of the hammer which meant some respite from a desperate lead sustained heroically.

Then I brought up Tennent, clipped him into my piton and took off myself on what I believe to be the hardest pitch in my experience, made harder by fingers and toes without feeling. The difficulty was the slippery nature of the ice-glazed granite and the smallness of the holds for climbing rocks at such a high angle. For Nicol, who had to uncover such holds as were now available, it must have been a lonely fight, and I saw why there had been such a long pause at 30 feet, at an overhang demanding a pull-up on a rock knobble and a delicate squeeze with the left foot to jam it sufficiently long to transfer the right hand to a higher and better hold.

Very Severe as that move was, there was still another bulge which at first sight seemed impossible because it had a horrible projection forcing the body outward with little to support it in space. The technique was to by-pass this bulge by climbing parallel to it, then so twisting the body that a foot could be placed on top of the boss. Then with the body in precarious balance over a 70-foot drop you had to traverse in a sidling motion to get your hand on a clean edge of rock that gave a solid pull-up to another overhang.

This last move was an ugly one, with an icy roof overhead and the blessed haven of a safe snow slope leftward, only 2 feet away, but to reach it meant another awkward edging round a vertical





corner where the proverbial well-directed push with a straw would have sent you plunging into space. Thirty feet above me I found Nicol anchored to a pair of pegs driven into shallow cracks in the rocks, a belay which was to prove a life-saver in the next half-hour.

'We are as good as up,' he said. 'You bring up Norman and I'll go on as hard as I can to get this over before it becomes really dark.' And as he spoke, as if in augury of success, the enveloping clouds swirled open, revealing the oval of the frozen loch against the dark glen out of which I had been hearing the bubbling of blackcock for the last hour, a strange link with the outside world. Then the hostile mists closed again, and a voice floated up faintly, asking how we were getting on.

How are we? Fine, as far as I could tell by the showers of ice-chips flying past my head and the rope going straight into space. I told Tennent to begin climbing, and he must have been numb with waiting. Anchored to the two ice-pegs and with a good stance hacked from the snow, I felt well placed to hold a slip, but so fiercely did the rope jerk when Tennent did come off that I was torn from my stance and had to take his weight hanging from the pegs. I heard him shout for a pull, and I gave him all I could, praying that the pegs would not come out or all three of us would be toppling down that face. All was well, he had found his feet again and performed with marvellous speed on a tight rope, which was more important than anything else at this moment. The lack of crampons was an impossible handicap on this pitch and his performance was all the more amazing.

The final pitch up 100 feet of untrustworthy snow could have spelt disaster to a man less experienced than Nicol, with a surface just hard enough to take your weight without cutting through to the ice beneath. A novice would probably have trusted it and slid to his death, but he, a veteran at 22, had cut deeply through to the ice at every step, right up to the curling cornice where he stood, a dim shape in the night, as I joined him. Very soon the flicker of Tennent's head-torch emerged from the jaws of the gully and we were united for the first time in 9 hours. It was nearly 8 o'clock, and as we foregathered in the bitter cold and mist to munch chocolate our feeling was one of joyous deliverance from the Pit itself. Now we would be able to move frozen limbs, and even if we had to take care not to go over the north-eastern cliffs, we each had a torch. Graham knew the mountain intimately, and off we went, contouring to find the easy slope that leads to the Meikle Pap.

We had hoped the snow would bear our weight, but it did not. Our feet broke through as in the morning, but our tired labours had the merit of thoroughly warming us up and making us thirsty

OPPOSITE : As their seconds saw them.

Above : Slessor assaults Creag Meaghaidh (see p. 30). (*N. Tennent*)

Below : Nicol thinks out Parallel Gully A (see p. 23). (*T. Weir*)

for the tea which tasted like nectar 3 hours later. It would have been nice to crawl into our sleeping-bags then, but Tennent had to be home that night, and so we faced the long drive to Aberdeen and on for another 40 miles to Gardenstown in Banffshire, reached at half-past three.

It was an exciting drive with an incipient blizzard blowing as we contoured the narrow roads that lead down to the sea from Turriff. Through the flying snow we were aware of a strange paleness like moonlight—hard to understand unless it was mist. When suddenly the snow ceased, Tennent stopped the car exclaiming ‘The Northern Lights!’—And there, in front of us, streaming over the whole Moray Firth were pinkish searchlights and green curtains making day of the night, and we were not too tired to appreciate it. But bed was a pretty good place to crawl into.

Marvellous to be alive next morning in the warm sunshine, listening to the hedge-sparrows and rock pipits singing as I took my cameras high above the village to try to capture the turquoise blue of the sea and the snow headlands shining above the fishing village tucked into the red cliff. Everything seemed to have a new and unexpected beauty, but I expect the rebirth was in myself, the enjoyment of relaxation and the freshness of spring after the death struggle of yesterday.

Mountain Days

I’VE had my share of mountain days in snow and rain and sun,
But not enough—for every day brought its own form of fun;

Days lonely or gregarious,
Grim days and days hilarious,
Days of delights most various,
I’ve sampled every one.

The day when, blind with stinging sleet, we stagger towards
the height,

And boots are clogged, and bones are chilled, and fingers numb
and white;

A driving blast-and-blatter day,
A set-the-teeth-a-chatter day,
A mind-must-conquer-matter day;
‘Think of the bath to-night!’

The heather’s dusty to the throat and weary to the feet ;
The far too distant skyline is a-shimmer in the heat;

A heavy, hot and hazy day,
A climbing-would-be-crazy day;
How cool the burn!—a lazy day
To bathe and sleep and eat.

The day when the abysses yawn, the heart abandons hope,
 With toes tense on a tiny hold while fumbling fingers grope;
 A where-he-goes-I-follow day,
 A does-my-laugh-ring-hollow? day,
 A 'Right-I'm-coming'-(swallow) day;
 Thank heaven for the rope!

The tingling frosty day whose dawn sets every top a-glow,
 As up we hack through fastnesses of silent ice and snow.
 Then down—a sweeping, swooping day,
 A yodelling-and-whooping day,
 An almost loop-the-looping day,
 Glissading down we go.

Such days are shorter now and few (alas for heart and lung!)
 My knees on screes are ill at ease; nor cling I where I clung.
 Yet even these bathetic days
 Recall the old athletic days,
 Those best and most poetic days
 When all the hills were young!

BARCLAY FRASER.

MISSING THE LAST POST

By Norman Tennent (J.M.C.S.)

THE wind was north-easterly, strong and freshening; the sky grey and overcast. In the northern corries the layer of compacted snow was thin, and new snow was falling. Yet Slesser was in good organising form.

'Have you put some more water on for tea?' he cried, munching my wholemeal bread and Oxford marmalade, and trampling in Tricounis up and down over my fankled rope.

Ten years of catering has taught me never to argue with a difficult customer. Without mentioning that I wanted coffee, I fell to musing about this Man of Destiny with whom I was associated, and this place to which we were drawn irresistibly every winter. . . .

Four years had passed since we had—more or less accidentally—climbed the South Post. That whole ascent had a Walter Mitty-ish air about it; the scene of climax being at the top, where I shook hands with Dr Slesser—the first time since Greenland, five years before. Its dream-like quality was not diminished later by reading his account in the *Journal*. It seemed a pity that I had not been able to publish my version alongside; and then—surprise!—to divulge that both described the same climb. I remember Slesser's

magnificent long lead up vertical and overhanging snow, of the sort supposedly only found on the south sides of the Andes. . . . He recalls nothing but hard, crisp conditions. Only when water squirted up his sleeve at a blow from his axe did he consider the wisdom of proceeding, long after I knew we had burned our boats. He saw eagles circling above ; but I think we were being eyed speculatively by common carrion eaters. We were in agreement, however, at that moment we took to be our last, in thinking that a bomber which suddenly roared overhead was an avalanche.

But then I had been expecting an avalanche. Ten years previously, with Cunnison and Ransley, I had seen the Posts opening, like three gigantic hoppers, depositing tons of ice and snow, in blocks as big as cottages, down the shoots below to crash and thunder across the lochan.

Tough, Brown and Raeburn, who in April 1896 made the first recorded attempt to climb the Centre Post, had a close call from an avalanche (though, when Raeburn and Walker tried an autumnal ascent in 1903 they found only a 'great pot' running with water and filled with spray ; and they escaped on to B Buttress). And again, a Phenomenal Premonition made Bill Murray forsake the Post, just before an avalanche. Even so, he said, he had to run for his life to escape. T. Mackinnon, A. MacAlpine and K. Dunn also ran. The name of the winner has not been recorded.

On another occasion, when Murray set out with Dr Bell, they never reached the starting post. Adequately forewarned, their armament included a sackful of pitons made from stair-rods ; but there are objective dangers and circumstances, apart from avalanches, over which man has no control. Murray mentioned it was his birthday. Coincidentally, it was Dr Bell's. The publican on whom they presently called happened to be holding his own anniversary.

Bell's first impression of the Great Pitch in 1934 was that it was 'manifestly impossible' ; the angle of the wall he found to be over 70 degrees, or steeper than Rannoch Wall, and of about the same height. Yet with careful planning, special equipment and the right conditions, he must have felt it would 'go.' Such conditions seemed to prevail in March 1937, when with C. M. Allan he found much hard frozen snow below the Great Pitch. They cut their way up and across the wall to the right. The traverse of the 30 feet took an hour, with Bell using a slater's pick in one hand and a piton in the other. Continuing up the fan to the right, still by these unorthodox methods, they finally swung left into the Post above the pitch.

I had not seen many birthdays when I bought my first *Journal*.

It contained a long account of Dr Bell's Coire Ardair explorations. I doubt if Chapman's Homer opened up more to Keats. Soon afterwards I discovered that wonderful men in Norfolk jackets, with long ice-axes, really existed. Their reserve and obviously assumed reticence about Coire Ardair drove me nearly frantic. Seemingly it was no place for the uninitiated. Perhaps I was thought to be lacking in reverence, but between myself and those cliffs were placed barriers, unseen and otherwise.

But the young revolutionary becomes the traditionalist, the reactionary, at last. And now Slesser and I don't care if we are old-fashioned; we climb for the pleasure we seem to find in each other's company despite everything, and whether we succeed or fail.

Our first failure, after the South Post success, was caused by stomach trouble on the Centre Post. Douglas Scott, our guest, was first to succumb, to a lobster's revenge. By dawn, when Slesser and I were gazing with awe at the glistening curtain of ice which hung above us like the vast gold brocade on the Potala Palace, he was still far away down the glen behind a rock.

But heavy manual work in the early morning does not suit my own stomach. After cutting the first few steps in the Great Pitch, and before committing myself to hours of strife and hunger upon it, I returned to the ice grotto out of which Slesser's red nose was protruding like a puffin's beak from its burrow. I wanted breakfast and someone else to do the work.

He tried, but, failing to gain any height, traversed left, doing some awkward downward cutting. After about 100 feet he anchored himself, by his own exacting standards of security, to a piton. I followed, taking out four others he had used and, refusing to climb the overhang directly above, as he advised, continued out to the crest of the buttress. The next 100 feet of tottering schist was steep, if not *surplomb*. It would have been better with more *verglas* to bind it instead of its covering of loose snow. The steepest section was a pile of detached blocks; I must have shifted them in passing, for a piton I had driven in came out when Slesser touched it. . . .

After a side-slipping traverse, we regained the gully above the Great Pitch, and scuttled up the remaining few hundred feet to the plateau, using the piton and ice-axe technique. There was no cornice, and the total time taken for the ascent was 4 hours, 3 of which were spent avoiding the Great Pitch.

We had still not done the climb of our ultimate hopes, and on the summit plateau Slesser's stomach trouble started.

'I'm cold,' he complained. 'That's a sure sign I'm under-nourished.'

Having seen him consume a pound of prime steak the previous evening, I quoted Sir Andrew Aguecheek: 'I am a great eater of beef, and I believe that does harm to my wit.' I felt it would have been ill-mannered to explain the point.

Last year we used the now traditional piton and pick method to reach the foot of North Post. The ice at the first of the eight or more pitches was thin and poor. After lodging a piton neither in the splintering ice of the bulge nor in the crumbling rock alongside, we decided to abandon a rockless and iceless climb, and set out to explore elsewhere. Descending slightly, we traversed to the north over steep ground, towards that conspicuous shelf which runs from the left, below the North Post, to the north face of the corrie.

Half of a short winter's day had already passed. We had spent much time down at the lochan arguing and pleading with a companion—who was to lead the climb—not to abandon us on account of toothache. (He nevertheless did so. He ran down, jumped into his van and drove away, leaving the observant Aberarder farmer, who had seen three going up the hill, in a state of wild surmise.)

After the shelf, just around the corner on the north face we found two gullies side by side. It was by the westerly that we continued our way of wanton disport to the top. It provided two interesting ice-pitches; the situation at the uppermost being particularly so. I was smiling happily and, I thought, encouragingly, up at Slessor, who laid into the ice with mighty blows. He seemed to grow out from the side of the gully like a tree above a river. For a time all went well. Then he happened to stop and look down.

'Put that camera away!' he roared. Then: 'Which arm is the rope belayed around?'

'Both,' I replied.

Next moment his axe flashed down past my nose like a thunderbolt from Jove, to stick into the *névé* below. When Slessor himself descended, terrible in his wrath, the rope was round both my arms and my neck as well. I was made to ascend the pitch; not too difficult a task as the step-cutting was nearly all done.

I suggested that the climb be called 'Staghorn Gully,' since I had made myself into a staghorn bollard to belay him. Strong disapproval was registered.

'I happen to take these things seriously,' he said.

A traverse about 100 feet below the top of the buttress led us back to the top of the North Post. The shield-shaped recess which formed its topmost pitch looked climbable. We returned along the top shelf, which might call for some care, if done without crampons. The direct finish to the North Post also looked possible. From the

summit of B Buttress, well out from the bed of the gully, we could see nothing of the Great Pitch but its uppermost rim.

Soon afterwards there was hardly a trace of snow on the hills, and that was the end of winter climbing though not of discussion and mental wanderings. Some time earlier Graham Nicol, the neck-or-nothing North-Easterner, had offered to take me up the climb, but I didn't think I wanted just to 'knock it off.'

Yet it seemed hardly credible that Centre Post was not already in the bag. Every time we went up to the corrie we expected to find tents and gymnastic apparatus set up there; with bull-necked Nordic Types peering through telescopes and shouting in guttural north-eastern tongues towards the face, from which faint cries would be heard from time to time.

I was not at all surprised when Patey told me that J. Marshall had bagged Centre Post. Yet when the account appeared in the *Journal* it described an ascent of Dr Bell's traverse. . . .

Outside that Aberarder bothy, where in January this year I watched the expert's Tricounis going over my new nylon rope, a dour north-easterly gale was blowing.

The moss was as crisp as toast underfoot as we walked through the last of the trees and the cliffs came into view. We had two guests with us.

'I've never done a winter climb in Scotland under really hard conditions,' said one of them.

'You may do so very soon,' I thought.

North Post was a mere thread of ice; the other gullies had less snow, but probably more bare ice than I had ever seen in them. The buttresses were greyish-white and hoary. A noise like an express train driving to destruction through a tunnel came from the wind between the cliffs and the bealach.

Yet Slesser was still full of confidence.

'Would you rather climb North Post or Centre Post?' he asked our guests, in the way one might ask a man whether he would rather be shot or hung.

Whilst the debate continued I set off towards Centre Post, mainly because its approach over *névé* and ice seemed preferable to the high-angled turf and broken rock leading to North Post.

The first pitch of ice was tough and plastic. Step-cutting was laborious. Even so, we were cold.

'There's a tongue of *névé* to the right,' shouted Slesser, through chattering teeth. Reaching it had been Plan A. I was now on Plan B, so I did nothing about his suggestion, beyond cutting some particularly large lumps to land on his head.

We carried on fast, on two ropes. Slesser and I were wearing crampons, and we were at the foot of the Great Pitch before the others, who had only one pair between them. I cut one or two steps, gingerly tried them, and then returned to where Slesser was ensconced.

‘What’s the matter?’ he asked.

I thought the question unnecessary. He only had to look at me. In descending a few feet I had turned my head sideways to see the steps below. Ice had instantly sealed my right eye, and my cheek felt like mutton from a deep freeze.

‘Windy,’ I said.

He was not satisfied, and set out to try the right traverse. It took a prolonged session of brain-washing in the cascade of powder snow and spindrift to weaken his determination. But even then he had been anchored to the face for some time before I launched my appeal. I told him about a Catalanian recipe for which I had the ingredients, and then said :

‘What about lots of coffee, our sleeping-bags and a game or two of chess?’

‘We ought not to climb together,’ he said, lowering himself down. ‘We are both sybarites.’

WE HAPPY FEW

By R. W. MacLennan

NUMBER 369 High Street was discovered by George Ritchie. He had it inspected by two members who belonged to the architectural profession. They were elated. It was great. Wonderful. Just what we required. It only needed . . .

It consisted of three ex-slum houses—early nineteenth century—knocked together to form the unprepossessing premises of a rather primitive printer. Floors and ceilings had been hacked about to house his cumbrous machinery and everything expressed the debility consequent on generations of heavy thumping. His policy as regards repairs and maintenance had obviously been ‘*Après moi—the demolishers.*’

However, lay members in the face of such informed enthusiasm could only endeavour to hide their ignorant apprehensions. Misgivings there were, but somehow they never managed to rise quite to the level of consciousness. If you met George Ritchie anywhere near the High Street he would press a rusty key on you and insist that you have a look. When you returned he would cast a quick glance over his shoulder—to make sure that neither Haig nor

Marshall were on the horizon—and ask anxiously what you thought of it. You would say that it was great and he would agree and the conversation would trickle to a dispirited ending.

However, the die was as good as cast. Authority was impressed also. The professional pair measured the place and produced a plan—an officiously technical looking thing, very suitable for bandying about at meetings. A plausible spokesman was briefed and primed. That apathetic hum, following a brisk secretarial suggestion and known as ‘Committee assent,’ was duly secured.

First steps and the mood of the time are best shown by the following quotation—which, of course, betrays its origin: that bombastic yet nauseatingly ingratiating style remains peculiar to the East of Scotland circular, a publication which could justly be described as ‘the yellow press of the mountaineering world.’

‘NEW CLUBROOM

The last circular contained a rather cryptic note about new clubrooms. Those members who have attended recent lectures will have heard more about this and may have accepted the invitation to inspect the premises and see the work in progress.

The remaining 95 per cent. may now like to be put in the picture.

The locus is 369 High Street. Two floors above the shop front of Stewart the draper, five dirty windows (one of them a dummy) mark the spot. A common (extremely!) stair leads directly to the second flat. The landing door opens on to a large room (36 by 15 ft.) where the said four windows give a fine view of the north buttresses and curved ridges of St Giles’. This will be the lecture room and/or Club lounge, the transformation being effected by drawing a dual-purpose curtain.

Off this and facing north are two smaller rooms (about 11 by 13 ft.) destined to serve as library and kitchen respectively. In addition, a lavatory and wash-place.

The rent is extremely modest and for a very good reason. The place was in appalling condition—no electric light, scabrous plaster falling off everywhere, a floor of unpredictable contours and an all-pervading, unmentionable smell.

However, to a Club able to substitute unpaid labour for tradesmen’s bills, this was a decided opportunity. Similar property in good condition rents at four times the figure asked for here.

We have to thank George Ritchie for its discovery and the professional acumen of I. D. Haig and J. R. Marshall for seeing its possibilities. (This notice is intended to discourage any further remarks anent ‘wir fees.’)

Thereafter we are indebted to the President and the Hon. Secretary of the Club for coming through, inspecting and sponsoring the project in Committee.

(Those who were privileged to see it will not easily forget the sight of Ross Higgins standing in the midst of the aforesaid squalor, peering into the cobwebby gloom, lit only by a single flickering torch—and, with the

rapt look of the visionary, talking grandly of public receptions and Festival exhibitions.)

The Club Committee, who also viewed the premises, took the generous view that this could be the National Headquarters and agreed to back us on the tentative cost put forward to them.

This cost, however, presupposes a large amount of voluntary, unpaid labour. Some of this has been forthcoming already (including J.M.C.S. members), but all additions are welcome. Tuesdays and Thursdays from 7.30 to 10 P.M. are the usual work parties, but any alternative times can be easily accommodated. Work is under the *undisputed* supervision of I. D. Haig (Dean 3266), who is only too willing to hear of any offers of labour, material, transport, etc.'

The history of the clubroom, it will be noted, resembles that of mankind. After unrecorded tribal confusion the first written document shows a servile state with an absolute ruler firmly established, and the final result is similarly a monument which is the expression of the ruling personality made permanent by the anonymous industry of his enslaved fellows. The lower classes contributed their quotas of dogged labouring and generous pilfering and inspired wire-pulling but were denied any share in the management of affairs. Little sympathy should be given them on that account, however; the astute reader may even detect a note of relief in the subservient reference to 'undisputed charge.' Reacting to the horrible prospect of a clubroom embodying all the varied prejudices of our untrained tastes, it had been decided to give Haig his head. As he later discovered, the aches went with it. The lower orders became rather adept at loyally passing all difficulties upwards.

Haig was therefore called upon to produce—or rather to generate—at considerable cost to himself—the key processes required for an enterprise based on the shaky chassis of voluntary labour and powered by the uncertain fuel of nebulous funds. Tyrannical gaffering was a first necessity and considerable art is required to inject the necessary urgency. The 'jolly-good-show, go-to-it chaps' atmosphere just won't do.

Equally imperative was an ulcer-courting devotion to logistics and economy, astonishing to those who, with every bright suggestion, added hopefully 'The Club's got the money.' The cost of these rooms if a greenhorn had been in charge can be guessed at from an incident involving a display of ungovernable rage from Haig on learning that one of his deputies had actually made some purchases at normal retail prices.

Thirdly—and most unpalatable of all perhaps—he even developed an Oscar-earning ability to cajole and bully the plausible but dilatory donors of essential goods and services.

These are the tributes that would appropriately be awarded by an impersonal narrator. The writer in this case, however, can draw on his own worm's-eye view memories of this sterling character in action, and is in fact grateful for the opportunity to offer such a 'profile.' Dipping his pen in vitriol he hastens happily on.

The Hon. Architect has never been described as the most genial of men. His normal expression is admittedly astringent. His manner, some might say, is forbidding. A kinder word has been 'off-taking.' Among his friends it is alleged that his characteristic activity is sitting in a corner, quietly hating. His mere presence, it is said, has blighted the evening of more than one cheerful novice venturing innocently into Lagangarbh when Haig was in residence.

He was therefore a personality well suited to cope with the types of volunteers who presented themselves. Many of those were sufficiently well known to him to make any pretence at politeness unnecessary. Any of their helpful suggestions, their lengthened sage advices, could be answered, if at all, by his customary stock of four-letter or five-letter words.

The nucleus of the work party was formed by a group of ill-assorted individuals who had frequented a Hanover Street howff with weekly regularity. They now found their Thursday night conviviality transformed into penal servitude with Tuesday night added for good measure. The service they were able to give was varied in quality, the attendance often uneven, but they were apparently the best that could be got. Little attempt will be made here to evaluate their several contributions. Those mentioned directly or by implication are presented because some handy insult is available to drape like an albatross around their necks. Those inadvertently omitted require not apologies but congratulations. In more or less the order in which they came under the hypnotic domination of the Hon. Architect they were :

MacLennan—an individual with a great deal to say but little of it as a rule to any point. As a worker, utterly helpless. An indefatigable destroyer of tools and waster of energy. Tolerated mainly for his contacts with the underworld of the building trade and his *open-sesame* to an Aladdin's cave of disused furniture (library table, kitchen door and cornice, etc.). Even in these directions he was handicapped by his intrinsic lack of common sense. 'What,' thundered Haig repeatedly, 'is the use of leaving messages with you when you never remember them properly?'

Russell—a man of some skills certainly, but most ambitious when practising those he knew least about. Like Haig, another little Cæsar—vociferous, venomous, usually to be found working vigorously at the origin of a spate of abuse. A generous provider

when this lay in his power—stole and installed the clubroom radio.

Stirling—at that time *doppellgänger* to Russell, a lean, silent, sinewy object with a withering stare. Drifted in unflinching every night: laboured morosely with ill-concealed scorn for others less skilfully engaged. Much given to Rembrandt-like touchings with the paint brush; after which he would descend to contemplate them soulfully from a distance.

Stewart (J.M.C.S.)—Adam ('Cannon Ball Heid'), a much-maligned dignitary from the days of the cable cars, also highly regular and conscientious (or—according to Russell—given to malingering in quiet corners).

Gordon (J.M.C.S.)—the second of the 'Glen Grant' twins. Dave was a tower of strength and a repository of skills. He could do anything with tradesmen's tools except explain what he was doing with them. The fairy godmother of the squad—any passing wish for special tools or fittings and next evening Dave would turn up with a huge brown paper parcel containing the lot. Any enquiries were met with a heavyweight wink and an 'Eh?' delivered with the same volume of sound as the one o'clock gun. These generous but mysterious benefactions, which overwhelmed even the greed of the Hon. Architect, were eventually received with as much apprehension as gratitude (see end of paragraph on Russell).

George Hood—an obnoxious presence, who, as one of nature's anarchists, could hardly resist the opportunity of paying with some attempt at work for the pleasure of taking part in so perfect a shambles.

A sane man, G. Scott Johnstone, the sole hero who appeared straight out of the alien tracts of the membership list and, working in this half witted medley, survived uncontaminated (perhaps) until spring and geology bore him away to the North.

J. R. Marshall came in like a lion and went out like one addicted to architectural competitions. His raucous, meteoric presence always gave at least an illusion of rapid progress. His undoubted talents as provider of building materials had their drawbacks. The phone would ring in the middle of a busy office afternoon.

'Boab?'

'Yes, James?'

'Lorry coming with battens, bricks, three hundredweight of sand. You'll have to give the man a hand up.'

'But I'm tied up. I've . . .'

'It'll be there in half an hour.'

'But how can I . . .?'

'So long!'

George Ritchie, on the other hand, gave ample warning of the supplies he procured for us. Seven to eight weeks in one case—a never-failing source of surprise to him—‘What! It hasn’t arrived yet? I’ll get on to him immediately!’ However, for that marvellous toy, the sanding machine, alone he deserves his niche. George also did some florid work on the lavatory door. This was for the record, with the Hon. Architect standing grimly over him.

Haig failed utterly in his ambition to get a stint out of a less busy but equally elusive character allergic to manual labour. A half-promise had been obtained, so when this unsullied individual happened to appear, Haig proffered a paint brush. ‘A’ (nothing would make us reveal the surname) considered it with a wan sneer. In elegant distaste he murmured, ‘Which end do I hold?’ And there the prospect faded.

Apart from those still to star in these pages, mention should be made of those who were able to contribute an evening (or perhaps two) and of those unfortunates who, calling up on other business, found themselves press-ganged on the spot.

However, on the basis of the awkward squad aforementioned, the work-in-progress referred to began in the first days of 1958. True, the Hon. Architect had already had a lordly walk round, with slaves attendant, wrenching off a shutter here, tossing a gas bracket over his shoulder there, and so on. But by mutual revulsion the place was left at peace during the festive season, its unredeemed squalor appropriately dishonoured by the *graffitti* now discovered on the walls: ‘G. Caius Ritchus, 51 B.C.,’ ‘Martialis illegitimus est.’ (The riposte of the maligned ‘M,’ calling attention to the character of one Maclenicus, is unprintable even in Latin; he was undoubtedly the ignoblest Roman of them all.)

When the work at last started in earnest it did so in spectacular fashion: walls were attacked with hammers and chisels and ice-axes; the sordid old plaster evaporated in explosions of poisonous dust; laths were gouged out; fireplaces gutted; piping disembowelled. The talents of those engaged were obviously stimulated by the opportunities presented here for wanton destruction (J. R. Marshall was outstandingly brilliant). The nightly scene was one of noise and confusion with the clouds of volatile stour lit only by a temporary electric lead.

The result of all this enthusiasm had to be shovelled off the floor and put into sacks. The sacks had to be tied and piled up in odd corners to make room for a new rain of rubbish. Occasionally somebody gave a half-hearted sweep round but a fresh tide would then engulf everything. When the accumulation became unbearable

a lorry and man would be commissioned from Jock the blacksmith and for a glorious evening or two there would be a yard or two of space.

The said Jock was reduced to a state of wonder and dread by our activities. It was probably seven times that he carted away what he was assured was the very last load.

The neighbours were rightly alarmed. But here we were fortunate. Of the two families in the stair, one was stone deaf. The other consisted of a lady of robust character (when she and Gordon were passing the time of day it could probably be heard out at Fairmilehead), and her husband, who looked in on us every Thursday evening, after his weekly tank-up, to give encouragement and historical background in a state of bemused benevolence. His final benediction was always 'Ye're daein fine, lads . . .' as he was helped up the stairs by Haig. From the small hall below a deputation of diffident but resolute old ladies sometimes came up to point out that our knockings interfered with their meeting—a spiritualists' *séance* !

By the time the preliminary dust had settled, something else was as plain as the bare walls. No more members would arrive. Of the imposing membership list some were over-age, some overworked already, no doubt. Some had more urgent or more vital business and some, we assumed, had a higher I.Q. or a lower opinion of the advantages of a clubroom.

Taking our cue from the Hon. Architect, we lost no opportunity of brightly introducing the subject of the clubroom in any chance encounter with a stray member. We heard with sympathy many stories of incredibly crowded lives. Some of these used to begin spontaneously at the mere sight of one of us. The Hon. Architect even reported that he had seen vaguely familiar shapes hurrying past with averted faces but he was always one for seeing the worst side of human nature.

However, another and more peaceful phase had now commenced. The ribald song of the blow-lamp made resonant music, and in every corner intent rooted figures with one hand aimed up and down and along, with the other scraped and scraped. It was slow, unsociable work and sometimes, over the welcome break of refuelling, a couple of heads came together in muttered rebellion. But even the most oblique conspiracies for moving on to more interesting tasks were ruthlessly suppressed. 'Any instructions?' snarled the Hon. Architect. 'Until further notice there is only *one* instruction. *Remove all paint.*'

So the squad scorched wearily on. MacLennan could be observed expertly crackling window panes with a confidently directed

jet of flame. While passing from one glass to another he did occasionally dislodge some paint, no doubt by accident.

The presence of 'Cannon Ball Heid' could be deduced from the polyglot repertoire proceeding from his corner, 'Ich hatt' einen Kameraden' alternating with 'An t-Eilean Muileach.' Gordon was still shouting, as offensively jovial as ever, Stirling still bleakly staring, Russell still fulminating.

Organisational worries now began to beset the Hon. Architect. He began combing the membership list again, impatiently flicking over useless pages of bankers, lawyers, civil servants, M.D.'s, seeking out a peirage of joiners and plumbers, or—most daring hope of all—the princely presence of a plasterer. Having marked down the few strands of gold in this array of white-collared dross he disappeared on mysterious visits. From these he returned in one of three moods—(a) radiant and relieved, (b) sceptical and suspicious, (c) abusive and blasphemous.

However, a new era was casting its shadow. While the proletariat bungled steadily on, a series of star performers from the trades began to tread the boards.

First to appear was our genial Fred Mantz, from the J.M.C.S., following promptly upon a delivery of the bricks that make up his daily work. The effect on the workers hitherto present was like that of the Colonel's visit to the cookhouse or the minister's appearance at the whist drive. For Fred is notoriously gentlemanly, apparently devoid of malice and incapable of satire. In his sunny presence the numbed rabble were, for the time being, deprived of their crude nightly orgy of gleefully baiting each other to the raw. Visibly deflated, they watched Fred, on arrival, graciously accept the stack of bricks and the mix obsequiously prepared for him and, before starting to work, *don a pair of gloves!* Worse was to follow. No four-letter witticisms. The click of bricks falling professionally into place was accompanied by dissertations on the Haydn quartets or whistled illustrations from Gluck's *Orphée*. The rabble, muck to the eyebrows, worked around on light tasks, while Fred—spruce, white-shirted, gloved—built up fireplaces. The *débauche* was complete.

This might have made a lasting transformation. But Fred is a man with many calls on his violin and it appears, like most of those addicted to culture, blessed with supreme absence of mind. With half a fireplace left to do, he disappeared, leaving the door unlocked, and we saw him no more. The Hon. Architect, gratified but shaken, completed the job, gradually recovering his venom in the process. The rabble, no longer inhibited by good manners and opera, took to abuse and scurrility again.

Second performer and Joiner No. 1 was R. Brown—another man

with many calls on his time. Richard, obviously marked out for a contribution, had, apparently in advance, selected his sphere of activity and calculated to a nicety the appropriate number of man-hours due. He appeared with tools and, taking Gordon in tow, proceeded to conduct a *blitzkrieg* in the side room, as a result of which the desired library fitting arose magically completed. A fine piece of work, and 'Good old Dick' was the cry of the moment.

But a sad sequel illustrates the transient nature even of deserved fame. The said Richard's evening employment left him with about 15 minutes to spare on certain work nights; these minutes he elected to spend in the clubroom, strolling happily up and down, humming or whistling, the very image of idle privilege as he treated the bent backs of the labourers to carefree renderings of *Mackintosh's Lament* or *Cha till MacCrumein*. Gibes about 'well-dressed gaffers' and offers to lend scrapers or sandpaper brought only a tactful about-turn or an ostentatious switch from *urlar* to *crunluath*. And one of those who may have cried 'Good Old Dick,' now standing with a chisel in hand, looked perhaps for a moment at a spot between the shoulders of the slow-marching pibroch whistler—and, with an effort, resumed using the chisel for its proper purpose.

With Joiner No. 2 there were quite different tribulations. R. 'Secundus' Marshall had apparently been awarded the honour of laying the new floor. It is doubtful whether his consent was formally sought, but nevertheless he turned up for the task, imperturbable as ever. Gordon was enlisted as skilled labourer, and plank by plank a new wooden skin began to form over the ocean waves of the old floor. Noisy progress seemed assured. Then a sudden stop. Tuesdays, Thursdays followed each other, but no Secundus. He was 'wrighting' ships being drydocked in incredible numbers at Leith. The Hon. Architect danced about, frantic. Gordon wandered disconsolately about the unfinished works. At the pitch of blackest despair Secundus unexpectedly walked in, and resumed as if from yesterday. This pattern repeated itself more than once. In fact, it persisted almost to the very end. There was one long-standing gap in the new floor which no one believed would ever be closed—not until Secundus one evening clouted in the last nail, with an expression of mildly astonished reproach at our impatient anxiety.

There was also the entertaining cross-current of Architect *v.* Tradesman, a traditional duel in which both sides are as convinced of infallibility as Rome and Avignon. Tactfully at first, but gradually becoming more barefaced, each protagonist began to employ measures designed to minimise the effect of the other's unfortunate aberration. The result was a masterly contest in

floormanship in which considerable resources of guile and obstinacy were called up on either side.

Haig was progressively, helpfully suggestive, pointed, blandishing, darkly authoritative. Secundus, who at best has only about four different facial expressions, none of them particularly communicative, switched them all off and contrived to indicate a mood of faintly amused neutrality—a performance at which he has probably no equal.

Their campaign ranging up and down the floor, and into every corner, whetted their every suspicion of each other. They even took to appearing on alternate evenings—Secundus working with stealthy diligence on Tuesday, Haig marching bands of witnesses over the same ground on Thursday—‘Down there was where he was to have been working. He only came up here to finish it off his way before I could stop him.’

On the whole, Secundus seemed to have the greater stamina. In their last head-on clash, when Haig pointed an accusing finger at a floor finishing and recalled his minute instructions to the contrary, Secundus considered the evidence, and then Haig, with robust sangfroid: ‘It seems, then,’ he confessed comfortably, ‘that I’ve made a —— of it’; his tone was one of cheerful satisfaction.

In the plumbing trade all seemed set fair. D. Lamont (J.M.C.S.), a small, youthful, almost spherical object, was mild and obliging. He looked worried as he worked. And he actually changed things at the behest of the Hon. Architect. This was a model assistant, a credit to the ranks of the whippersnappers, and it was considered fortunate that during his stint the S.M.C. Committee would break off from their meeting across the square to call in and inspect progress. Lamont would be on hand, attentive and diffident, handily placed for a presidential pat on the head. However, when the Committee arrived Lamont was making a joint. This involved looking very worried indeed. It also involved making occasional fast runs along a line between the gas-fire and the kitchen sink. During a lull the Committee entered and took up positions at various points along this line. There was a minute or two of lordly appraisal. Then the next run started. A worried-looking, overalled object took off from the gas-fire with something red-hot in pincers. Attitudinising members were knocked sideways, Vice-Presidents and Secretaries nearly flattened. An Edinburgh dignitary got as far as ‘This is young La . . .’ as the latter handed him off, burst through a loose maul into the kitchen and got down to it without a backward glance.

The Committee pretended they hadn’t seen anybody.

The foregoing events were not, of course, neatly consecutive.

Some idea of the orderly progress of clubroom work and the utter absence of any sense of achievement in it will be obtained only if it is remembered that they occurred simultaneously and were telescoped with floor-sanding, Snowcemming, reception of furniture and all sorts of other ploys simple enough to mention but each a crisis in itself.

It was soon summer and barely half-way to any hope of completion. 'I don't know how you fellows have the heart to go on holiday,' commented Haig bitterly to three who had already booked and paid for Austria. And certainly with such upsets things lagged even more. There were spells of near mutiny and the Hon. Architect had to go round mollifying and peacemaking; the rhythm reasserted itself and without enthusiasm work went on. We were scraping the bottom of the barrel for assistance now. There was patching to be done on the door and Haig conjured a joiner out of nowhere to do it. There were tiles to be laid round the fire—a baffling thought until Gordon produced 'the brother' out of thin air and he rattled it off with professional ease.

There was an interminable amount of painting. There was the ceiling to be papered by Haig and Russell (custom-built for this particular height). They got up on a shaky batten, facing each other with hands aloft holding up folds of pasted strips and performed a sort of Balinese dance to get it correctly applied. Neither being of a phlegmatic disposition, this performance was generally highly rewarding to the audience, particularly on the occasion when one of the strips turned out to be a yard short and the dance ended in outstanding tantrums.

Eventually, almost before we noticed, it could be said that the worst was over. The library arrived. The slide collection was moved in. Wondrous light fittings, stimulating æsthetic discussions, made their appearance—the straw cigar in the library and, in the main hall, the spotlights and the two dull opaque spheres that were instantly christened 'The Brothers Stewart.'

An opening day was eventually fixed. But true to experience, work and muddle continued almost up to the very opening hour. On the Saturday forenoon in question the carpet was being sewn together *in situ*. The curtain thankfully arrived, no more than comfortably anticipating the opening ceremony.

And the writer's experience of clubroom construction ended, more or less as it began, with the raucous commentary of J. R. Marshall, who was engaged in fitting up the curtain rail. The thing doesn't work properly to this day.

Another Song

THE most important part of the Annual Dinner is the Singing of the Club Song. Composed in 1892-3 by 'that enthusiast,' Stott, and completed whilst he was already sailing to New Zealand, it miraculously preserves the spirit of the old Club. In cold print, it invariably evokes easy scoffing from young and outrageous new members; but when it is sung—and especially sung by Stuart Jack—the scoffing becomes uneasier and uneasier until these dialecticians finally find themselves roaring as happily and traditionally as their more comfortable neighbours. For the tune is irresistible, the words—given a Club, a dinner and mellowness—uncannily apt.

To the ordinary member who has thumbed through the odd old *Journal*, the Singing conjures up Annual Dinner after Annual Dinner, smoky Meet after Meet, good companionships and great times back through the yellowing pages. What it means to the older members may be guessed. It is therefore in sure knowledge that our Song is still vigorous and very well able to look after itself that we print this contemporary song by Tom Patey (who feels exactly as we do); it, too, was sung at the last Dinner and drew forth enormous applause. How Stott would have enjoyed it!

The author promises us a polished-up version, but we think this will do as it stands, with the *verglas* fresh upon it, for this year at any rate. The tune, of course, is 'Dem Golden Slippers' and the German, impossible.

ACH, MEIN GROSSEN BOTEN

(A spurious Teutonic version of the S.M.C. perennial 'My Big Hobnailers')

ON the *Marteau-Piolet* it hangs on the wall,
 The hammers and the slings and the drills and all,
 But we'll scrape off all the mud, and we'll polish off the blood
 And go up to the mountains in the snow!
 Let the pitons rattle, as we go to battle,
 Sound the ever-ringing peal of steel on steel!
 Let the happy chink of the old snaplink
 Echo o'er the mountains and the snow!

Chorus:

Ach! Mein Grossen Boten!
 (Auf! Mein Kletterschuhen)
 Ach! Mein Grossen Boten!
 How they speak of frozen feet, and lengthy stride o'er
 Bergschrund wide—
 Ach! Mein Grossen Boten!
 Ach! Mein Grossen Boten!
 Memories raise of hellish days upon the Eigerwand.

Then our V.S. men will assault the Ben,
 Profanities will echo up and down the glen,
 And every little Tiger will be training for the Eiger
 When we go up the mountains in the snow.
 Then our cragsmen bold will swarm down the shoots
 And avalanche the tourists on the tourists' routes,
 While others, never flagging, Munro-baggers are debagging
 When we go up to the mountains in the snow!

In the grim grey dawn, we struggle ever on
 Though the nights are long in the *Pied d'Elephant*,
 Though the heartbeat quickens, and the stonefall sickens
 When we go up to the mountains in the snow.
 We cut no tracks with the 'good old axe,'
 We discard the rope on the frozen slope,
 In the black *Cagoule* of the Munich School
 We go up to the mountains in the snow.

Minor key:

But—at the last bivouac, when your toes turn black
 And the snowflakes whiten the Horeschowsky (sleeping)
 sack . . .

Major key—triumphantly:

Let the vultures in the valleys hear the *Deutschland über Alles*
 Faintly wafted o'er the mountains and the snow,
 And when the grim day's done, and the victory's won,
 We drink a *Tutti Frutti* to Giusto Gervassutti,
 All the Bergkameraden will return to Inverarnan
 Descending from the mountains through the snow!

Last chorus:

Ach! Mein Grossen Boten
 Ach! Mein Grossen Boten
 How they tell of days of Hell with Tommy Weir or
 Doktor Bell
 (or, Dreams arouse of the old Kingshaus, and ringing cries of
 'Rauss, Rauss, Rauss!' (shouted or screamed))
 Ach! Mein Grossen Boten
 Ach! Mein Grossen Boten
 Throes disclose of toes that froze upon the Eigerwand.

T. W. PATEY.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

LETTERS were once frequent in the *Journal*. The first Meet was mooted in this way, early Munros were assembled and, on controversial topics, worthy antagonists battled enjoyably in print through many volumes. We are unfortunate now in only appearing annually; for to make a point but once in twelve months considerably prolongs an argument. Yet here are three—the first and the last genuine, the second bilious from a 4-month diet of adventitious routes.

The Club Library

SIR,—A room, in the almost deserted premises at 369 High Street, Edinburgh, contains a large collection of books; all of them, like the rooms, gathering dust through lack of interest and use. It is rather puzzling—since this collection covers such a wide field of mountaineering, travel and general interest, dating back to the early 1700's—that members make such little use of it. Only 19 members have borrowed books since the High Street rooms opened—24 books in 15 months!

One of the reasons for the move from the Synod Hall was so that members could have access to the Library at all times, and so that it could be housed properly. Both these things have been done, yet far more use was made of the Library in the Synod Hall. The notices which have been on the Library walls may well have frightened many members off, but these have either been taken down, or have fallen down, in recent weeks. Another reason for lack of use may be that the more recent members do not realise what a fine collection the Club Library is.

Certain things obviously require to be done; the preparation of a complete catalogue of the whole collection, and copies circulated to members; the putting under lock and key of the more valuable and rare books; a complete cross-reference system made, so that a book can be found without searching every shelf; kindred club journals (if we intend keeping them) to be bound—none have been since 1939, at least; and, finally, a firm hand taken with members who borrow books and then forget or just cannot be bothered to return them—it is ridiculous that books can be out for as long as four years and nothing done about it!—Yours, etc.,

JAMES RUSSELL.

The Naming of Climbs

SIR,—A climb is given a name to distinguish it from any other climb. To name it is the privilege of its originator, who may justly contend that his decision is final and further argument petty and irrelevant. Therefore, whilst bringing up this controversial topic in response to several requests, we wish to make it quite clear that there are two sides to the question and that we print the following as a purely personal letter, non-Editorial and probably both petty and irrelevant. Nevertheless, the writer, well knowing

how vitreous is his private position, would much have preferred to cast these stones from the security of his Office. (For several new climbs in which he featured had regrettable christenings—though at the time the names seemed well enough. . . . In extenuation, he featured merely as pendulous and protesting luggage, numerically and intellectually unqualified for the ceremony.)

On the naming of new climbs he would make the following points:—

1. The name chosen should refer, either obviously or subtly, to some feature of the climb or of its climbing. *North Buttress*, *No. 2 Gully*, are examples that, provided one's compass or counting is sound, are generally acceptable, if unexciting. *Red Slab*, *White Slab* are more adventurous voyages into the descriptive. *Fat Man's Agony* is rather too adventurous, though admirably suggestive of the continuously and abrasively restricted nature of the route and—pace Mr Murray and Dr Parish—on that account we think it preferable to *Ptarmigan Crack*, in which genteel and ornithological anonymity it now reposes. Of more satisfyingly imaginative names *Agag's Groove* and *Solomon* (the Welsh route bisecting the *Quartz Babe*) come at once to mind, but there are many more that fulfil point 1 most wittily. But there are also many, an increasing number, in which—as in bad Hemingway—we have the terse confiding obscurity, and nothing else. Tiresome names like *Gestation*, *Constipation*, *Inspissation* and similarly tense and pregnant nouns; *Brian Boroo* and his legendary fellows from four continents, an intolerable horde; *Streptococcus*, *Scaphoid*, *Gastrocnemius* and other totemic spillage of college-washed brains—all significant, no doubt, to their learned contrivers, but to anyone else as irritatingly pointless as the *Yoohah*, *Bing*, *Bong*, *Gnib*, *Gnob*, *Ouch*, *Grrh*, by which the less gifted seek to perpetuate their achievements in the vertical.

2. Besides conveying something to others, the name should be a worthy one. This is less important for small climbs. We can just tolerate 100 ft. or so of *Fat Man's Agony*, but 600 ft. of *Fat Man's Buttress* would be too much. Or again, if Eck, say, makes a 40-ft. Very Severe variation and calls it *Tarzan's Trapezium* (he had made one 10 ft. farther west and called it *Plato's Pentagon* and another 6 ft. farther east and called it *Orpheus' Octagon*) no one will really mind, for Eck is happy and the climbs may be vaguely trapezoid or polygonal, and perhaps he did, after all, climb them respectively solo, with his pal's girl friend, and with a guitar. But if Eck discovers a superb new cliff, does tremendous routes on it and then drapes such thin and tinselly names all over them, we must protest that, since Eck has the imagination and drive to do these magnificent climbs, he might well have exercised such talents on the names he flings to posterity.

Fortunately, classical climbs do tend to have worthily classical (not necessarily Classical) names—*Crowberry*, *Churchdoor*, *Waterpipe*, *Eagle Ridge*; and things like *Hallelujah Heave-Up* and *Airy Mary* may be worth no better terminology. But we would ask originators of good middle-run routes, neither classical nor bouldery, to pick informative names carefully and, where possible, suitable to that part of the country. Because of this care we have *Sgiarr Thearlaich*, *Sgiurr Mhic Coimnich*, *Sgiurr an Fheadain* in the Cuillin and not *Charlie's Peak* and the rest. This is not to suggest that we be smothered in a full blizzard of Gaelic—as pedantic a conceit as any—but

that *Leac Mhòr* has as good a right to be on *Garbh Bheinn* as *Great Slab* or *Lléch Fawr* have to be farther south. Since our ground is Highland, our hills—especially in J.M.C.S. Gaelic—have resounding and vibrant names; possessing, particularly for those of the *Galltachd*, a curiously satisfying quality. We know most of the simple terms already—it would be pleasant to meet them occasionally among the polyglot drivel that disfigures our New Climbs section. But if one is emotionally opposed to such Celtic concessions (whilst gladly talking of *étrier* and *dièdre*) then let the reference be in good Scots or English—not in that cheap flippancy which dismisses *Meall a' Bhuiridh* as *M-@-B*. To this we are particularly averse; we would most certainly rather associate that hill with the roaring of stags than with the swiggings of aspirin.

To end in the true *Pro Bono Publico* (surely that is a V.S. in Skye!) style of a letter to (or by) the Editor, let us respect these places among which we are able to climb; let us have neither *Bazooka Buttress* nor, necessarily, *A' Bhuidheanach Mheadhonach*, let us (we will get it in first!) keep a sense of proportion!—Yours, etc.,

G. J. DUTTON.

Protection Against Falling Stones

SIR,—I should like to draw your attention to a new cap specially designed for climbers.

These caps will absorb a force of between 10,000 and 20,000 lb. A force of 5000 lb. may cause a fractured skull and would almost certainly cause dangerous concussion, so the protection afforded is considerable.

They were originally designed with a reinforcing layer of foam in the peak as a protection for car drivers. The whole cap is made of No. 11 felt, and for climbers the original cap has been strengthened in the crown by more No. 11 felt. In outward appearance it looks like an ordinary cap, and on trial in the Alps we found it light and comfortable.

Further information can be supplied. Approximate price is 39s. 6d.—
Yours, etc.,

HAMISH MACINNES.

NEW CLIMBS

RHUM

(For references, see *S.M.C.J.*, xxiv, 49 *et seq.*)

Ruinsival: Lower Buttress.—*Riona*. 120 ft. Severe. Anne Littlejohn (L.S.C.C.). 10th July 1959.

Some 100 ft. right of North Corner is a large triangular flake about 40 ft. high, with a deep damp gully on the left and large wet overhangs high up on the right. From a cairn, go straight up the most prominent part of the flake to a stance (thread belay) at 40 ft. Traverse left 12 to 15 ft., swinging round by means of a perched block on to a large ledge of doubtful soundness. Climb steep wall above ledge, bearing slightly right to finish almost directly above the start of the climb.

—*Perdita's Traverse*. 140 ft. Very Difficult.
Anne Littlejohn & Anne Clark (both L.S.C.C.). 5th July 1959.

There is an *arête* just left (north) of the 'obvious break' in the rock wall about the centre of the Lower Buttress. Left of this *arête* are two grooves. Climb the left-hand groove to a broad ledge at 40 ft. Descend a few feet from the right-hand end of the ledge, go round an airy corner and traverse right into the right-hand groove. Continue delicately (crux) along and up a projecting staircase on the other (right-hand) side of the groove to a large stance on the *arête*. Finish steeply but easily up right-hand (south) side of the *arête*.

—*Perdita's Groove*. 100 ft. Mild Severe.
Anne Littlejohn (L.S.C.C.). 10th July 1959.

Take groove to right of previous climb and follow it straight to the top; good stance half-way up. (If this stance reached from broad ledge on *Perdita's Traverse*, then standard only Very Difficult.)

—*Sentry's Sortie*. 100 ft. Very Difficult (strenuous). Anne Littlejohn & Anne Clark (both L.S.C.C.). 10th July 1959.

Between the 'obvious break' referred to and the South Corner there is a large shattered *arête*. Some 20 ft. left of this a steep 20-ft. crack (cairn) leads over two ledges to the crest of the *arête*, which is followed for a few feet to a grassy platform overlooking the groove to the right of the *arête* (belay). The opposite wall is climbed for about 15 ft. and a sentry-box gained on the right, from which an exit is made by the corner directly above it (crux).

—*Groove and Chimney*. 100 ft. Difficult.
Anne Littlejohn & Anne Clark (both L.S.C.C.). 10th July 1959.

Follow groove on right of large shattered *arête* to grassy platform of previous route. Climb straight up right wall of groove for 15 ft. as before, and then traverse left over a flake to a ledge, whence a short chimney leads to easy rocks.

Ruinsival: Upper Tier.—*Bachelor's Choice, Variation Finish*. 150 ft. Very Difficult. Anne Littlejohn & Anne Clark (both L.S.C.C.). 6th July 1959.

Start as for *Bachelor's Choice*, climbing No. 2 Groove for 60 ft., then traversing left round a sensational corner to No. 2 *Arête*. Follow the *arête* for 15 ft., then traverse left along an exposed ledge for 25 ft. and descend slightly, with difficulty, to a belay in the corner. Climb corner for 10 ft., then continue the traverse left to an exposed corner, descend 10 ft. to broad exposed ledge, and continue along this for 20 ft. to long narrow slab forming its continuation; follow this to the top.

ARRAN

Cir Mhòr: Rosa Pinnacle.—*Fourth Wall Variation*. 105 ft. Severe.
R. A. Hockey. 6th September 1959.

A rather indirect variation to the right, providing splendid open face climbing.

(8) 55 ft. From grass patch at base of plinth, traverse 15 ft. right and descend to sloping grass corner. Make delicate exposed upward traverse to right across slab, until possible to ascend directly.

(9) 50 ft. Climb broken slab above until barred by overhanging roof. Reach ridge crest by spectacular exit to right.

Cir Mhòr: Lower N.E. Face.—*April Arête.* About 400 ft. Severe. J. W. Simpson & W. Wallace (both J.M.C.S.), 19th April 1959.

This climb follows directly up narrow edge formed by left wall of Gully A (see diagram, p. 68 of Arran Rock-climbing Guide) and the main lower face of the mountain. Except for some 15 ft. the rock is sound. One belay piton was used half-way up; otherwise good stances and belays available.

—*B₂C Rib Variation.* About 100 ft. Severe. Miss G. W. Hamilton & W. Wallace (J.M.C.S.). Easter, 1959.

About half-way up the Rib a spacious grassy ledge is reached. Instead of following original route directly up, traverse right after a few feet to the edge overlooking Gully C; this edge was ascended to top of Rib in one run-out.

Coire na h-Uaimh.—*Slapstick Wall.* 375 ft. Hard Severe. R. Hutchison, jun., J. Gardner & W. Gartshore (all Lomond M.C.). 26th September 1959.

Because of wet weather this route may have been over-graded; it lies on the belt of slabs forming the lip of Coire na h-Uaimh. On right of slabs, half-way up, is an overlap shaped like the letter 'J.' The route ascends to the overhang, then up corner on right, and breaks out on to the crest of the slab on the left. No pitons were left in place.

Start 300 ft. right of lowest rocks (cairn and arrow) to left of steep east-facing little slab.

(1) 40 ft. Climb into upper of two corners, continuing for 25 ft. until exit made to slab on right, and then on to ledges. (2) 50 ft. Follow up easy grassy cracks; piton belay. (3) 70 ft. Keep in crack above until exit made by mantleshelf move to right; piton belay. (4) 105 ft. Traverse 10 ft. right, and then descend to slab. Continue for some 40 ft. in corner until original line can be regained (piton runner); piton belay after tricky layback section. (5) 110 ft. Up and left on to slab, until spike belay reached.

SKYE

Sgùrr Sgùmain: Western Buttress.—*Lost Hope.* 800 ft. Very Severe. J. McLean (C.D.M.C.) & I. Clough. 28th April 1959.

A variation of West Trap Route. Follow West Trap Route for about 250 ft. to the crack behind a large flake, above the (crux) chimney pitch. Lost Hope starts from the large grassy ledge on the right.

(1) 150 ft. Climb slabs and grooves to a right-angled corner with a crack in the back. (2) 70 ft. Climb the thin crack in right wall (arrow); then traverse right, into a groove. Climb this; steep and difficult (piton runner). Continue up buttress, parallel with West Trap Route, by short pitches and grassy ledges.

Sgùrr Sgùmain: Final Tower.—*Willit*. 150 ft. Hard Severe. J. McLean (C.D.M.C.) and I. Clough. 28th April 1959.

The terrace below the Final Tower is broken centrally by a watercourse emerging from a gully with an enormous block in it. This route follows the sharp *arête* on the left (arrow).

(1) 80 ft. Slightly overhanging at first, and hard. Keep to ridge crest (belay). (2) 70 ft. Traverse left for 40 ft. and climb cracked wall on left (belay).

Sgùrr Dearg: N.W. Buttress.—*Valkyrie*. 300 ft. Very Severe. W. S. Yeaman and W. Bonthron (St Andrews University M.C.), through leads. 21st June 1959.

Start up prominent crack in obvious *dièdre* on left of direct start of Æsculapius; this is strenuous and partly overhanging. Cross terrace and continue up *dièdre*, now slanting up to right. Delicate climbing on excellent rock leads to small triangular ledge (120 ft.) with piton belay. Climb overhanging crack to an outward-sloping mantleshelf (50 ft.) and continue up steep cracks and a chimney to finish by last pitch of Æsculapius (Grade A.2), taking final overhang directly.

Sgùrr Mhic Coinnich: Coireachan Ruadh Face.—*Sue's Chimney*. 120 ft. Very Difficult. W. Bonthron, Miss S. M. Bell and W. S. Yeaman (St Andrews University M.C.). 19th June 1959.

Cairned start is at foot of gully on left side of Amphitheatre, half-way up J Buttress. Chemist's Constitutional is farther left. Climb the gully, and finally by right wall end on the Terrace.

MacLeod's Maidens: The Old Lady.—235 ft. Severe. I. S. Clough and J. McLean (C.D.M.C.), through leads. 26th April 1959.

This is the largest of the three stacks off Idrigill Point, north of Loch Bracadale. Access was by roping down sea cliffs (250 ft.) on east side of headland; ropes should be left in position for return. There is no water between the Old Lady and the shore at low tide.

(1) 50 ft. Gain ledge on left, then up right to a grassy patch; piton belay. (2) 75 ft. Avoidable by a scramble on ledge to right and below, but the rock is fairly sound—climb gangway up left into groove, then to terrace at foot of wall above; peg belay in place. (3) 75 ft. Straight up wall, passing big flake, to ledge. Traverse left, and up crack. Continue up to shoulder; peg belay. (4) 35 ft. Along the ridge and up wall (loose rock!). Then to summit block; piton belay. Rope down from pinnacle where 'summit ridge' first reached; 200 ft. rope recommended.

HARRIS

Ullaval: Sròn Ulladale.—*Direct Route.* 1150 ft. Hard Severe. G. J. Fraser & Miss E. M. Baldwin. Easter 1958.

(This climb cannot be located accurately owing to the death of the leader in a climbing accident. It seems a good route and the original account is given here. Note that 'Amphitheatre Buttress' is properly the name of the *upper* part of the crag (S.M.C. 'Islands' Guide, p. 148), and the climb probably starts at the foot of Sròn Ulladale to the right of the Great Gully.) The climb is a direct route on the Amphitheatre Buttress (*sic*), crossing Folkard's 1948 route about its 10th pitch, but thereafter apparently taking a line somewhat to the right. A fine expedition and though there is vegetation in the middle the final section gives beautiful clean climbing. In a grassy bay below the steepening of the bounding gully on the left of Amphitheatre Buttress (*sic*), the Buttress base is a steep wall; the climb starts at the middle of this base, beneath a corner crack.

(1) 40 ft. Climb the wall, bearing left, then back to a niche below the corner. (2) 80 ft. Leave the niche by the right, then go straight up vegetation and a rock wall to a good ledge and belay. (3) 60 ft. Follow a grassy rake to the right, then climb a steep clean wall until possible to move right to a ledge. (4) 40 ft. Leave ledge at right end and climb up crack with small tree alongside. (5) 70 ft. Climb crack and broken groove leading right to large platform. (6) 30 ft. Ascend small overhang direct, on the left. (7) 130 ft. Easy grass to short wall. (8) 70 ft. Climb wall around a large block, and continue over slabs. (9) 70 ft. Easy climbing to belay in a gully 20 ft. above the foot, and to the right, of the next wall. (10) 60 ft. Move on to the wall above the belay; climb straight up to beneath a V-chimney. (11) 50 ft. Climb the chimney, pulling out awkwardly at the top on to a good ledge. (12) 40 ft. Go up slab above on small holds. (13) 70 ft. Traverse up to right towards an exposed stance at tapering foot of final tower. (14) 60 ft. Climb just to left of the rib on steep good holds; chockstone belay beside a protruding flake. (15) 50 ft. Avoid easy-looking groove; move on to face of buttress and climb close to its edge, and then move right on to a sloping ledge. (16) 100 ft. Straight up grooves from right-hand edge of the ledge. At 50 ft., move to right round a rib. Climb a quartz block into a crack, and go up this to a platform under an overhang. (17) 130 ft. Take the overhang at its right, then go straight up the narrow crest of the buttress, finishing up a wide chimney.

NORTHERN HIGHLANDS

Foinaven: Creag Dionard.—*Pantagruel.* 560 ft. Severe. T. Sullivan & T. Abbey (Kinloss M.R.T.). 26th April 1959.

This climb and Gargantua lie on the crag, to the right of the waterfall, shaped like a long-based triangle and facing north-east; they are on the white quartz buttress just right of the waterfall and at the left-hand end of the

triangle. The rock was steep and somewhat loose; belays were scarce and pitons did not take well.

(1) 110 ft. Climb stepped groove (to left of first corner of the cliff) for 70 ft., then traverse right to heather platform. (2) 120 ft. Straight up towards two obvious overhangs; stance. (3) 120 ft. Avoid overhangs on left and climb to big heather ledge. (4) 100 ft. Traverse upwards left, then right and straight on to slabby gangway; climb this for 70 ft. and finish by a 40-ft. wall.

—*Gargantua*. 600 ft. Hard Severe. T. Sullivan & M. Denton (Kinloss M.R.T.). 26th April 1959.

Starts in first corner to left of two conspicuous coloured streaks.

(1) 40 ft. Climb corner to ledge. (2) 110 ft. Climb crack, then traverse 10 ft. right to ledge and poor belay. (3) 90 ft. Straight up to stance and belay beneath overhangs. (4) 90 ft. Turn overhangs on left and follow groove to stance; doubtful belay. (5) 100 ft. Follow groove past holly to stance and wedge belay. (6) 90 ft. Follow groove less steeply to rock gangway. (7) 120 ft. The direct finish invites . . . but: walk up gangway to right and climb 60-ft. crack in wall.

—*Toothache*. 260 ft. Difficult. E. Buckley & G. Lee (Kinloss M.R.T.). 25th April 1959.

A big slabby face forms left-hand side of the corrie drained by the waterfall; starts at the first line of weakness in this face, to right of prominent overhangs (cairn).

Climb open corner; then up ridge to right of large slabs beneath overhang; after a traverse left, continue up ridge, which is now parallel to a vertical crack immediately above the prominent overhangs. Some 220 ft. of scrambling then leads to a rocky plateau.

Ben Loyal: Sgùrr a' Bhatain.—*Rowboat*. 190 ft. Mild Severe. K. Richardson (F.R.C.C.) & D. Dewell (J.M.C.S.). 25th June 1959.

Reached from Cunside track, and lies on the upper tor; rock steep, impressive and sound. Probably the easiest line on the main rampart of the crag, and follows the left-hand bounding ridge. Starts 3 ft. left of extreme bottom left-hand corner of the crag.

(1) 110 ft. On to ledge immediately above corner, continuing up corners until line of ridge merges with that of gully on left; belays. (2) 50 ft. A prominent ledge now crosses the main face (it gives a sensational walk); climb on to it into a corner and climb the 15-ft. left wall. Continue up grassy groove to belay. (4) 40 ft. Move right from belay, step on to ledge on *arête* and continue up easy rocks.

Stack Polly: Main Peak, South Face.—*South Rib*. 180 ft. Severe. A. Zahuski & J. Whitrow (both J.M.C.S.). 18th May 1959.

The face is characterised by three vertical ribs. This is the left-hand one, bounded on its left by easier rocks stretching towards Baird's pinnacle.

After an easy first section, the sharp nasal overhangs were gained by a small pinnacle and steep rocks, and turned by a chimney on their right.

From a large ledge 20 ft. above the chimney a wall was climbed by two thin cracks, finishing over awkward undercut rocks. Easy ground follows.

—*South Face Route.* 200 ft.

Very Difficult. A. Zaluski & J. Whitrow (both J.M.C.S.). 21st May 1959.

Starts up rocks left of chimney in centre of face (cairn). From easy ground so reached, traverse right (round foot of central column) into grassy groove. After 30 ft., climb chimney on left; follow easier rocks to ledge and from its right end make directly for summit, trending to right just before finish.

Stack Polly: S.W. Face.—*Anyways.* 200 ft. Very Difficult. J. G. Wright & J. Ryman (both J.M.C.S.). 18th May 1959.

Start up a corner 120 ft. right of Baird's Pinnacle and gradually work to left up various cracks and corners until, after a short stomach traverse beneath a jammed block, the original route is joined at its final pitch.

Cùl Beag.—*Quelle Delicatesse.* 170 ft. Very Severe. J. G. Wright & A. Zaluski (both J.M.C.S.). 17th May 1959.

Seen from Linneraineach, the rocks are in two definite tiers. Wedge Buttress (*S.M.C.J.*, xxvi, 383) is on the upper tier; this and the following climb is on the lower one.

Towards the left is a small pear-shaped slab, bounded by a short gully on the left and a deep chimney on the right. Climb a small chimney splitting the slab diagonally, then follow right edge to top. 120-ft. rope barely enough.

—*Curving Chimney.* 220 ft. Very Difficult. J. G. Wright & J. Ryman. 21st May 1959.

The slabby wall on right of lower tier is split by this curving chimney.

Climb steep grass at base (piton); climb chimney till forced out on to face on right. Cross to the Pulpit; traverse back to line of chimney and follow to top. Other routes possible from Pulpit.

Beinn Eighe: Coire Mhic Fhearchair, Eastern Ramparts.—*Gnome Wall.* 500 ft. Severe. T. W. Patey. 16th August 1959.

A formidable upper band of quartzite cliff extends for about $\frac{1}{4}$ mile from the edge of the left-hand Triple Buttress to Far East Gully. There is one obvious line of weakness near the right-hand end of the Ramparts: this route escapes from the Wall on to the Triple Buttress some 100 ft. below the cliff top near a projecting gargoyle.

Reached from the foot of Far East Gully, the route starts at the extreme right-hand end of the screes below the Upper Ramparts. (Lovat and Weir, in their 1954 attempt, began lower down (from the main corrie floor) and so included a lower tier of cliff. Their unsuccessful attempt on the upper tier probably went farther to the right. They retreated some 100 ft. below the gargoyle after 6 hours of V.S. climbing; the route they selected was certainly much harder and would perhaps make a finer climb if it could link up with the last pitches of Gnome Wall.)

Start directly below the gargoyle. There is a choice of hard routes. After veering leftwards for some 150 ft., easier ledges allowed a rightward return to regain the direct line up to a point within 200 ft. of the gargoyle. A tempting line up a ferocious cracked wall was abandoned and a sortie leftwards showed that the spur to the left was partially split from the face some 60 ft. above. A lunge on to a grassy ledge on the left gave access to a wet lichenous crack and slab which led in 30 ft. to a deep rock crevice; one passes easily rightwards through this and emerges at the top of the crucial pitch. The gargoyle is now only 60 ft. above. After unsuccessful attempts to thread the overhangs, a route was found round the airy ledge on the right, leading to excellent rock and an exposed 70-ft. pitch; the finish was on easy ground just right of the gargoyle.

It is doubtful whether any two parties would follow the same line: however, on most pitches the correct solution would not be the obvious one.

Beinn a' Mhùinidh.—*Miscellany*. 170 ft. Severe. A. Ellison & J. R. Harris. 4th June 1959.

This and the following route are on a crag in the same band as the Waterfall Buttress, but higher up and farther towards the Bonaith Donn corner. On the left of the crag is a wide broken gully and *Miscellany* is immediately right of this, up a ridge indistinct below but sharp above.

From the cairned start climb the ridge to heather ledge, traverse right; climb diagonally right, up yellow slab to edge of wide crack; climb crack and steep wall above. A mantleshelf leads to ledge in 20 ft.; turn the overhang on right and finish by knife edge on right.

—*Climax Slab*. 160 ft. Severe. A. Ellison & J. R. Harris. 6th June 1959.

This route lies 50 ft. right of *Miscellany*, up the least heathery of three slabs, and—like that climb—becomes progressively harder.

After 60 ft. take a piton belay on heather ledge. Continue to next but one heather ledge, below overhang; piton belay. Climb left of overhang to wide chimney; take left hand fork, emerging with difficulty.

—*Crypton Crack*. 190 ft. Severe. A. Ellison & J. R. Harris. 4th June 1959.

Farther up Gleann Bianasdail. To the left of the prominent steep slabs of the Bonaith Donn corner the buttress becomes more broken and there is a wide gully. The route lies 270 yds. farther up the path from this gully, at a point where the rock becomes more consistent again.

From cairn, climb short wall to narrow ledge. Climb crack above, then up slab; traverse 10 ft. right and up groove to heather ledge. Continue up groove past a ledge; climb wall above on insecure holds; a final wall follows.

A' Mhaighdean: The Octave Ribs.—*Fahrenheit*. 190 ft. 'Mild' Very Severe. F. Green & G. McCallum (both G.U.M.C.). 1st April 1959.

The Octave Ribs are obvious on the upper of the two bands of coarsely crystalline rock that slant across the Dubh Loch face, under the sandstone

cap of the mountain. This climb is on No. 4 Rib, immediately right of very obvious red rib; it is very sustained and exposed and boots are recommended.

Climb edge for 40 ft., then traverse left into grassy groove and climb this to belay. Rejoin rib crest; climb 100 ft. to piton belay and stance. Climb crest to overhang; take this directly and finish up short slabs to boulder belay.

—*Soh What?* 110 ft. Very Difficult. K. Torrance & A. Currie (both G.U.M.C.). 3rd April 1959.

Just right of Fahrenheit. From cairn, follow rib crest until shrubby ledge reached; poor belay above. Continue over small bulge and follow steep left-hand wall of groove above.

Tòrr na h-Iolaire (Carnmore).—*Suspension*. 310 ft. Severe. G. McCallum & C. Pollock (both G.U.M.C.). April 1959.

On west face. Starts 6 ft. right of Wester Route, up slabs leaning at right-angles to cliff.

Follow ledge rising to right; avoid overhang on right and climb 100 ft. to ledge and belay. Climb up easier rock to broad rake; belay. Ascend rightward-trending crack to notch in overhangs above; climb overhanging notch to ledge above, just left of prominent chimney. Climb high-angle wall for 50 ft. on left of chimney. Easier rock to finish.

Duncansby Stacks.—*South Stack*. 240 ft. Very Difficult. J. K. Butler, J. A. McLeish & J. D. Porter. September 1958.

The three Stacks of Duncansby lie 1 mile south of Duncansby Head. The southernmost is the highest. All are islands at low tide.

A raft was used to cross the 30-ft. low-tide channel to the rock platform on the south side. From this south-west corner the route led up a short wall and up sloping grass and broken rock to a boulder belay at 120 ft. From the grass terrace now attained, a 50-ft. wall on the inside face of the Stack at the south end gives way to a narrow ledge below a 20-ft. wall; the wall was climbed by an exposed crack at its southern end (crux). Thereafter a narrow ridge leads to the summit block, a large piece of sandstone covered with very loose boulders. The outside face of the Stack falls sheer to the sea. Rock is friable and grassy, and a rope is always advised. (See *John o' Groats Journal*, 3rd October 1958.)

CAIRNGORMS

Cairngorm: Coire an Lochain.—*The Milky Way*. (FIRST WINTER ASCENT.) 1½ hours. Grade 3. T. W. Patey, V. N. Stevenson & I. W. Armitage. 11th February 1959.

This ill-defined gully, 30 yds. right of the Vent, may have been climbed in summer, but is a better winter route.

The first pitch, above a steep snow tongue, is a vertical 100-ft. chute. This is avoided by a 50-ft. deviation to the top of a spur on the right, followed by a 120-ft. lead on steep mixed ground to regain the gully above the chute.

The gully then continues uneventfully, finishing by a spiral trough within the upper amphitheatre of the Vent.

—*Ewen's Buttress (No. 3 Buttress)*.
(FIRST WINTER ASCENT.) 1 hour. Grade 3. T. W. Patey & V. N. Stevenson. 3rd February 1959.

In excellent snow-ice conditions, the crest was reached directly from the gully foot. The hardest move was entering the shallow gully splitting upper buttress.

—*West Buttress (No. 4 Buttress)*.
(FIRST WINTER ASCENT.) $\frac{3}{4}$ hour. Grade 3. T. W. Patey. 5th February 1959.

Climbed almost entirely on ice; apart from the summer crux, which was simplified by a snow take-off. Several pitches of severe standard under prevailing conditions, notably the chimney above the crux. The hardest ice climb in the corrie.

—*Central Crack, Direct Finish*. 60 ft.
Very Severe. G. J. Dewar (E.U.M.C.), C. Allen (Glenmore) & D. Knight (all leading . . .). August 1959.

Follows prominent crack cutting up to right on face of square tower at finish of Central Crack Route; bounded by flake on right. From ledge at foot avoid first recess by ledges on left. Regain crack and continue to next recess. Emerge with difficulty to left under roof. Exposed, good holds to top.

Cairngorm: Coire an t-Sneachda.—*Aladdin's Buttress*. (FIRST WINTER ASCENT.) $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours. Grade 4 (direct). T. W. Patey. 5th February 1959.

The route was the narrow 'gully-cum-chimney' on right-hand aspect of buttress. The two main (vertical) ice-pitches were climbed almost direct, with slight deviation to slabs on left; both were of a very severe nature.

—*Spiral Gully*. (FIRST WINTER ASCENT.) $\frac{1}{2}$ hour. Grade 2. T. W. Patey. 4th February 1959.

The gully immediately right of the three Trident Gullies biting into the upper columns of Fluted Buttress as it spirals to the right. No real pitches in good snow conditions.

Cairngorm: Hell's Lum Crag.—*Kiwi Slabs*. (FIRST WINTER ASCENT.) $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours. Grade 4. T. W. Patey & V. N. Stevenson. 12th February 1959.

Climbed almost entirely on thin ice-ribbons. First two pitches snow-buried, but otherwise route was as in summer. The Severe pitch in the upper part was bare rock. An excellent climb, which could be improved in severe ice conditions by taking the direct line up a frozen waterfall (dripping on the original ascent).

Sgoran Dubh: No. 5 (Pinnacle) Buttress.—*The Slash*. 800 ft. Very Severe. T. W. Patey & V. N. Stevenson. 15th February 1959.

The prominent gash in the lower slabs of the Buttress, marked by the

tree at its entrance. A watercourse usually, its ascent requires drought or severe frost for minimum discomfort, previous attempts being washed back. This time semi-winter conditions prevailed, with much ice-glazing; crampons were used.

(1) 60 ft. Traverse up from right to gain gully bed above first pitch; block belay. (2) 40 ft. Direct ascent up vertical slime avoided by climbing right retaining wall for 50 ft. up an inset corner to a chockstone allowing a *rappel* back into the gully. (3) Easy ground to the foot of the next pitch, where an easy ledge out to left lands one below a sea of slabs preventing further deviations. (4) 100 ft. The key pitch. A horizontal traverse on thin ice led back into the corner of the gully (now a rounded groove). This was climbed direct, then for 80 ft. by wedging and wet ice nicks: difficulty increases. (5) 60 ft. Cave pitch; back up round chockstone. (6) 150 ft. Easy snow to foot of next pitch. (7) 100 ft. A vertical corner chimney, icicle-festooned and dripping wet. (8) Easy snow to end of lower section at 500 ft. The logical continuation is by an upper gully immediately above and ending in a deep cleft giving access to the crest of No. 5 Buttress near its top.

Lochnagar.—*Shallow Gully.* (FIRST WINTER ASCENT.) 9 hours. Grade 5 quoted. D. L. Macrae & F. G. Henderson (through leads; both Hall Russell's C.C.). 8th February 1959.

The direct summer route was followed on ice- and powder snow-covered rocks. The steep first 150 ft., consisting of three pitches, was the main difficulty. The crux (pitch 2) was an awkward move up a groove, steepening out of balance over an overhanging nose. Thereafter continuous step-cutting on hard snow led to a rock *arête* and the plateau.

Creag an Dubh Loch.—*The Mousetrap.* 650 ft. Very Severe. J. R. Marshall, R. Marshall & R. Anderson. November 1959.

The route lies up the steep slabby buttress right of Central Gully. It starts at the gully foot, level with some large pale blocks, and left of a small rock bay; cairn.

Climb an easy groove, trending to left by slabs to belay below a series of steep cracks. Follow these cracks to gain a grassy groove in 100 ft. and continue up this for 70 ft. to flake belay. Climb corner on left of steep wall 20 ft. above, emerging left on to a flake; move up to gain cracks and continue to stance and belay at 90 ft. Follow the cracks in three pitches, sometimes delicate, to large grassy ledges. A slab pitch of 60 ft. leads to 200 ft. scrambling to the buttress top. (Pitons were used only at belay points.)

CENTRAL HIGHLANDS

Creag Dubh, Newtonmore

This crag is situated a few hundred feet above the Newtonmore-Loch Lagan road, some 2 miles from Newtonmore. It comprises several buttresses.

—*Nutcracker Chimneys*. 400 ft. Very Severe. T. Sullivan (Crag Lough C.C.) & A. Parkin (J.M.C.S.). 19th July 1959.

On the biggest, most obvious, buttress there is a great wall; on its left is more broken ground, and the climb follows a groove-and-chimney line up there.

Start in recess behind oak tree and left of prominent rock nose. (1) 65 ft. Climb a right-hand groove, traversing left at top to tree belay in overhung bay. (2) 90 ft. Traverse right, cross overhangs, then up chimney and crack to airy stance (tree belay). (3) 110 ft. Step out left, climb grooves, take rightmost of two chimneys, continue to grass ledge (poor belays). (4) 100 ft. Climb obliquely leftwards, then up grass to tree belay below *arête*. (5) 45 ft. Follow *arête*.

—*The Brule*. 400 ft. Very Severe. T. Sullivan (F.R.C.C.) & N. Collingham. 25th October 1959.

Starts in first corner to right of Nutcracker Chimneys.

(1) 65 ft. Climb corner, leaving on right; a mantleshelf leads to ledge (belay). (2) 75 ft. Traverse right, under overhangs to undercut groove; climb this (belay). (3) 80 ft. Climb the corner. (4) 100 ft. Straight up to tree belay. (5) 85 ft. Climb two slabs to end.

—*Rib Direct*. 350 ft. Very Difficult. B. Halpin, T. Abbey & S. Tondeur.

Starts almost directly below prominent rib vanishing into trees and lying to right of the great wall.

(1) 50 ft. Up wall, taking left traverse to belay. (2) 80 ft. Traverse up right to short slab; tree belay. (3) 80 ft. Traverse left and up slanting crack, whence scrambling to tree. (4) 120 ft. Climb rib.

Crag Meaghaidh.—*North Post*. (FIRST WINTER ASCENT.) 5 hours. T. W. Patey & J. H. Deacon (Climbers' Club); G. K. McLeod & P. Danelet (Guide des Diablerets). 6th February 1960.

This classic gully offers an outstanding winter climb; hard frost and a liberal plastering of ice are essential.

In the narrow chute one major chockstone pitch was turned on the left edge of the gully (due to ice falling from above). Where the gully widens, a vertical iced chimney in the left-hand corner gave access to an easy ledge leading to a large platform on the right. There is an easy way up the rocks on this side. However, the party recrossed the terminal open face which overlooks the gully, by a very exposed 80-ft. traverse, the highlight of the climb. A further 100 ft., first rightwards and then back to the left, completed an artistic finish to the gully. An easy open *coulair* led to the top in some 200 ft.

BEN NEVIS

Càrn Dearg: North Wall.—*Zag-zig*. 180 ft. (Just) Very Severe. I. Clough, R. Porteous, P. Brocklehurst & R. Henson. 28th May 1959.

The obvious zig-zag fault up the steep wall below Easy Way.

(1) 90 ft. Climb to, and traverse along, the grassy lower crack to stance and belay on left. (2) 90 ft. Back right up the chimney by a stomach traverse; half-way, one is temporarily forced out on to the wall, and just before the finish there is an awkward emergence from a cave; well protected by chockstone runners.

Càrn Dearg: Great Buttress.—*Titan's Wall*. 370 ft. Very Severe; A. 2. I. Clough & H. MacInnes (C.D.M.C.). 19th April 1959.

Follows the great wall between Sassenach and The Shield. Hard free climbing and, with its Sassenach continuation, one of the longest artificial routes in Britain, needing at least 12 hours; tremendous exposure.

(1) 120 ft. Climb first 50 ft. free to overhang, by cracks up middle of wall (strenuous; piton runners). A less strenuous alternative climbs edge of buttress for 20 ft., then continues up the slab. From the overhang the crack line is followed, trending right, by artificial climbing to a ledge. Traverse left along ledge until above overhang; good stance and peg belays. (2) 150 ft. Return along ledge to rejoin crack line. Follow this, artificially, over bulges to ledge and belay. (3) 100 ft. Ascend left, then right, to steep groove, following this to grassy terrace (piton runner in place), where Sassenach is joined. Finish by pitches 7 to 12 of Sassenach (another 480 ft.).

Càrn Dearg: Great Buttress.—*The Shadow*. 800 ft. (Mild) Very Severe. T. Sullivan & N. Collingham (both Kinloss M.R.T.). 19th September 1959.

Start at a thin crack 35 ft. right of Route I.

(1) 90 ft. Climb the crack, traversing right to a belay. (2) 40 ft. Surmount block above, go round corner and follow little groove to grass ledge. (3) 90 ft. Climb wall behind belay, step right and enter grassy groove. (4) 120 ft. Continue up groove until it widens; traverse 30 ft. right to block belay on slabs. (5) 130 ft. Climb slabs towards a black slab; just below this, traverse left and break through the overlap; then on to a little corner. (6) 130 ft. Cross wet streak, ascending diagonally to right; belay in grassy groove (joining with Centurion route). (7) 120 ft. Climb up, then to right (joining Route II); belay in grassy corner on right edge of buttress. (8) 80 ft. Climb slab on right wall of corner, traverse left and cross another slab to a ledge; belay above on left. (9) 80 ft. Climb groove above belay.

Càrn Dearg: No. 5 Gully Buttress.—*The Slant*. 400 ft. (Mild) Very Severe. T. Sullivan & N. Collingham (both Kinloss M.R.T.). 19th September 1959.

Start at the lowest point of the buttress, to right of a gully.

(1) 50 ft. Climb corners to a ledge with block belays. (2) 120 ft. Continue up more awkward corners, gaining a gangway; at top, step right and then left; belay below cracked slab. (3) 50 ft. Ascend slab, traversing right to small corner. (4) 130 ft. Break out left, traverse left up a slab and continue leftwards up steep wall to big ledge; 100 ft. more of scrambling to finish.

Càrn Dearg: Càrn Dearg Buttress.—*The Bat*. 1000 ft. Very Severe. Pitches 1 to 3 and 7: R. K. Holt (E.U.M.C.) & R. Smith; Pitches 1 to 7: D. Haston & R. Smith; Pitches 7 to 11: D. Haston & J. R. Marshall. (All through leads.)

Smith describes the climb in an article in this issue.

(1) 50 ft. As for Centurion. (2) 110 ft. Follow the corner 30 ft., traverse the slab on the right 30 ft., climb up to a large block and follow the shelf on the right to belay at the end. (3) 90 ft. Descend 10 ft., then go up and right by a shelf into a corner, over a short wall to a triangular slab, and up a V-groove above and slabs on the right to belay below the chimney of Sassenach. (4) 40 ft. Climb a groove just left of the left edge of the chimney to a slab for a piton belay on the left. (5) 100 ft. Climb the corner above (pitons used). (6) 110 ft. Climb a groove trending right. (7) 110 ft. Cross the left end of a terrace and climb the bulge above. (8) 110 ft. Climb a bulge on the left and follow leftward-trending grooves. (9) 110 ft. Follow grooves to the right of a roof. (10, 11) Climb walls and grooves to the top of Route II.

Ben Nevis: Secondary Tower Ridge.—*Lady's Day*. 360 ft. Mild Severe. I. Clough, Catherine MacInnes & E. Buckley (Kinloss M.R.T.). 18th April 1959.

Starts immediately left of the foot of Vanishing Gully. All pitches are of 60 ft.

(1) Climb to stance; peg belay. (2) Traverse right across the gully, then up to stance; peg belay. (3) Climb steep slab above (crux), and then ascend rightwards to spike belay and stance. (4) A rising traverse to right. (5) and (6) Continue up the chimney line above to join the 1934 route.

—*Vagabond's Rib*. 700 ft. Hard Severe. I. Clough. 18th April 1959.

To the left of Vanishing Gully are two tiers of steep slabs. Climb to top of first tier, following steep sound rock on edge overlooking Vanishing Gully; cairn. (The 1934 route crosses the gully at this point.) Continue more easily up fine slabs above to crest of Tower Ridge.

—1931 *Route, Variation Start*. (Length and grading not quoted.) I. Clough. 18th April 1959.

This follows clean dry rib between the (usually wet) chimneys of the original route and of Kellet's Variation, starting at the foot of the right-hand chimney.

—*Beggar's Groove*. 600 ft. (Hard) Very Difficult. I. Clough, Miss J. Pickering, C. Anderson, R. Henson, P. Brocklehurst & R. Porteous. 20th May 1959.

Start from shallow gully to right of Douglas Boulder West Gully (half-way between foot of Vanishing Gully and the start of 1934 Route, Secondary Tower Ridge) at foot of a chimney (arrow).

(1) 50 ft. Climb chimney to grass ledge and belay. (2) 100 ft. Continue up groove above and to large block (runner). Step down right, then traverse up right along groove to stance; chockstone low down. (3) 80 ft.

Cross groove, climb wall towards the left; then up to top of first tier of slabs to cairn on Vagabond's Rib. Remainder of climb is by grooves and cracks up the slabs above to crest of Tower Ridge (as for Vagabond's Rib).

Winter Ascents.—The following have been reported:—

Platforms Rib. (FIRST WINTER ASCENT.) 6 hours. H. MacInnes (C.D.M.C.), I. Clough (alternate leads), T. Sullivan & M. White. 8th March 1959.

The summer route was followed throughout.

The Great Chimney. (FIRST WINTER ASCENT.) 2½ hours. Robin Smith & J. R. Marshall (through leads). 6th February 1960.

Steepening snow led into the chimney, whence continuous difficulties were maintained to the ridge (a rope sling was used on the spike of the summer crux).

Minus Three Gully. (FIRST WINTER ASCENT.) 4 hours to crest of N.E. Buttress. Robin Smith & J. R. Marshall (through leads). 7th February 1960.

The climb followed flank of Minus Two Buttress closely all the way (with escapes to Platforms Rib possible). Of the four ice-pitches met, the central two were the most difficult.

Gardylloo Buttress. (FIRST WINTER ASCENT.) 6½ hours. Robin Smith & J. R. Marshall (through leads). 8th February 1960.

The route followed the lower of the two distinctive long grooves to the centre of the face; then by a vertical wall on to the upper groove and so to the easy final gully. The crucial 150-ft. pitch leading to the easy snow funnel took 3 hours' ice-work of a high order; 2 piton runners were used for protection.

The Comb. (FIRST WINTER ASCENT.) 3½ hours. Robin Smith & J. R. Marshall (through leads). 12th February 1960.

Piggot's route was followed to the top of the crux chimney, when a left traverse was made for 40 ft. to a shallow chimney groove giving a direct line to the crest of the buttress; a climb of fine character.

The Orion Face. (FIRST WINTER ASCENT of this direct line.) 8 hours. Robin Smith & J. R. Marshall (through leads). 13th February 1960.

A very direct line was taken. It started at the broad ledge of the Slav Route (gained by 100 ft. of ice climbing), and followed an ice-groove (beside the Beta route) to a piton belay beneath a roof. A leftward traverse eventually reached the Basin. Mixed snow and ice climbing led to the foot of the second slab rib, turned by an ice-wall on the right. Leftward-tending snow and ice grooves led to the snow slopes beneath the final tower of N.E. Buttress. Ice-grooves were followed to the summit slopes; these were climbed tactly in the darkness and may not be the easiest finish. (See *S.M.C.J.*, xxvi, 372.)

Rogue's Rib. (FIRST WINTER ASCENT.) 7 hours. I. Clough & G. Grandison. 2nd January 1960.

The first ice-pitch of the Italian Climb was followed by an exposed traverse to the rib on the left. The summer route was then followed throughout.

Comb Gully Buttress. (FIRST WINTER ASCENT.) 5 hours. J. M. Alexander & I. Clough (through leads). 8th January 1960.

From below a huge ice column near the foot of No. 2 Gully the route went diagonally right to gain a large snow basin. It then followed a groove from the left of the basin until a rising traverse right led to good belays below upper part of a prominent curving chimney in the steep final rocks. The chimney was climbed and summit reached to left.

Compression Crack. (FIRST WINTER ASCENT.) 5 hours. I. Clough & R. Sefton (Kinloss M.R.T.). 29th January 1960.

Summer route followed past 'easy chimney and slab pitch' to point level with a large shelf leading left to crest of Raeburn's Buttress. Then a traverse above South Castle Gully led to wide chimney with large capstone. Bad snow and ice prevented a direct ascent, and 20 ft. below capstone the right wall was traversed to a crack; with channel pegs and slings this was climbed to ledge. Thereafter an awkward chimney and a left traverse led to easier ground.

Ben Nevis: Polldubh Crags.—For an introduction to the following climbs, see Clough's article in the NOTES section.

High Crag.—Seen from Pinnacle Ridge, this is the large two-tier buttress high up to the right of Secretary's Crack Buttress, above and left of Pine Wall.

Crag Lough Grooves. 500 ft. Very Severe. T. Sullivan & I. Clough (through leads). 29th March 1959.

Keeps mainly to left side of buttress, starting to left of a cave overhang at its foot.

(1) 40 ft. Climb small corner to stance and belay beneath overhangs. (2) 75 ft. Traverse 10 ft. right over ribs into a groove; up this to heather ledge; tree belay. (3) & (4) 50 ft. & 80 ft. Pleasant slabs to large grass terrace separating the two tiers. (5) 60 ft. Climb to, and traverse, obvious gangway trending right (wooden wedge); turn corner, using two pitons; small stance, peg belay in place. (6) 70 ft. Climb shallow groove above on to overlapping slabs, and up to grass ledge and belay. Then 120 ft. of fine slabs to the top.

Kinloss Grooves. 240 ft. Very Severe. I. Clough & T. Sullivan (through leads). 11th April 1959.

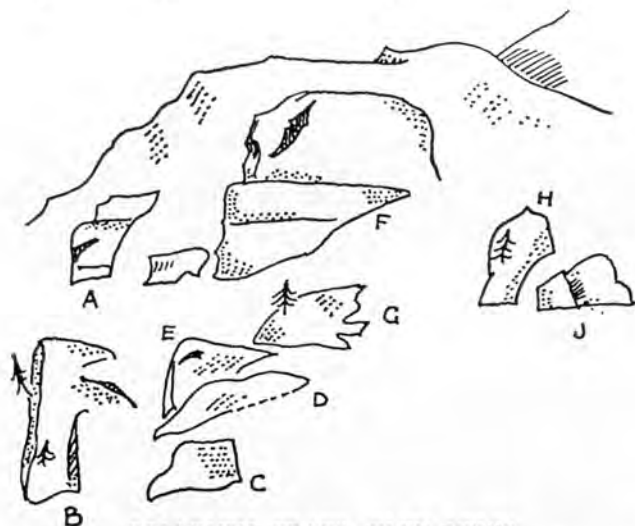
Starts at the first obvious break in the overhang right of Crag Lough Grooves.

(1) 50 ft. Up groove to small stance beneath overhang; piton belay in place. (2) 90 ft. Emerge right, then climb to recess; up groove and slabs above (tree belay). (3) 100 ft. Straight up slabs to grassy terrace at top of first tier.

Enigma. 270 ft. Hard Severe. T. Sullivan & I. Clough (through leads), 11th April 1959.

On the second tier; starts at right end of grassy terrace to left of a big recess.

Up the slab to a heather groove at 30 ft.; traverse up left for 30 ft. to avoid bulge, then 30 ft. back right; continue to ledge and tree belay (120 ft. rope sufficient). A further 120 ft. up the slabs finishes the climb.



POLLDUBH CRAGS, GLEN NEVIS

A, Secretary's Buttress. B, Cavalry Crack Buttress. C, Pinnacle Ridge. D, Repton. E, Pandora. F, High Crag. G, Spike. H, Pine Wall. J, Styx. (After I. Clough.)

The Paunch. 240 ft. Very Severe. I. Clough. 5th April 1959.

On the second tier; starts round the corner left of the gangway on Crag Lough Grooves at the foot of a wall of red rock; overhangs for first 15 ft. (cairn).

Up strenuous overhang to stance and belay at 60 ft. Then 20 ft. to tree belay, and another 40 ft. of scrambling to join Crag Lough Grooves. The final 120 ft. lie up the slabs.

Hot Tin Roof. 220 ft. Very Severe. T. Sullivan & I. Clough. 2nd May 1959.

Starts 6 ft. right of Kinloss Grooves; the third break.

(1) 100 ft. Up fault to heather ledge; traverse left 10 ft., then up to pine tree runner and continue diagonally right past another tree to small stance and piton belay. (2) 120 ft. Up slabs, trending left and keeping right of heather groove.

Hawk's Nest. 195 ft. Hard Severe. I. Clough & E. Buckley. 21st April 1959.

On the second tier, starting 40 ft. above The Paunch.

(1) 15 ft. Up to ledge with large blocks; thread belay. (2) 60 ft. On to ledge and down slab; turn corner, using wedge, piton and slings. Swing into groove beneath roof and descend until above hawk's nest. Up gangway on right, turn corner and traverse to tree belay. (3) 60 ft. Climb gully above to chock belay. (4) 60 ft. Climb cracked wall on left to ledge on buttress edge, then up slabs.

Styx Buttress.—This is the steep buttress with several overhangs, to right of Pine Wall. Two routes, Doomsday and Damnation, were described in the 1959 *S.M.C.J.* (xxvi, 375).

Resurrection. 140 ft. Very Severe. I. Clough & A. R. Lakin. 5th April 1959.

Follows the long tapering slab up the left-hand side of the buttress (cairn); of sustained difficulty.

Fidelity. 140 ft. Very Severe. I. Clough & T. Sullivan (through leads). 11th April 1959.

Starts 15 ft. right of diagonal heather groove splitting front of buttress; cairn.

Up edge of slab to tree belay; directly up rib on left of heather niche (belay); up middle of slab.

Iche. 120 ft. Very Severe. T. Sullivan & I. Clough. 11th April 1959.

Starts to right of the diagonal heather groove.

Up slab to poor stance (belay at right end of overhang); traverse left, up thin crack to tree runner, then upwards left to top.

Tykes' Climb. 160 ft. Very Difficult. E. Buckley & I. Clough. 20th April 1959.

Starts at left-hand edge of buttress.

Up middle of 30-ft. slab, then up shattered ridge to ledge (belay); climb above, past dead tree, and up ridge.

Repton. 150 ft. Hard Severe. T. Sullivan, E. Buckley & A. Flegg. 27th March 1959.

A line of rounded overhangs is conspicuous. Up middle of face to stance and tree belay below overhangs; traverse left for 30 ft., then up corner to stance and tree belay; up small corner behind, break out right and so to top.

Pandora's Buttress.—The second buttress above Pinnacle Ridge.

Pandora. 230 ft. Severe. I. Clough & E. Buckley. 20th April 1959.

On the left of the buttress.

One hundred feet up clean slabs on left to large stance (belay high on right). Then up corner above for 10 ft., traverse to left edge and follow rib; round corner, traverse below trees to other corner and climb wall above to tree belays. Finally, up delicate slab on left.

Dental Groove. 110 ft. Severe. I. Clough & E. Buckley. 20th April 1959.

The obvious heathery groove half-way up left-hand face of buttress.

Difficult, up to tree belay; continue up groove to join Pandora, then up wall to tree belays; climb slab on left.

Phantom Slab. 190 ft. Very Severe. T. Sullivan & I. Clough (through leads). 3rd May 1959.

Starts (arrow) at foot of rib left of, and 100 ft. above, the start of Pandora.

(1) 60 ft. Climb edge of rib. (2) 60 ft. Cross to foot of Dental Groove and climb this to tree belay. (3) 70 ft. A bold lead up steep slab on left.

Flying Dutchman. 220 ft. Severe. T. Sullivan & I. Clough (through leads). 3rd May 1959.

Starts at rock tongue below and to right of Pandora.

Up ridge crest to grass terrace (tree belay); then climb slabs on left, passing small skyline tree.

Degradation. 230 ft. Severe. I. Clough & T. Sullivan (through leads). 3rd May 1959.

Follow slabs to right of Flying Dutchman; not a very good climb.

Pinnacle Ridge.

Mechanic's Institute. 145 ft. Severe & A. 2. I. Clough, A. R. Lakin & A. Parkin. 5th April 1959.

Starts to right of beginning of Severe Slab route, up 30 ft. corner overhanging by 10 ft.

Artificial climbing up corner, with free finish on good pull-up holds; continue to tree belay. Then left round corner and up middle of wall (crossing ordinary route) to belay on floor of scoop. Climb crack on right, pull round on to slab and finish up this.

Burma Road. 160 ft. Hard Severe. I. Clough & E. Buckley. 20th April 1959.

Starts between Severe Slab and Mechanic's Institute routes.

Climb slab to corner, reach holly and fight through subsequent jungle to overhang; climb right wall to stance and tree belay. Traverse right along heather ledge to belay (arrow). Climb slabs straight.

Cavalry Crack Buttress.

Storm. 300 ft. Very Severe. I. Clough & T. Sullivan (through leads). 3rd May 1959.

Starts at left-hand edge of the buttress.

(1) 100 ft. Up steep left-hand groove for 20 ft., then cross to right-hand groove, following it to ledge below diagonal crack; belays. (2) 100 ft. Climb crack 25 ft., then awkwardly to right and traverse left up to prominent pine; belay. (Alternatively, continue up crack after 25 ft.) (3) 50 ft. Up groove right of pine; three pitons used to climb wall above, leading to second groove; piton belay on buttress edge. (4) 50 ft. A delicate groove on left

leads to top. (Possible escape to right from pine by stomach traverse, making climb Hard Severe.)

Vampire. 320 ft. Very Severe. I. Clough & E. Buckley. 21st April 1959.

Starts 30 ft. right of left edge of buttress (cairn and arrow).

(1) 25 ft. Climb wall to ledge and tree belay. (2) 75 ft. Up rib on left (arrow) into groove; spike runner. Trend to left over slabs to block runner. Gain pine tree on left; belay. Walk 25 ft. to foot of groove. (3) 100 ft. Climb groove, then up wall, bearing left on good holds. Finish at escape from Storm; spike belays. (4) 120 ft. Climb slabs, keeping left for best climbing.

Heat Wave. 370 ft. Very Difficult. I. Clough, Miss J. Pickering, C. Anderson, R. Henson, P. Brocklehurst & R. Porteous. 22nd May 1959.

Starts at left-hand edge of buttress.

Climb groove (with holly at foot) for 20 ft., then step left into other groove and, reaching a tree, climb up to heather ledge below diagonal crack of Storm (belays). Traverse right, round corner to ledge and tree belay below vegetative gully. Climb gully a few feet, then up wall and slabs on left to ledge and belays; thence up slabs.

Secretary's Crack Buttress.

Secretary's Buttress, Direct. 280 ft. Mild Severe. I. Clough & E. Buckley. 21st April 1959.

Starts at front of buttress, up a smooth slab corner, then following thin central crack to top of Secretary's Crack, finishing up the slabs of that route.

Last Word. 70 ft. Very Severe. I. Clough. 22nd May 1959.

A hard alternative to first pitch of previous route. Below Secretary's Crack is a parallel crack. Last Word takes the steep wall below this.

Scimitar Buttress.—Nutcracker Chimney and Diagonal Crack (*S.M.C.J.*, xxvi, 272) are on this buttress.

Wanderlust. 120 ft. Very Difficult. I. Clough. 22nd April 1959.

Starts to right of Diagonal Crack at holly bush, following up fault, then traversing up left across Diagonal Crack and finishing up a rib.

Little Buttress.—The small buttress to right of top of Pandora's Buttress. Surmounting the climbs on this buttress is a pleasant ridge.

Spike. 160 ft. Very Difficult. I. Clough, P. Brocklehurst, R. Henson & R. Porteous. 29th May 1959.

Starts up clean slabs on front of buttress to tree; thence climbs up and traverses to buttress edge; stance and belay above. Finishes straight up (arrowed) slab above; belay.

Tutor's Rib. 160 ft. Mild Severe. I. Clough. 29th May 1959.

Traverses right after a few feet of Spike route, then goes straight up the rib and finally up slab some 10 ft. right of Spike.

GLENCOE

Buachaille Etive Mòr: Crowberry Ridge.—*Dingle*. 130 ft. Very Severe. D. Haston & J. Stenhouse. September 1958.

This route follows the line of the prominent corner between Fracture route and Crowberry Ridge proper.

Start at the narrow wall between these routes and climb 40 ft. to a belay. Then climb corner for 90 ft. to the slabs of the Ridge.

Central Buttress.—*Swansong*. 300 ft. Severe. D. Haston & J. Stenhouse. 19th April 1959.

Start approximately 100 ft. left of Kinloss Corner. Follow the line of an obvious crack for 120 ft. to ledge and belay. Traverse leftwards 60 ft. to the foot of an overhang; then climb overhang and go rightwards up a thin crack to the top in 120 ft.

North Buttress: West Face.—*Shibboleth, True Finish*. 180 ft. Very Severe. R. Smith & J. McLean (C.D.M.C.). June 1959.

From the ledge and piton belay at top of original Pitch 5, traverse right to a good spike; then step up and go right to enter a bottomless groove. Climb to ledge and piton belay on the right (90 ft.). Traverse the wall on the right (just above the great cave overhanging Raven's Gully) to enter the recess at the bottom of the crack springing from the cave roof; climb the crack to cliff top (90 ft.).

Aonach Dubh: North Face.—*Stook*. 400 ft. Severe. R. Smith & D. Haston. April 1959.

Follows the fine open corner some 100 ft. left of Deep Gash Gully.

From top of rock step leading from Sloping Shelf to Pleasant Terrace, step right and climb a rotten rib and steep wall to enter the corner, and continue, to make a piton belay (120 ft.). Climb the now vertical corner (80 ft.), finishing by walls and grooves above (200 ft.).

—*Yo-yo*. 300 ft. Very Severe. R. Smith & D. Hughes (E.U.M.C.). May 1959.

The obvious corner half-way between Ossian's Cave and Deep Gash Gully, running from Sloping Shelf to Pleasant Terrace.

Starting at an undercut flake, go up and left 20 ft. to a slab, then up and right, into the corner, for 110 ft. to piton belay on shelf to left. Climb corner 70 ft. to belay above the biggest overhang; then 100 ft., with a short excursion to the left near the top.

West Face.—*Hee-haw*. 400 ft. Very Severe. J. Moriarty & D. Haston. 21st June 1959.

This route is on the right flank of E. Buttress and starts at an overhanging crack about 20 ft. left of the bed of No. 4 Gully.

Climb the crack for 80 ft. to grass ledge and belay. Pitch 2 (120 ft.) takes the line of a corner crack for 20 ft., and then goes up a steep loose wall for 100 ft. to a detached block below a prominent crack; piton belay.

Climb overhang above, take a piton runner in the crack and follow the latter until below a large overhang. Aim right and go up steep wall to ledge and piton belay. Traverse left into a steep groove; climb this. At the top go 90 ft. left to small stance on slab. Climb the slab above, go up overhanging crack and reach top in 40 ft.

Geàrr Aonach: North Face.—*Meander.* 260 ft. Very Difficult. J. R. Marshall & D. Haston. March 1959.

This and the next two routes spring up from the conspicuous ledge girdling the face; climb vegetatious rocks to arrive at the rightmost end of this ledge.

A cairn marks the start, at the rightmost end of the ledge. Climb the wall above for 130 ft. to reach large grass ledge. Turn the grey nose above by a groove on the left and continue straight up for a further 130 ft.

—*The Walk.* 260 ft. Difficult. J. R. Marshall & R. Marshall. May 1957.

Start some 30 ft. left of Meander and follow obliquely leftwards the line of two grass bays to the top of the face.

—*The Prowl.* 250 ft. Very Difficult. D. Haston & J. R. Marshall. March 1959.

Some 100 ft. left of the rightmost end of the ledge is a recess beyond a large rowan tree. Climb 10 ft. up a chimney above to a small bay and belay. Quit the bay by a crack on the left and follow line of crack to the top.

—*The Kneepad.* 550 ft. Very Severe. D. Haston, J. Moriarty & J. R. Marshall. May 1959.

Look for a chimney rake some 50 ft. left of and below the highest part of the face. It is bounded on the left by a black wall, below which a cairn marks the start of the route.

Climb the wall, then a vegetatious groove, to reach main ledge in 180 ft. Traverse this rightwards for some 100 ft. to a large cave. Turn the overhanging roof on the left by an oblique crack, pass a chockstone and gain the lip of the overhang by using two pitons (in place). Move right to an overhang bay, climb overhang by crack on the right, and reach a small platform at 25 ft. Traverse right a few feet and follow steep grooves (piton runner) for 100 ft. Easier for 150 ft. to top.

—*Preamble.* 480 ft. Severe. J. R. Marshall, L. S. Lovat & G. J. Ritchie. May 1957.

Some 150 ft. left of the highest part of the face is a small vegetatious buttress with a grey slabby tongue of rock at its base; the right flank of this buttress is bordered by a grassy chimney.

Climb from cairn at grey tongue for 90 ft. to a small chimney left of the grassy chimney; belay. Continue up chimney for 90 ft. to the main ledge. Follow line of black groove to a belay at 100 ft. and continue until a slabby ledge is reached. Traverse left into the chimney of Chimney and Face Route, and climb up to a large grass ledge. Then climb the wall 40 ft. to the right of the final section of that chimney, and finish in 100 ft.

SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS

Craig-y-Barns, Dunkeld

There are many conveniently accessible, almost suburban, cliffs in Scotland where summer evening rock climbing can be enjoyed. Fortunately, we also have mountains and are not restricted to these Harrison's Rocks and their often tediously minute instructions; but we will include samples of such tea-time buttresses, for their initial exploration is certainly good fun. Edinburgh J.M.C.S. has its Salisbury Crags, Glasgow its Whangie, Fort William its Polldubh Jungle, and now Perth—beating about its own bush—has produced Craig-y-Barns.

This is a densely wooded hill some $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles north of Dunkeld, on the north side of A9, usually giving climbs on good rock comparable with those on Ben A'an of the Trossachs. There are three main crags.

The lowest and most easterly crag, above Charlotte's Cave, is hidden by trees (which may interrupt roping-down!). Some six routes made here range from Difficult to Severe and a few Artificials may have been hammered out.

The second, Lover's Leap Crag, is a 200-ft. cliff facing south-east, directly under the summit and easily seen from the road. Only one route, the best on Craig-y-Barns, has so far been reported on it and this climbs directly up the middle:

Craig-y-Barns: Lover's Leap Crag.—*The Kiss of Doom.* 150 ft. Severe. R. A. Hockey & J. E. Proom. June 1959.

The crag is crossed by a grassy terrace sloping up to the right and ending at a 100-ft. pinnacle; between the right wall of this pinnacle and the main cliff is an unclimbed overhanging crack, and the climb starts in a recessed corner 25 ft. right of this crack.

(1) 35 ft. Up 25 ft., then diagonally left to small cave above overhanging crack; belay. (2) 20 ft. Climb diagonally right to good ledge with sycamore tree belay. (3) 80 ft. Move right and up over the first bulge on to a steep face. Follow easiest line on good holds to the crux, a final bulge; runner possible in thin crack. Belay at oak tree 40 ft. above. Scramble to top.

The third crag, West Buttress, is a 150-ft. crescent-shaped cliff rising within 30 yds. of the main road, just north of Polney Loch. Several routes have been made; the following are mostly by R. Campbell and P. Brian, of the Perth J.M.C.S., and date from the past two summers. All except the first two have a south-east exposure. Each route lies to the right of the previous one.

Craig-y-Barns: West Buttress.—*Ivy Crack.* 60 ft. Very Severe. The leftmost fissure at the left end of the crag.

—*Consolation Corner.* 80 ft. Very Difficult. The next fissure to the right.

—*Twisted Rib*. 150 ft. Very Difficult. Start at beech tree below centre of crag. Climb rib to ledge, step left, climb to ash tree and traverse back right to ledge and belay. Continue right until able to return left to grassy bay. Climb slabs to left or right, or (Very Severe) faint central groove.

—*Beech Wall*. 150 ft. Severe. Starts just right of beech. Go up and left almost to Twisted Rib, then back right and up to good ledge; up layback crack on left, move right, to ledge, and then directly up on good holds past whin bush to top.

—*Recess Route*. 150 ft. Very Difficult. Starts at rib 30 ft. right of dead tree. Go up to grassy recess, climb chimney on left to tree-covered terrace and then up the wall behind the trees.

—*Cuticle Crack*. 100 ft. Very Difficult. The thin crack just left of the vegetative central Hairy Gully.

—*Bollard Buttress, Left Route*. 150 ft. Difficult. Starts 20 ft. right of Hairy Gully. Climb to small ledge, then up wall to edge of Hairy Gully; then right to detached boulder, the Bollard, and so to top.

—*Bollard Buttress, Direct Route*. 150 ft. Severe. Starts in alcove right of previous route. Climb to ledge by ash tree; straight up Severe wall to Bollard.

—*Terminal Buttress*. 170 ft. Severe. Starts right of fallen boulders (cairn). Climb to inset corner; up this to ledge and belay. Use combined tactics to climb overhang, climb to thorn bush, step right and continue over another overhang and steep wall to top.

(The above information was supplied by J. E. Proom and R. A. Hockey, with whose botanical knowledge we are impressed.)

ARROCHAR

Ben Narnain: Yawning Crag.—*Muckle Mou'*. 110 ft. Very Difficult. P. Mitchell & J. R. Ewing (Greenock M.C.). 12th September 1959.

Yawning Crag is an outcrop $\frac{1}{4}$ mile south of the summit, at 2500 ft.; it is 150 ft. high, 200 ft. long, faces south-west and lies at 70 degrees. Muckle Mou' is a cavernous chimney. This and the next two climbs were done in vibrans.

From the sunken floor ascend over boulder pitches to back of outer chimney. Climb left wall to spike belay (runner); make a hand traverse for 8 ft. up diagonal crack below overhang on left wall, transfer oneself to inner chimney and make height to rising floor of jammed boulders, belaying there at 60 ft. Climb up and out to foot-wide passage beneath boulder-jammed roof, continuing through passage until escape (crux) possible to compartment under final boulders; excellent seat and belay at 40 ft. Emerge, finishing across slab on brink of right wall.

—*Cicatrice*. 110 ft. Very Difficult.

P. Mitchell & J. R. Ewing (Greenock M.C.). 12th September 1959.

Starts 20 ft. lower and to right of Muckle Mou', following a thin crack.

After a climb to ledge and block belay, there is a short wall to a cave and good stance. The continuously difficult crack is then climbed to the crag top.

—*Lip Route*. 70 ft. Very Difficult.

This, climbed by the same pair on the same day as the above climbs, goes up the left edge of Muckle Mou', on small holds.

Creag Tharsuinn.—*Alfresco*. 130 ft. Severe. D. McKelvie, C. Whyte, H. Martin & A. Burns. 21st June 1959.

Starts at foot of lowest wall of the Rake (cairn).

Climb centre of face on small holds for 110 ft. and then traverse right to heather ledge; piton belay. Traverse left and finish directly up centre of wall. (A piton runner can be obtained half-way up first pitch at a small bulge on the left, but this necessitates delicate traverse to regain route.)

GALLOWAY

Craigdews.—*Central Route*. 250 ft. Severe. G. J. Fraser. (? date.)

Craigdews is a little south-facing cliff on the New Galloway-Newton Stewart road just east of the Grey Mare's Tail. The route has more character than is at first apparent. Start in a clean-cut bay at the middle of the base; ahead is a steep wet wall and to the left an easy slab.

Climb the slab and follow the rib above to the first broad terrace. Walk left some 30 ft. Climb mossy wall (bounded on right by undercut nose) until a line leading diagonally right can be taken; at end of line step awkwardly right, into a heathery chimney, and follow this to the second terrace. Then climb the corner at the right side of a slab to a smaller terrace. Climb the groove and then a large unstable-looking flake; swing into a niche and climb the rib—steep but with good holds. Scrambling to top of hill.

NOTES

Arran Notes

Ben Nuis Chimney.—The aircraft wreckage lending a bizarre aspect to Pitch 4 of this climb ('Arran Rock Climbing Guide,' p. 20) was, according to W. Wallace (J.M.C.S.), deemed unsafe and pulled away in August 1959.

Skye Notes

Duplications.—Unwitting duplications of routes are common enough and, whilst expert scrutiny does its best to reduce their published incidence, some will slip through into the *Journal*. For the sake of Guide Book Editors' sanity, these instances must be recorded, and we are indebted to all who point them out. In the last issue: (a) **Sgùrr Sgùmain: Final Tower, West**

Face.—*Petite Dièdre* (xxvi, 396) follows the same line as PENITENTIARY GROOVES (xxvi, 395) which, being the earlier climb, gives the definitive name to the route. Clough considers 'Severe' the better grading. (b) **Sròn na Ciche: Eastern Buttress.**—*Staumcracks* (xxvi, 393) apparently follows the same line as BOREAS GROOVES (xxvi, 394); the latter, earlier name is therefore established as the correct one. Embarrassingly, the St Andrews party classed it as only 'Severe'; Clough suggests a compromise of 'Hard Severe'!

Northern Highland Notes

Sgùrr an Fhìdhleir (Coigach).—T. W. Patey writes: 'I climbed the Buttress in 2½ hours on 18th August 1959, making what is perhaps a more direct finish to the route than those described in the 'Northern Highlands' Guide. For the most part I followed Baird's 1933 route, finding the description adequate but the climbing extremely unpleasant, due to much friable wet vegetation. Contrary to the (Editor's) note in the Guide, Baird's party did not escape by the uppermost grass terrace, as did Parker and Young; they appear to have made a hard and fairly direct ascent of the north-west wall overlooking the Terrace.

'The Great Slab from which Parker and Young retreated—"the easy-looking slabs"—is, in fact, the key to the upper Buttress (as yet unopened). The slab is cut at intervals of 40, 30 and 40 ft. by thin grass ledges. The first tier goes easily straight up the slab; the second is by-passed on the left by a steep groove round the corner of the Buttress. The third would have been the crux, and will certainly succumb to a roped party, thus permitting the continuation of a most elegant line.

'However, in common with Baird's party, I traversed 80 ft. right and mounted the spur on the right of the Great Slab. The overhanging central part of the face now prevented return to the planned line. Instead, I climbed the north-west face more or less directly and perhaps to the left of Baird's route throughout. Eventually a 60-ft. horizontal traverse to the left led out on to the backbone of the Buttress on easy ground about 120 ft. below the Shoulder. In the prevailing conditions the last 300 ft. of climbing were probably Very Severe, and the rock heavily vegetated. This finish is perhaps unjustifiable.'

Foinaven: A'Cheir Gorm.—*Cave Ridge.* I. G. Cumming and Miss H. Rose found a Moderate climb of some 350 ft. in July 1959 on this ridge; it is the central one of three, each bounded by stone shoots, which together make up the final cliffs of A' Cheir Gorm when viewed from the east. A small cave is visible from below.

Ben Hope: North Ridge.—*Winter route.* Ascent of this mountain by the North Ridge involves negotiation of a wall straddling the ridge at 2600 ft. In suitable winter conditions this can be avoided by a short, steep snow-gully climb 60 ft. east of the ridge, whence the ridge may be regained above the obstacle (I. G. Cumming & J. M. Lyons (J.M.C.S.), in February 1959).

Cnoc na Freiceadain (Coldbackie, near Tongue).—K. Richardson (F.R.C.C.) explored this crag last summer (see 'Northern Highlands')

(Guide, p. 141). He confirmed its being for the large part hopelessly loose, but climbed the right-hand gully of the three dividing the lower crag. It consisted of a 90-ft. Difficult pitch and there the rock was 'adequately sound.'

Cliffs by Linneraineach.—A small cliff which meets the road some 800 yds. towards Ullapool from Linneraineach has been explored by members of the London Section of the J.M.C.S. They have named it FREE SAMPLE and have worked out a couple of 90-ft. Very Difficult routes.

Cairngorm Notes

Cairngorm: Coire an t-Sneachda, The Mess of Pottage.—This is the ill-defined crag left of Jacob's Ladder. It may not offer any worth-while rock climbing. In winter, two routes were worked out by J. H. Deacon and T. W. Patey. (1) On the broken right flank is an obvious snow route (there are several lines). (2) A steep diagonal staircase climbs leftwards in the middle of the crag. This is Severe, on iced rock. The direct finish was not completed; a 100-ft. traverse to the left was the escape.

New, Undocumented, Climbs.—The Editor of the 'Cairngorm Rock Climbing Guide' sends us this list of new climbs of which he has as yet 'only the barest details,' and which are not included in the forthcoming Guide:—

BEINN A' BHUIRD: COIRE NA CICHE.—*Sickle*. 350 ft. (First winter ascent.) A. Thom & R. Wiseman. March 1959.

CAIRNGORM: HELL'S LUM CRAG.—*Escalator*. 300 ft. (First winter ascent.) J. Y. L. Hay & A. Thom. January 1960.

BRAERIACH: GARBH CHOIRE MÒR.—*Tiara*. 300 ft. Very Severe. A. Thom, G. Annand & R. Wiseman. June 1959. On buttress between Egyptian Fantasy and She-Devil's Buttress.

GARBH CHOIRE DHaidh.—*Chimney Pot*. 500 ft. (First winter ascent.) R. H. Sellers & K. A. Grassick. March 1959.

COIRE BHROCHAIN.—*Vanishing Shelf*. 650 ft. (First winter ascent, of a line (D) followed by G. H. Leslie & M. Smith on West Buttress in summer, 1955.) R. H. Sellers & K. A. Grassick. March 1959.

—*Bhrochain Slabs*. 650 ft. (First winter ascent.) W. Gault & D. Bruce. February 1960.

Central Highland Notes

Creag Meaghaidh.—*North Pipe*. Winter ascents. J. H. Deacon & T. W. Patey ascended this on 7th February 1960. A. G. Waldie & C. G. M. Slesser climbed this route under winter conditions at Easter, 1956, and Slesser has repeated the ascent twice since then; these feats went unrecorded, so we quote from Patey:

'From the bottom of the North Post a long corridor slants up to the

right, ending half-way up the face below two obvious gullies on the upper castellated tier. These gullies, the North and South Pipes, are on the prominent corner of the main face where it bends back towards the Window; directly below is a long scree shoot.

'We started directly below the Pipes from the scree shoot by-passing a waterfall on the left, and followed easy slopes to the foot of the Pipes. Insufficient time prevented us investigating the South Pipe, which looked exciting. The North Pipe lies back comfortably throughout its 400 ft., interrupted only by four short ice-pitches: a pleasant climb, which deserves to become more popular. Our time: $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours, for 800 ft.'

(Curiously enough, in this issue of the *Journal*, Tennent describes one of the previous ascents; for this is 'Staghorn Gully' where he incurred his leader's wrath.)

Ben Nevis Notes

Haunt of the Tiger: A Record of Recent Developments on Polldubh Crags. Before reading these notes, reference should be made to 'The Rock Playground of Lochaber,' an article by J. Ness in the 1951 issue of the *Journal* (xxiii, 323) giving the early history and routes on these fine crags, which deserve more popularity. When shrouded in mist the high cliffs of the north face of Ben Nevis are often wet, cold and forbidding; whereas Polldubh usually welcomes the climber with warmth and sunshine because of its southern aspect and low altitude. Even in showery weather the crags can give fine climbing and soon dry off; and there are many caves and overhangs. Combinations of routes can afford as much as 1000 ft. of climbing. For example, a combination of Burma Road on Pinnacle Ridge with Pandora and Crag Lough Grooves (or Kinloss Grooves and Enigma) on High Crag will give Hard Severe and Very Severe climbing for 890 ft. With a little imagination the same method can be used to link routes of lower grades.

A great many of the newest routes are in the highest grades, but this is what has been needed on Polldubh for some time. Some of the old routes have been found to be easier than their gradings would suggest and are suitable for the more moderate climber. Up to the time of the recent explorations there were no graded routes of interest to the rock 'tiger'; this has now been remedied. The down-grading of some of the old routes is due mainly to the use of rubber soles. This is necessary in order to achieve some sort of standardisation. Climbs previously classed as Severe and meriting only Very Difficult standard are: Route I on Hangover Buttress, Secretary's Crack and Pine Wall. The Pinnacle Ridge gradings are correct.

The R.A.F. Mountain Rescue teams have figured prominently in the recent developments. In October 1953 the R.A.F. Mountain Rescue Summer Course was held at Steall, and several days' training were spent on Polldubh. At least three parties climbed a route on what is now called High Crag. Dan Stewart was the first to find the route which traversed by a narrow heather ledge on to the crag above the initial steep section and followed the slabs (which are now the middle section of Crag Lough Grooves) to the terrace below the second tier.

In the summer of 1957, along with other members of the Kinloss team, I did two new routes on Hangover Buttress. One was quite a hard free climb, the other a very interesting artificial route. On the artificial climb free climbing led up to an overhanging roof. Using pegs driven up into the roof, a traverse was made to the lip on *étrier*. The crack above still overhung and had to be pegged until it was possible to finish up a very delicate slab. Care was needed with rope management or the leader found that rope-drag made it impossible for him to continue up the slab!

In 1958 John Alexander (then officer in charge of the team) and I discovered Styx Buttress, not a very big buttress but very clean and, owing to its overhangs, impressive. We climbed two grand routes, Damnation and Doomsday, both Very Severe. These climbs really marked the advent of hard free climbing on Polldubh.

Easter 1959 saw the start of a fresh wave of exploration. It began when Terry Sullivan of the Fell & Rock C.C., who had recently joined the Kinloss team, and I rediscovered High Crag. We noticed an obvious weakness in the lowest overhanging section of the buttress—a groove. I led the first pitch to the foot of the overhangs. Sullivan led the next 70 ft., a superb pitch, which was very sustained. By delicately crossing three steep rock ribs, the groove was entered. Determined climbing led up the groove until, when things were getting really harrowing, a perfect but awkward thread-runner gave protection for the rest of this exacting pitch. Pleasant slabs (previously climbed by Dan Stewart) led up to the terrace which separates the two main tiers of the buttress. The next section was overhanging, but an undercut and outward sloping gangway led up to the right. By using Sullivan's shoulder I gained the gangway and traversed up. Two pitons were needed to round a corner where I was able to use a small stance and a piton belay to bring up Sullivan. He was, however, unable to reach the gangway and eventually had to use a wooden wedge and sling. The groove above the belay overhung and was holdless, but Sullivan climbed confidently up on friction holds and turned the overhang. This was the last hard pitch, and glorious slabs led us up to the summit of the buttress. Sullivan called the route Crag Lough Grooves in honour of his home club. It is the finest and the hardest route on the crags; in its 500 ft. are three long pitches of Very Severe standard.

During the next few weeks development was fast and furious. Many of the existing crags were worked out and new ones discovered. Now, though possibilities for good routes still exist, most of the best lines have been climbed, and are recorded in the New Climbs section of this issue.

As a rough indication, the following list may be used. Climbs are in order of difficulty:—

VERY SEVERE: Crag Lough Grooves, Last Word, Storm, Fidelity, Phantom Slab, Kinloss Grooves, The Paunch, Resurrection, Vampire, Damnation, Doomsday, Iche, Hot Tin Roof, Route III on Hangover Buttress.

HARD SEVERE: Burma Road, Hawk's Nest, Enigma, Route II on Hangover, Repton.

SEVERE: Pandora, Repton, Flying Dutchman, Degradation, Nutcracker

Chimney, Dental Groove, Pinnacle Ridge Severe Variations, Mechanic's Institute, Secretary's Buttress Direct, Tutor's Rib.

VERY DIFFICULT: Route I on Hangover, Secretary's Crack, Pine Wall, Spike, Pinnacle Ridge, Wanderlust, Tykes' Climb, Heat Wave.

DIFFICULT and MODERATE: Sheep Fank Wall, Cavalry Crack. (It is hardly necessary to record climbs in these lowest grades as routes of this standard can be found on most buttresses but are generally unsatisfactory as climbs.)

IAN CLOUGH.

Point Five Gully.—The first winter ascent took 29 hours of climbing extending over 5 days, and the 'saga' was well described by Clough in our last issue. Now we hear that J. R. Marshall and Robin Smith, in the course of their February quarterings of the mountain, have edited this to a mere 7 hours—'a magnificent climb,' reports Marshall.

Glencoe Notes

Clachaig Gully.—There has recently been a large rockfall in Clachaig Gully, a part of the west wall below the Great Cave having collapsed into the gully and swept down about 50 yds. Another large fall is imminent, as a huge section of the west wall in the same place is slipping away and is liable to collapse in conditions of heavy rain or thaw. No large pitches have been obliterated, and the character of the climb has not been altered. (*Reported April 1960.*)

D. J. B.

Miscellaneous Notes

New Climbs.—The task of sorting out 'New Climbs' is heavy for Editor and Scrutineers. For the guidance of future contributors to this section, the following suggestions are made:

1. Do not send in boulder problems or small *zwanzigmeter* routes, whether scrambly or Very Severe, from places like the Cuillin, where such things abound. Send them in by all means from remote or unusual airts where their presence lends interest to an otherwise pastoral scene; Collie's Pinnacle on Càrn Bhinnein is an example—rubbish in Skye but a *Grépon* in Glen Thaitneich.

2. Short straightenings-out of classic routes, however, are welcome—provided that they *do* improve the major climb.

3. There is little point in perpetuating another route a piton's breadth from an existing one of the same standard. One need not so assault a cliff in peace time.

4. Adopt arrangement used in this issue for Mountain, Cliff, Route, Length, Grading, Participants and Date. Whilst description adequate for repetition is essential—especially that of the *start's* precise location—try to avoid a pitch-by-pitch dissection: if a route has character it should stand on its own bottom rocks. To 'follow the line of least resistance' and still be hard is indicative of excellence.

5. If you notice anything unusual—rock, snow or aeroplane falls, duplications or curious gradings, for instance—send in your observations. They could be very useful as ‘Notes.’

Other Contributions.—The policy of the *Journal* has been elaborated in the Editorial. All contributions are welcomed, for this is a Club forum; they may appear as Articles, Letters or Notes. If they arrive before 1st November, any editing necessary can be done in collaboration with the author; for those sent in after that date, no such guarantee is available, though notice of change will always be given.

Photographs—topographical or personal—are also desired; outstanding quality or interest is essential.

The Hon. Editor is anxious to receive suggestions for improving the *Journal*, in content or *format*; they may be private or for publication.

Future issues will go to Press earlier, and anything received after 1st March will not be published in the *Journal* of that year.

The Hon. Ex-Secretary.—So Ross has gone! That persuasive voice, that velvet glove, that discreet and innocent astonishment, that expert polishing of spectacles and of Agenda—gone! Resigned, and smirking from Vice-Presidential altitude. He was, as many have perceived, a far better Secretary than we deserved, and we had him for ten years. Like Western weather he ‘wass so ferry consecutive’ that, aloof from circling and ephemeral committees, he became almost a Permanent Staff to lean upon. Any query from anyone, imperious, faltering or tetchety, and back by return came that postcard or that letter impeccably typed in red and blue beneath the Club’s calm monogram, soothing and informative; it was incredible, but it happened, time after time. How anyone so unbearably efficient as Ross Higgins escaped early death by stonefall we do not know.

The selfless work he has put in has been enormous. No one else could have done this exacting task with so little fuss, have weathered so many storms so adroitly, have contended with and pacified so many thrawn and warring factions; and all without being driven to cynicism or the Arctic. The strain must have been very great! But there he is, our new ex-Secretary, as courteously invaluable as ever, still dispensing impeccable information and still as thoroughly and sincerely and practically dedicated to the Club’s welfare as any man can ever have been. Let, therefore, the Club’s appreciation of, and deep gratitude for, Ross Higgins’ most splendid services—so well voiced at the last A.G.M.—be recorded again here.

Belay Loops.—The B.M.C. Circular No. 290, issued by the British Mountaineering Council and the Association of Scottish Climbing Clubs states:

The attention of all climbers is again drawn to the risk which is taken in using belay loops of light-weight rope, whether for safeguarding a second or as a support for a running belay.

A further accident has shown the inadequacy of belay loops of thin line. A leader fell from Carreg Wastad when 10 ft. above a running belay consisting of a karabiner and a belay loop of $\frac{3}{8}$ -in. circumference nylon line.

The loop broke and the leader fell to the full length of the rope, sustaining severe head injuries.

BELAY LOOPS OF LIGHT-WEIGHT ROPE OR LINE, WHETHER OF NYLON, MANILA OR ITALIAN HEMP, ARE LIKELY TO FAIL IF A LEADER FALLS EVEN A SHORT DISTANCE. AT ANY TIME THE PROTECTION THEY GIVE IS VERY LIMITED, ALTHOUGH IT CAN BE GREATLY INCREASED BY PROTECTING THE LOOP, WHERE IN CONTACT WITH THE ROCK, BY A LEATHER SHEATH.

Scottish Mountain Accidents, 1959-60

AGAIN, the list is long. Again, the moral to be drawn is usually clear. The more obvious contributory factors are italicised.

29TH MARCH.—David Pearson (20) and John Lammin (22), London University M.C., climbing Aladdin's Couloir, Cairngorm. Pearson leading, *wearing crampons in wet slushy snow* on final pitch. Crampons balled-up and he fell; belay failed to hold in slush and both went down West Chimney for 450 ft. Leader killed, second injured. Recovery by Glenmore instructors and students.

5TH APRIL.—Patricia Laird (19) and Robin Griffith (24), of Leeds University, wearing vibrams and *without axe or rope*, attempted to traverse Liathach in strong wind and snow flurries. On Pinnacles rock became difficult with new snow and while climbing down to south Griffith slipped on snow-covered slabs, stopping himself after 50 ft. In spite of warning, his companion tried to follow; she slipped and fell into a gully. Worsening weather foiled attempts to locate the body. Kinloss team, using 500 ft. of rope, found it and brought it down next day.

19TH APRIL.—Frank Chisholm (19) and J. Thomson, both of Edinburgh and who had taken a 'Beginner's Course' of the Mountaineering Association, on Douglas Boulder, Ben Nevis; wearing vibrams and *carrying* a rope. Rocks had *verglas*. Chisholm led and, second not being able to follow, continued solo whilst companion descended. In 50 ft. leader stuck and could not retreat. Second told him to stay whilst he went for rescue party. Before second reached foot of Boulder, leader hurtled past him. Body brought down by Lochaber rescue team assisted by Rev. Bob Clark and Mr and Mrs Hamish MacInnes.

10TH MAY.—Ronald H. Sellers (S.M.C.) killed on Springboard, Black Spout Pinnacle, Lochnagar. Roping down as last man, when belay came away. Died of injuries; stretcher party by Etchachan Club members.

25TH JUNE.—David Fulton (19) killed on Sgurr Mhic Coinnich.

13TH JULY.—Valerie Harrison (17), hill walker and plant hunter, missing on Killin hills. Large search parties, including R.A.F., out several days. Body found on Creag an Lochain.

20TH JULY.—Gordon Highlanders on march from Braemar to Aviemore. A sergeant fell and broke leg in boulder field near highest point. Carried to Rothiemurchus Hut, and thence by ambulance. Glenmore instructors called on for aid.

2ND AUGUST.—Robert Caldwell (28) suffered ankle injury on north Arran hills.

3RD AUGUST.—Boy of 17, member of Rutherglen Academy party staying at Norwegian huts, Glenmore, collapsed on Nethy side of Stac na h-Iolaire of Cairngorm on return from Bynack More. Carried down by Glenmore instructors and Rover Scouts.

5TH AUGUST.—Eleven-year-old girl stuck on Creag nan Gall, Ryvoan; father went to rescue and got stuck as well. Glenmore instructors lowered both down, safe but shaken.

7TH AUGUST.—*Same boy of Rutherglen Academy* (see above) collapsed and died on Càrn Elrig. Camp party brought body down, with Glenmore kit.

?TH AUGUST.—Climber fell from Cioch Direct route, Skye. Rescued by Rock & Ice Club and Creagdhu Club.

15TH AUGUST.—Donald Knight, student on holiday training course at Glenmore Lodge, deliberately left party, after climbing instruction on Creag a' Chalmain completed, and tried a Severe route on his own. Came off: multiple injuries.

20TH AUGUST.—Frank Smith (26) of York (Rock & Ice Club) fell 30 ft. from Pitch 1 of Agag's Groove; fractured pelvis and ribs. Stretcher party from climbers in the vicinity.

22ND AUGUST.—David Blair (36) of Cockermouth was pulling himself up on to top of Collie's Pinnacle, Bidean nam Bian, when a block came away in his arms. Fell on to ledge just under summit, on west. Stretcher party from nearby climbers.

24TH AUGUST.—Robert Gemmell (24) fell on South Peak of Cobbler; fractured leg. Rescued by local civilian team and climbers.

28TH AUGUST.—Five Youth Hostellers left Kishorn Y.H. to walk over Ben Damh to Inveralligin Y.H.; all well equipped but inexperienced. Separated in mist near summit. Rest got down but two stuck on a ledge; they spent the night there and one got down in the morning with a 'rope' of towels, clothes and a sleeping bag. Local rescue party unable to locate boys previous night; tried again and found this boy, but unable to climb to boy still on ledge. Kinloss team called and extricated him; found route down to ledge a hard Difficult.

5TH SEPTEMBER.—A. Edwards, Petty Officer, persuaded to make up a team of runners for the Ben Nevis race, though insufficiently trained. Collapsed near summit. Carried down by Kinloss team.

11TH SEPTEMBER.—Mrs Green: fractured leg, Ben Nevis.

19TH SEPTEMBER.—German tourist injured when scrambling on Durness cliffs.

26TH OCTOBER.—Neil Buse (16) and Gilbert Harrison (16), Boy Scouts on a 'Badge' exercise, overdue on Fir Mounth path. Search parties out; boys turned up at Feughside unharmed.

2ND NOVEMBER.—Cpl. Spencer, Royal Fusiliers, became separated from main party on Army exercise whilst crossing from Glen Clova to

Braemar; overdue. Local rescue party brought him down suffering from exhaustion.

29TH NOVEMBER.—Edward Robb (21) benighted on Ben Macdhui. Search parties out, but he descended safely to Glenmore side next day.

29TH DECEMBER.—English party of eight on three ropes, including one man of Oread M.C. and one of Summit M.C. from Nottingham, in Coire an t-Sneachda, Cairngorm. Two parties had completed climbs and were awaiting arrival of third; a shout for a rope announced its arrival under a cornice. *Member of party on top, carrying a coiled rope, walked out on to cornice, which collapsed on to party beneath and carried all four into corrie 100 ft. below.* Made their way to Jean's Hut, but one (girl) required a stretcher from there to the road and one man had suspected fractured skull. Idiot who fell through cornice was uninjured.

31ST DECEMBER.—Coyne, Petty Officer, injured when crossing Cuillin from Loch Coruisk to Glen Brittle. Portree rescue team carried him down.

1ST JANUARY (1960).—James Laverty, descending Ben Nevis, slipped by Red Burn on tourist route; superficial injuries and shock. His companion summoned help (Kinloss team) by correct distress signal. Both wore vibrams.

2ND JANUARY.—Peter Johnson (24), Cambuslang, with companion (both wearing vibrams and carrying axes) had negotiated 1st pitch of Gardyloo Gully, Ben Nevis, *unroped*. Thought that Johnson had put his axe aside to rope up, when he slipped. Fractured skull, and died in a few minutes. He was carrying crampons at the time. Stretcher party from other climbers and Lochaber rescue team.

2ND JANUARY.—Leader of party of two stuck at 3rd pitch of Crowberry Gully, Buachaille Etive Mòr. Second went to Kingshouse for help. Retrieved from gully by members of Creag Dhu Club.

3RD JANUARY.—Edinburgh University Meet at Cluanie. Party of four with Kerr (leader) and John Sandeman set out to traverse several peaks. Rocks iced above 3000 ft., with frequent large patches of ice. Sandeman lagged behind all the time and was finally lost to sight when party was on slopes of Sgùrr nan Conbhairean. Mist on tops by then. Party looked, but did not find him: decided he had gone down Coire a' Chait to Cluanie Inn. He did not arrive. Large parties out, including Kinloss team; not yet found. All party wore vibrams and carried axes; Sandeman had instep crampons.

30TH JANUARY.—Richard Holt and Elizabeth Carruthers (E.U.M.C.) ascending Stob Coire nan Lochan, Glencoe, by normal route. Bad weather with heavy snow and high wind. Snow avalanched beneath them and they fell to corrie, just above lochan. Girl unconscious, with head injuries and broken jaw; two climbers lay either side of her whilst rescue party of J.M.C.S., E.U.M.C. and Lomond M.C., with Hamish MacInnes, called up from glen. Holt walked down part of the way. Leuchars R.A.F. called on.

7TH FEBRUARY.—Gerald Massey (31), one of a party descending a gully on western face of Ben Hope by glissading the snow pitches and climbing round the short (10 ft.) vertical sections; snow in perfect condition. Massey somehow lost his axe and fell some 800 ft., losing his balance and going head first. He was killed instantly. Body brought down by members of Caithness Mountaineering & Ski Club, police and gamekeepers. (From informative report of above club.)

14TH FEBRUARY.—Miss Clark and Miss Taylor (L.S.C.C.) climbing right fork of Fork Gully, Stob Coire nan Lochan, Glencoe, in bad weather and deep snow. Leader was avalanched, and both fell some distance. Miss Taylor had fractured spine and head injuries. Rescue team led by Kinloss team, with Dr MacInnes.

28TH FEBRUARY.—Two hikers (aged 25) lost their way descending tourist path from Ben Lomond summit to Rowardennan. In answer to cries early next morning, Arrochar policeman rowed across Loch Lomond and found one. Large search party later found the other in the woods. One slightly injured. Leuchars R.A.F. called on.

We wish to thank R.A.F. Rescue Teams for their great help. As we go to Press, details have arrived of two further affairs wherein the Leuchars team has assisted.

Ski-ing Accidents.—Five have been officially reported (from the Cairngorms, Glen Shee, Glencoe and Ben Lawers) but many others have occurred.

CORRECTION.—We are now informed that in last year's list (*S.M.C.J.*, xxvi, 413) the four men who changed their plans in the Cuillin on 28th March 1958—without notification and to everyone's inconvenience—were *not* members of Glasgow University Mountaineering Club.

IN MEMORIAM

WILLIAM WICKHAM KING

1862 - 1959

WILLIAM WICKHAM KING, although not an original member of our Club (he joined in 1891), was so intimately associated with the founders, W. W. Naismith, Gilbert Thomson and A. E. Maylard, as well as such other 'originals' and well-known early Scottish mountaineers as H. T. Munro, J. Rennie, W. R. Lester, W. Douglas and Norman Collie (to name only a few), that he may well be regarded as one of that active group. One further consideration may be urged in support of this view. King was not one of those who joined the S.M.C. out of sympathy with its objects, whilst remaining principally devotees of the Alps and the Alpine Club. It was the magic of the Cuillins, their ridges and *chimneys*, that

made a mountaineer of him, as he has so recently told us in a short article on Early Climbing in Skye (*S.M.C.J.* (1956), xxvi, 37). He first climbed there with Norman Collie in 1888, again in 1889, and met A. E. Maylard there in 1891, who introduced him to Naismith and others, and later proposed him for membership in December of that year.

He went to the Alps a little later with Naismith and Lester in August 1892, at what was almost an S.M.C. Meet on the Gabelhorn, but they were turned back by a snowstorm when 700 feet below the summit. Here again he proved his vigour and enthusiasm. His first list for a month's 'hard climbing,' in addition to minor ascents, included the Aiguille de la Za, the Aiguilles Rouges d'Arolla, a traverse of the Rothorn, Riffelhorn from the glacier, Untergabelhorn (alone), followed by departure on the same night from Zermatt to climb Monte Rosa (no Bétémps hut then!), the Matterhorn, Dent Blanche (first ascent of the year with Naismith) and also the Obergabelhorn with Naismith and another friend (second attempt).

Naturally he joined the A.C., of which he was a member from 1895 to 1938; and also his local organisation, founded much later, the Midland Association of Mountaineers, of which he remained a member until 1938. He maintained his interest in the S.M.C. and the *Journal* to the end of his life and, in fact, he has been the 'father' of the Club for the last 10 years since the passing of the last of the original members, E. J. McCandlish—although he was, in fact, about 6 years older than the latter.

Perhaps it may be advisable to refer to his Alpine and foreign mountaineering first of all, as we must be content with the brevity characteristic of the 'S.M.C. Abroad' section of the *Journal*. Even so, the record is known to be incomplete as there is no mention of his climbing in the Pyrenees and Tyrol, although he certainly climbed there.

In 1893 he was geologising in the Oberland, but managed to climb the Eiger and the Schreckhorn and also the Finsteraarhorn by the Agassizjoch, a hard way. In 1897 he climbed the Grépon and again went to Arolla, where in a subsequent year, 1902, he made a new descent of the Dent Perroc, and also climbed several other peaks including the Rimpfischorn and the Weisshorn. In 1903 he was in the Mont Blanc area with Naismith and J. W. Drummond, when Mt Blanc was traversed from the Tête Rousse to the Col du Midi and back to Montanvert. His list also included the Aiguilles de l'M, Tacul, Moine, the little Dru, the traverse of the Grands Charmoz, Grands Montets and the Dent du Midi. At least half of these expeditions were done without guides. Then comes a big gap with no records. Finally in 1912 with Mrs King,



W. WICKHAM KING

a Norwegian friend and a Turtegro guide came the ascents of Storen Skagastolstind, the north, middle and Great Skagastolstind peaks (all on good rock), the north ridge of Styggestolstind and the pinnacles of Midtmaradalstind (an excellent rock climb). These earlier expeditions were very long, with Mrs King left out, but she was with her husband on Dyrhaugstind. There are no later records in the *Journal*.

The most interesting rock-climbing stories about W. W. King concerned his explorations of the Cuillins, many of which were only briefly recorded in the *Journal*. The era of balanced climbing on high-angle faces or walls had hardly begun. Skye gabbro was plentifully seamed with trap dykes already weathered down to gullies, chimneys or cracks, which formed most attractive routes, especially if complicated by multiple chockstones and caves. It is with caves and chimneys that the name of King will be ever remembered amongst the climbing fraternity. He did make long expeditions all over the ridges, crossed the Thearlaich-Dubh Gap with Collie in 1891, climbed a face route on Knight's peak of Sgùrr nan Gillean (though this started as an attempt on the gully pitch between the 3rd and 4th Pinnacles); and Collie also conducted him over the Cioch, shortly after he had discovered it. There is only a brief note about King's Chimney on Sgùrr Mhic Coinnich. King said little about it and must have thought it unexciting. A new variation for the ascent of Sgùrr Dubh Beag from Dubh Mòr again involved a chimney. He always had an eye for chimneys, even when far away from the Cuillins. At an Easter Meet of the Club in Aviemore King, Maylard and Solly climbed the Married Men's Buttress on Sgoran Dubh—hardly a buttress at all, but involving at least two chimneys with the additional attraction of snow.

However, his two most interesting chimney adventures in the Cuillins were the Bhàsteir Nick Gully, also known as King's Cave Chimney, where G. Bennett Gibbs was the humorous narrator (*S.M.C.J.*, v, 170-175); and a hard chimney on the north face of Bruach na Frithe, the only recorded climb on that face. Let us take this tale of 'amazing aerobatics' first, as part of it is extracted from a letter describing the climb to W. W. Naismith (*S.M.C.J.*, x, 226).

In August 1908 W. W. King, Dr Inglis Clark and party attacked the longest chimney on the face. After 40 feet of back and foot work came 150 feet of easy climbing to a point where an assembly of chockstones blocked the gully. Part of a corroded dyke inside the cave enabled King to climb to a point in the cave behind the outer chockstone. A convenient thread hole for a rope allowed

this to be fixed and the rope hung down outside, so that the leader could tie on, with Dr Inglis Clark holding the lower end. Then the leader swung boldly off into space to the outer side of the chockstone. 'Here the struggle began,' wrote King in a letter to Naismith. 'I was on the left wall and climbed hand over hand up the rope till I got my foot on to a minute hold and also found a tiny handhold for my right hand. Then I reached up the rope and twisted it round my left hand and hauled myself up. This manœuvre was repeated, I don't exactly know how, till somehow I got my left leg on the sloping outer side of the chockstone, and the friction lightened the load of 12 stone on my hands and arms. What a weight I seemed to be ! For a minute I was dead beat and had to rest. I had now lifted myself as high as the hole through which the rope was threaded. Pulling in the slack, I managed to throw the rope over another jammed block above me. It fortunately held, and with the help of the doubled rope I soon got on to the top of the chockstone and found a good hitch.' Above this formidable obstacle the climbing was free from difficulty and the crest of the ridge soon reached.

No doubt there were giants in those days, but it would be interesting to revisit this chimney using the same method—if indeed nature has left the rock architecture as it was in King's day.

The King's Cave Chimney story was related by G. Bennett Gibbs, and must be read in the original account which is illustrated by a beautiful architectural drawing. The gully lends itself particularly to the formation of caves, one above the other 'and may be said to consist of at least three main floors with an attic and a cockloft (a room above the attic). The second floor has a special chimney at the back, leading right to the top of the gully and it also has a window looking out over the gully.' Dr Inglis Clark began the exploration from the top, descending to the third floor. The succeeding exploration occupied four separate days between 17th and 25th August 1898, the weather being perfect. Most of the time was spent in moving obstructions and threading ropes behind chockstones. Gibbs remarks : 'In days of old, Kings sat on the Stone (of Scone, to be crowned) ; on this day, by an unexpected slide, the Stone sat on the King, who presented the appearance of a cobbler horribly overburdened with a huge lapstone which effectually prevented him from continuing his occupation till it was firmly fixed again.' On the final day John Mackenzie joined King and Gibbs, and a bannister rope was fixed. Then it was found that a change of wind sent a strong draught of cold air down the back part of the cave. 'Now King had a nose for aeronautics (as witness his highway on the Inaccessible Pinnacle). Facing the

cold air he went to the head of the cave and thrust his head into a rabbit burrow and disappeared—all but his boots. It is probable that some heathen deity was called upon to witness, by his next remark, that there was a way straight up to daylight, but a very narrow one; and our leader, descending to the similitude of a cobbler, went a step lower and became a veritable chimney sweep! He ultimately made a small hole through which he wriggled up the funnel. Very few minutes after his total disappearance we heard a joyful jodel high up in the free air and the climb was done.⁷

This is not quite the end of the story. At a later date a worthy President of the Club (probably before he became so), John H. Bell, stuck in the chimney, reputedly on account of his girth; but perhaps not so, for the writer investigated King's Cave in 1924 from both ends, and found it to be blocked. A re-investigation of King's climbs might still be most interesting.

W. W. King was born in 1862, the younger son of Mr W. H. King, Solicitor, of Stourbridge, Worcestershire. He was educated at High Abbey (Winchester) and Worthing and subsequently at Radley College. In 1880 he became articled to his father as a solicitor, passing his final examination in 1885 and becoming a partner in the firm of Bernard, King & Sons. From 1905 to 1937 he was Clerk to the Justices of the Stourbridge Division, receiving a presentation on his retirement. Retiring from business in 1938, he was succeeded by his two sons, but continued to live at Hagley until 1941, after which he passed the remainder of his life at Ottery St Mary, Devon.

He had many local interests, particularly in the Dudley and Midland Geological and Scientific Society. An acknowledged expert, though an amateur, on the geology of the Midlands, with a geological specimen named after himself, he was a Fellow of the Geological Society for 50 years, and from them received the Wollaston Award in 1913 and the Lyell Medal in 1927. In 1931 the University of Birmingham conferred upon him the honorary degree of M.Sc. in recognition of his gift of a plexographic model of the South Staffordshire coalfield, embodying his own research and fieldwork. He also founded a local building society, was closely concerned with the Stourbridge Institutes and a Social Club, and was an expert in local history. At Radley College he rowed in 'The Eight' and later continued as an active member of the Bewdley Rowing Club.

He married in 1901, and is survived by his widow. He had two sons and a daughter and there are now two grandsons and four grand-daughters. To the end of his life mountaineering in all its

aspects remained his greatest interest. He read every S.M.C. *Journal* from cover to cover and then passed it on to his eldest grandson, now at Cambridge and reported to be 'mountain mad' and anxious to make good use of his grandfather's ice-axe, now in his possession. The portrait which appears in this issue of the *Journal*, kindly loaned by Mrs King, was taken in the year 1900 during their engagement, when her husband was midway in his climbing career. Our sympathy goes out to Mrs King and her family. It would be a welcome issue if a member of the King family chose to revisit the scenes of his grandfather's explorations and so qualify for the membership of the Club.

J. H. B. BELL.

FRANK G. YOUNG

FRANK G. YOUNG graduated in Science at St Andrews University and in 1902 was Assistant and Demonstrator in Physiology at University College, Dundee. Five years later he was engaged in hydrographical research for the International Committee for the Investigation of the North Sea, and in 1910 he went to Irvine Royal Academy as Principal Teacher of Science.

In 1914 he joined the London Scottish, was commissioned in the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) and in 1917 was Divisional Gas Officer, being severely wounded in 1918. He was Director of Education in Orkney from 1919 to 1929, when he became Principal of Dundee Technical College, retiring in 1946. He died on 7th February 1959, aged 79.

He bequeathed to the Grampian Club, of which he was a life member, his log books, Munro lists, etc. His logs give detailed accounts—date, party, times, summits, heights, etc.—of his climbs and walks from July 1895 to October 1958—many very long excursions, day and night, and some tremendous distances by road.

His Munro list does not show any ascents in Sections 7 to 11 and 17, but the very many entries in Section 14 show the extraordinary appeal that the Cairngorms had for him—every top visited, Cairngorm 17 times, Braeriach 26, Sgòr Gaoith 16.

His last entry in the log is Monday, 13th October 1958, when, aged 78, he and Mitchell C. Kay left Loch Moraig at 2.45 P.M., reached Càrn Liath (3193 feet) at 4.45 P.M., spent half an hour there and were back at the loch at 6.20 P.M. He ended his report with—'A satisfying climb on a fine hill in good weather.'

ERIC MAXWELL.

R. H. SELLERS

RONNIE SELLERS was killed in May 1959 on the Black Spout Pinnacle of Lochnagar, when a huge block of rock came away as he and his companion were roping down into the Black Spout from the Springboard.

Ronnie had been a member of the Club for less than a year but was a popular and well-known figure in Aberdeen climbing circles, being, in fact, the conscientious and energetic Secretary of the Etchachan Club at the time of his death.

His experience as a climber extended to the Alps as well as all over Scotland, and he was a mountaineer of outstanding ability and judgment. Recent issues of the *Journal* testify as to his activity as a pioneer of new routes in the Cairngorms, many of them of a high quality. For Ronnie, the appeal of climbing was not confined to either rock or ice, for he was equally expert on both, but lay in the whole field of mountain experience. Few men were more at home in the hills or climbed with more grace.

Some of the diagrams in the forthcoming Guide to the Cairngorms will bear witness to his artistic talents, and his untimely death at the age of 26 cut short a promising career as an architectural draughtsman.

Ronnie's personal qualities earned him a wide circle of friends. He was modest without being shy, carefree though not irresponsible, while his unselfish nature and ready sense of humour made him a first-rate companion. By his friends, Ronnie will always be remembered as a man of few faults and abundant graces. To them his death brings a sense of real loss, but they are the richer for having known him.

W. D. BROOKER.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB

Easter Meet, 1959—Ullapool

WHILST some might say that a week-end Meet north of the Great Glen involved too much travelling, yet it was generally agreed that this Ullapool Meet was most enjoyable, and that the Royal Hotel did us well.

Those present were A. E. Anton, Pat Baird (with his son Neil as guest), D. J. Bennet, R. L. Beveridge, I. M. Campbell, W. C. Carmichael, J. Dow, R. R. Elton, J. B. Home, A. H. Hendry, E. W. Hodge, B. H. Humble, Ross Higgins, G. M. Lawson, J. N.

Ledingham, G. Little, A. I. Maitland, G. G. Macphee, D. H. McPherson, R. W. MacLennan, Myles Morrison, Theo. Nicholson, G. Roger, Angus Smith, J. S. Stewart, T. E. and E. C. Thomson, R. D. Walton and F. R. Wylie. Macrae and Sturrock were the guests, in addition to Neil Baird. Bennet, Roger and Stewart were camping.

Hills climbed included Ben More Assynt, Beinn Dearg (Ross), Cona Mheall, Stac Polly, Eididh nan Clach Geala, Meall nan Ceapràichean, An Teallach, various Fannichs, Seana Bhragh, Cùl Mòr, Ben More Coigeach and Am Faochagach, with Beinn Ghobhlach (2082 feet) forming the goal of an amphibious excursion which included Dow as its senior member.

Robert Elton went strongly despite having one arm still in plaster and a knee that has not yet learnt how to operate easily without a knee cap. Professor-elect Anton descended most of Beinn Dearg in bare feet, a style forced on him by badly repaired boots.

On the Sunday evening we had the great pleasure of entertaining Dr and Mrs Tom Longstaff to dinner. The Longstaffs motored over from Badentarbet, near Achiltibuie, where they have been living for some years.

At Ullapool, Hodge produced from his car a cast-iron sign bearing the legend 'National Trust for Scotland. Pass of Killiecrankie.' He had found this at the Study in Glencoe and was returning it to the Trust offices. . . .

Easter Meet, 1959—C.I.C. Hut

A. G. Waldie writes that his party were the sole occupants. They traversed the arête to the summit, and climbed and/or descended Tower Gully and Nos. 2, 3, 4 and 5 Gullies, all heavily filled from recent falls. Soft snow, late starts and overcrowding on Tower Ridge caused benightments to several parties from the South, but happily the Hut's extra-mural facilities this Easter extended only to Afternoon Tea for the caravans.

Annual General Meeting

The 71st Annual General Meeting of the Club was held in St Enoch's Hotel, Glasgow, on Saturday, 5th December 1959, with the President, T. D. Mackinnon, in the chair. Detailed reports of office-bearers are available elsewhere to members, and we give here a summary of the goings-on, compiled from notes by Dr Bell and Ross Higgins and also stolen, where prudent, from the Eastern

District's entertaining circular ; these latter brilliances are enclosed, for safety's sake, within quotation marks.

HON. TREASURER.—A credit balance of £48. 12s. 2d. declined to £5. 9s. 5d. during the year, largely disposed of by the *Journal*, printing and postages and the new Central Clubroom. The Glasgow Clubroom rent has, however, been saved (!) and Guide Book income exceeded expenditure ; this latter surplus is earmarked for next year's programme.

HON. SECRETARY.—Club membership now totals 345. Four members, MESSRS D. C. Hutchison, G. B. L. Motherwell, R. H. Sellers and F. G. Young, died during the year. Twelve new members—MESSRS Kenneth Bryan, John M. Dunn, Michael W. Guest, George S. Prentice, Douglas L. Stewart, George Sutherland, Alex. Thom, Graham J. Tiso, John G. Burns, Leslie J. Griffin, Duncan Haston and James Moriarty—were admitted, and are welcomed to the Club. This was Ross Higgins' last secretarial A.G.M. and, after thanking all those who had given him assistance during his 10 years' bearing of office, he made some sage remarks which many have desired to see in print.

He suggested that it would be wise to pause and consider whether we were tending to lose the Club atmosphere, so notably preserved during the past 70 years, even though the Club had become stronger and more active than ever before. Was there a growing tendency towards Sectionalisation ? Attendance at a Meet was no longer considered to be a necessary preliminary to Election. There was also a tendency to stick rigidly to high climbing standards, regardless of personal knowledge of the candidate. Often enough, men of experience and personality, perhaps at middle age, were left outside when they could have been assets to the corporate life of the Club. This was no proposal for lowering climbing standards, but rather for a reversion to the older idea of considering character as well as climbing ability. We should not become just another Association, which a man wanted to join for the advantages it offered, and cease to be a Club in the true sense of the word.

HON. EDITOR.—No. 150 of the *Journal* was again somewhat larger at 111 text pages, 11 of illustrations and 15½ of advertisements ; 1000 copies were printed, of which the J.M.C.S. took 196 copies and members of other clubs 50 copies.

Dr Bell, on his retiral from office after twenty-four years, thanked the Club for its confidence and support, alluded to changes that had taken place, and asked members to continue their help and support to his successor and especially so in his earlier years as Editor.

GUIDE BOOK GENERAL EDITOR.—Guide Book sales were lower than for last year but were generally satisfactory. The 'Skye' General Guide lost ground to the new Rock-climbing publication, and since this is likely to recur in other areas a rationalisation of the publishing programme is being considered. 'Glencoe' (Vol. 1) was then in the Press, and the considerable 'Cairngorm' Rock-climbing Guide should be at the printers in 1960. Revision of the 'West Highland' General Guide and work on 'Glencoe' (Vol. 2), 'Ben Nevis' and 'Northern Highland' Guides had begun.

HUTS SUB-COMMITTEE.—*C.I.C. Hut*: The building, apart from roof, is in reasonable repair. The binoculars had been stolen, but insurance covered cost. A considerable loss on coal evoked heated discussion at the Meeting. Hut nights were rather less. *Lagangarbh*: Less use by kindred clubs, but byre now fairly comfortable. *Ling Hut*: Here the balance was slightly improved and only the porch requires attention. Keys are now with Mrs MACDONALD, Torridon Road, Kinlochewe.

CONVENER, EASTERN DISTRICT.—Climbing activity and its standard are both rising. The capacity of the new Central Clubrooms have been taxed by a surprisingly increased attendance at lectures, of which rock climbing and the Andean expedition proved the most popular. Teas were also appreciated and augmented Clubroom funds. Otherwise the rooms are still largely used by a few groups rather than by many individual members.

CONVENER, WESTERN DISTRICT.—Lectures in Rowan's Smoke Room were appreciated throughout the winter, the subjects extending from Galloway to Amadablam. Despite an ample number of cars for meets there was a decline in activity in the District. Search for a new clubroom continues. The projector was stolen during the year but insurance covered replacement. The interim Convener, T. J. Ransley, resigned and was succeeded by C. G. M. Slessor.

FIRST-AID COMMITTEE.—Dr Maitland stated that no new first-aid posts had been installed, but in view of probable contraction of the R.A.F. Rescue Service the earlier scheme of volunteer panels from the principal climbing clubs was being reviewed and revised. Dr Duff had arranged to hold a course on rescue work, already publicised by circular. An insurance scheme for official rescue parties was being discussed. The boot trade was being approached on the dangers, especially to novices, of cleated rubber soles for climbing. Two cupola shelters had been erected on Ben Nevis: (a) between old hotel and observatory, and (b) 350 yards

north of top of No. 4 Gully. Gratitude is again recorded for the invaluable help of the R.A.F. Rescue Service during the year.

LIBRARY AND SLIDES.—The Hon. Librarian reported more use of the Library since the new clubroom was completed. James Russell voiced general puzzlement, since the Library has long been officially 'Closed for Cataloguing' . . . an obvious incentive to borrowing! Eight requests for slides (504 small and 62 older) were met during the year.

THE B.M.C.—Dr Graham Macphee has now become President. The recent launching of the Glen Brittle Hut Appeal shows that, at last, things are under way. Under the revised B.M.C. constitution the A.S.C.C. is entitled to nominate a representative to B.M.C. committee meetings, and this gesture has been reciprocated by the A.S.C.C. Two competent books have been approved and backed by the B.M.C. : G. Francis' 'Teach Yourself Mountain Climbing' and E. Wrangham's edition of 'Selected Climbs in the Range of Mont Blanc.' The equipment committee has been active in standardising and testing nylon ropes, karabiners, ring pegs and other accessories.

THE A.S.C.C. held its Annual Meeting in the S.M.C. Clubrooms in May. It backed the Glen Brittle Hut Appeal and considered the revival of volunteer rescue teams to replace the possibly curtailed R.A.F. Service.

FORTHCOMING MEETS.—The meeting decided that for 1961 the New Year Meet should be at Crianlarich and the C.I.C. Hut, and the Easter Meet at Kintail and the C.I.C. Hut. It was suggested, with general approval, that New Year Meets should not be too distant but should be located where everyone could get together as much as possible, thus avoiding a multitude of Cave Meets and their consequent widespread and solitary dissipation. . . .

OFFICE-BEARERS.—Amongst other changes detailed in the Agenda and approved by the Meeting, J. S. M. Jack was elected Honorary President, and accepted with becoming diffidence the break with Club tradition which had hitherto carefully reserved this office for a Scottish landowner. Dr Duff and Dr Bell, for their services to climbing and to the Club, were with acclamation elected Honorary Members by the Committee.

THE TRUST PROPOSAL for Club publications, which had occasioned a Special General Meeting on 14th March, was again to be discussed, but : 'This infant prodigy, due to give a Dress Rehearsal, had to be whisked off stage before it could utter a squawk.

The dress, as L. S. Lovat pointed out, was not the one that had been promised.

‘Apparently everyone—except the Opposition—had overlooked the minute of the Special Meeting which promised that amendments to the Trust Constitution would be incorporated in a new draft to be submitted to the Club. There was little doubt as to the correct reading. The mood of the Meeting was less one of consternation than of dejection tinged with apathy.

‘The Opposition were most charming about it. Mr Lovat’s tones were low and dulcet. Dr Slesser’s generally astute glance was modestly downcast. They meekly sought the members’ decision, and if they did so with a certain complacent confidence this was not to be discerned in their demeanour. . . .

‘On the other side only the Hon. Treasurer advanced gallantly to the attack, flaunting a banner with an extremely strange device. It appeared to read ‘Substantive Motion,’ and was obviously too ingenious and daring for the low morale of his hearers. Even before the substantial adverse vote, he was resigning himself to dignified defeat with a somewhat pointed ‘Roll-up-the-map-of-Europe’ expression on his face.’

WESTERN DISTRICT CLUBROOM.—This subject, according to MacLennan, ‘. . . became a piece of intricate three-cornered shadow-boxing. Two Glasgow members wanted a clubroom there also. Two Edinburgh members, with perhaps something on their consciences, insisted that they get it. The Treasurer and Auditor demonstrated that there were no funds available and asked to be shown any money that could be used for this purpose. This was dismissed by the other four as a frivolous objection. After some cogitation the Meeting improved on the Committee’s recommendation that the non-existent money be provided, by directing that it be provided during the current year.’ Or so it seemed at the time. . . .

Reception

A large attendance of members and guests heard Tom Patey’s account, excellent in its jaunty competence, of the first ascent of Rakaposhi. (Although one reporter reports confidently that *he knows* that ‘Tom really regarded this expedition as altogether different and much less enjoyable than his previous Himalayan success on the Mustagh Tower, recounted at a Reception three years ago. They were, in fact, lucky to get away with it, in the prevailing conditions of avalanchy snow.’) The slides were very good, though the screen called for a long neck in the back seats.

Dinner

'The proceedings . . . were marked by a tone of friendly informality. J. C. Donaldson (proposing the "Guests" and "Kindred Clubs") opened in promising fashion with a lengthy quotation from "that great Scotsman, that noble character, etc., etc.," who turned out to be "the Convener of the Western District Sub-Committee, Dr Malcolm Slessor." The principal guest, Colonel Grant of Rothiemurchus, was refreshingly unpretentious in a speech by one well qualified to pay the Club the sincerest of compliments for its continuing responsible attitude to the Scottish countryside.' Stuart Jack, to tumultuous applause and from Honorary Presidential height, sang the Club Song. Harry Spilsbury obliged with several of the 'moderns,' including that most exquisite 'If I lend to you my rope, Will you use it tender-ly.' Another musical gem was provided by the versatile Patey; this axe-rattling Teutonic variant of a 'certain Grand Old Song' is given on another page. Grieve (Bob, not Chris), Bard of the Gleaming Eye, soared inimitably to 'The Tapmaist Elevation.' A good time was undoubtedly had by all 110 members and guests, and the piecer-together of these accounts regrets his absence from that festive board. Following the Dinner (and an old-established custom), several of the guests retired to Inverarnan for the night.

New Year Meet, 1960—Fort William

MAURICE COOKE writes :—

Those interested in statistics will recognise this Meet as the second smallest in the Club's history. However, the Palace and the Alexandra did us very well and the weather, after much rain on the 31st, turned cold and dry. The President and George Roger arrived at five minutes to midnight, and New Year was celebrated in serious and contemplative mood. Heavy rain outside made for a very quiet night and the hotel was serving breakfast to at least four people by 8.30 A.M. Some alarm was caused each evening by messages from the police and much credit goes to Roger who, with Peat and Hendry, was not back until late on the 2nd, and who then gave an excellent slide show, with Dr Berkeley's lantern, showing some magnificent views of Chamonix *aiguilles*. Proom and his guest, Gardner, climbed North Castle Gully and Roger, Peat and Hendry were at the top of the Tower Gully when they had to descend and help with the accident farther east. The President, alarmed at the number of irresponsible bachelors in one party,

shepherded it to the top of Stob a' Choire Mheadhoin and Stob Coire Easain, his firm example allowing it to overcome the thin frozen snow on the summits. In contrast to these conditions, the sight of water running over the spillways of Loch Laggan dam was remarkable. Carmichael and his group turned up on Sunday night, but the evening alarms and the break-up of the party on Monday did not allow this scribe to gather any real account of what people did ; though it appears that Carmichael and Ledingham were on Binnein Beag, where they found treacherous icy patches, and Roger, Horradin, Coats and Baxter explored Sgùrr nan Coireachan and Sgùrr Thuilm in a high wind and a rainy afternoon.

Present were : The President, J. W. Baxter, W. C. Carmichael, W. L. Coats, M. H. Cooke, C. V. Dodgson, R. R. Elton, A. H. Hendry, J. N. Ledingham, J. E. MacEwen, G. Peat, J. E. Proom, G. S. Roger, F. R. Wylie, J. Horradin (J.M.C.S.) and R. R. Gardner (guest).

J.M.C.S. REPORTS

Edinburgh Section.—The past year has been quite successful so far as Club activities are concerned, and membership has remained fairly steady—the usual resignations caused by failure to pay subscriptions being offset by an equal number of new members.

Outdoor meets were held at Glencoe, Cairngorms, Arrochar, Ben Nevis, The Lake District and other places. Average attendance at these meets was 25. Indoor meets were held throughout the year in the rooms at 369 High Street which we share with our parent Club; they were fairly well attended.

Honorary Officials are R. W. MacLennan (President) and D. Leaver (Vice-President). The President is Adam Stewart and the Secretary is Alec Barclay, 2 Parsons Green Terrace, Edinburgh, 8.

A. BARCLAY.

Glasgow Section.—The Club has probably reached a stage of apparent maturity and sober habits, in so much as it now runs a hut and issues a journal.

Membership has again remained quite constant, and at the end of the financial year there were 135 members; the 15 new members having compensated for 10 resignations and the 4 members who had gone up to the S.M.C.

Meets and Lectures.—Meets have been held regularly and attended by a small but varying number of people. It is apparent that official meets, although essential for the new member, are not keenly supported by the older member. He prefers to go away with his own private party, and only attends Club meets occasionally. Maybe this is as it should be, and certainly the Club appears to have been as active as ever before.

Nine lectures were held in conjunction with the S.M.C. and were all well attended.

The photographic competition attracted the usual crop of mediocre slides, a few good ones, and insufficient prints for a class.

The Annual Dinner was a sober affair—really too respectable.

Skye Hut.—The major achievement of the year, a success due to others rather than the section, was the opening of the Coruisk Memorial Hut in May. The ceremony was very fitting for the occasion, and the following meet was a great success. Since then the hut has had a successful year.

Publications.—Both a Hut List and a journal have been issued free to all members this year—so they have probably never had it so good. Members should realise, however, that if the journal is going to survive they will have to contribute articles voluntarily and not wait to be coerced.

Members Abroad.—Several parties were abroad this year, either climbing, drinking or wenching, as was their wont.

Mountain Rescue Panel.—Work is in progress for re-establishing the Mountain Rescue Panel. Members have been contacted and asked whether they would be prepared to act as volunteers. The J.M.C.S. hopes to be able to supply 10 to 12 men who would be able to go out at any time.

Whole Club A.G.M.—The Whole Club A.G.M. was a well-attended, sober affair. Members insisted on discussing business, and particularly amendments to the constitution relating to hut ownership.

W. M. THOM, *Secretary*, 7 Carrick Drive, Coatbridge.

Perth Section.—This Section has again had a very active season and the membership remains the same, whilst the finances are in good order. We held our usual monthly meets with a good turn-out on most occasions, though one or two places are losing their popularity. Throughout the year members ranged far and wide, and reports were received of some very creditable climbs, especially from the younger members. Two of the 'not so young' members completed all the Munros, finishing on Ben More of Mull on 28th August 1959; they were T. Kemp and J. Grant.

The Annual Dinner this year was held in the Bridge of Lochay Hotel, Killin, the principal guest being Mr J. Anton, S.M.C.

At the Annual General Meeting the following Office-bearers were elected: *Hon. President*, J. Anton; *Hon. Vice-President*, J. Proom; *President*, I. Robertson; *Vice-President*, J. Houton; *Secretary and Treasurer*, J. Grant, 37 Burghmuir Road, Perth.

J. GRANT.

London Section.—The London Section has had another satisfactory year, membership has increased slightly, regular meets have been held and some good climbing has been done. The only black spot was the loss of Linneraineach.

Membership.—Honorary, 2; Ordinary, 60. Eleven new members joined. The Committee rejected one application for membership.

Meetings.—A total of 17 climbing and three indoor meetings were held.

At the beginning of the year a full programme of climbing meets was

drawn up with about one meet a month during the winter and one every two weeks during the summer. A wide range of venues was selected. In general the plan was carried through successfully, although some alterations proved necessary owing to lack of transport (this point seems to be made every year!). Meets were held at Llanberis, Ogwen, Cwm Silin, Wasdale, Cornwall, Cheddar and Avon Gorges, Derbyshire and the sandstone outcrops.

At two of the indoor meetings members showed slides, and at the third Bill Wallace gave a superb illustrated talk on the 1958 Edinburgh Andean Expedition.

Circulars.—Five circulars were issued to members during the year.

Hut Bookings.—A few hut bookings were made for members apart from those associated with meetings.

Linneraineach.—It is with great regret that we lost the use of Linneraineach as a climbing hut. Efforts are being made to find another cottage that we can administer, and we are fortunate in this respect that Ken Cox is living in Scotland. It was a good year as regards the running of Linneraineach. The number of bed-nights increased by 114 to a total of 261. The administration of the hut for just over two years has shown a small profit.

Finance.—The general account of the Section showed a small profit on the year's working; however, had the Section borne the full cost of circulars we would have shown a small deficit. The A.G.M. of the Section took note of this and increased the subscription to £1 for 1960. The subscription will continue to include the *S.M.C. Journal*.

Officers.—*Hon. President*, E. R. Zenthon; *Hon. Vice-President*, A. M. MacAlpine; *President*, J. Wootton; *Vice-President*, P. J. Whitechurch; *Secretary and Treasurer*, K. N. Reed; *Meets Secretary*, P. J. Whitechurch; *Hut Custodian*, K. R. Cox.

The Committee record their appreciation of the interest that Robert Folkard and Ted Zenthon have taken in the affairs of the Section.

New Climbs.—We are pleased to record that Andre Zaluski and John Wright put up several new routes on Stac Polly and Cùl Beag. A record of these has been submitted for the *S.M.C. Journal* [and appear in this issue.—HON. EDITOR].

In conclusion, it is regretted that it was not possible to hold a meet in Scotland during the year owing to transport difficulties. However, a number of private parties of members visited the hills north of the border.

K. N. R.

S.M.C AND J.M.C.S. ABROAD

The Alps

J. H. B. BELL and Mrs Bell went to Loetschenthal on 7th August for some training. From Kippel (1376 m.) they went to Bietschjoch (3200 m.) too late to get a peak. They then climbed the Tennbachhorn (3100 m.), the final summit being reached over a mass of gigantic smooth slabs, easy when dry on the ascent, but not so good during the descent in thunderstorm

and cloud. Then on to Zermatt and a day on the Riffelhorn to end the training. Next day to the Rothorn hut and an ascent of the Zinal Rothorn. This was followed by an abortive attempt in bad weather on the Wellenkuppe. After a slog to the abominably crowded Hörnli hut, Dr Bell twisted his right knee, which had to be treated at Zermatt. 'So the holiday ended,' he writes, 'in tourism, fleshpots and wine-bibbing. A warning that Munros may be better value than the Alps in August!'

W. M. MCKENZIE, J. K. W. DUNN, R. GRIEVE and W. H. MURRAY spent the first two weeks of September in the western Pennine Alps. They met at Martigny and decided to go up the Val de Bagnes to the Chanrion hut. From there they climbed the Ruinette (3875 m.) by the Col de Lyrerose, a pleasant rock scramble to the upper snowfield and the west ridge, in high wind and cloud, descending by the same route to Mauvoisin. Then they went to the Panossière hut where, in fine weather, they climbed in the three following days—the Combin de Corbassière (3722 m.) by the small glacier facing the hut and along the south-east ridge, descending by the west ridge; the Combin de Bouveyac (3663 m.); and finally up a steepish glacier to the Tournelon Blanc (3712 m.). It was a good time to go, the Alps being less populous and the weather usually more settled.

J. R. MARSHALL writes: 'I spent approximately one month in the Alps this season, with R. MARSHALL, J. MORIARTY, D. HASTON and J. McLEAN (C.D.M.C.). Starting always from high camps, we did the following climbs:—

'On 8th July the traverse of the Vajolet Towers, climbing the Spigolo South-West of the Torre Delago and continuing to the Torre Winkler; a very enjoyable outing. Two days later an attempt on the South Pillar of the Marmolata, which failed in the terminal *couloir* because of cascades of cold water and rotten ice. The retreat by *rappel* provided an exciting and impressive end to this 15-hour expedition. On the 16th, following some poor weather, the Cima Picolla (*via* the Yellow Edge) was climbed by Moriarty and R. Marshall, and by McLean and Haston the next day. On the 18th, the Cima Ouest, *via* the North Face, was climbed by J. R. Marshall and McLean, a most stimulating route of great quality involving 11 hours of ascent. The same day, Haston, R. Marshall and Moriarty did the Cima Grande by the North Face, another wonderful wall route. A summit bivouac was memorable for the moonlit scenery in the sma' 'oors.

'Five days later the Marshalls and McLean did the Punta Civetta by the north-west face, a climb of surprising length for the Dolomites (some 4000 ft.). On the upper section we entered a thunderstorm and embarked on some memorable free pitches, off the existing route, before reaching the summit about 9 P.M. After a not too comfortable bivouac, we were disgruntled to find a good hut a few hundred feet below. The next day, a poor one, Haston and Moriarty climbed the Cima Su Alto by the south-west face (*via* Livanos) and bivouacked on the summit after 13 hours' ascent. This is one of the most elegant and difficult climbs in the Dolomites. The subsequent descent in bad weather and by the wrong route was apparently more hazardous than the ascent.

'After a spell of bad weather in Courmayeur, the whole party on 31st July traversed the Géant glacier in thick mist and knee-deep snow to the Réquin hut, and thence to Chamonix; in view of continuing bad weather we retreated to home grounds.'

G. G. FREEMAN spent 6th to 18th April touring in the Silvretta with friends from Nürnberg, for the first time (in winter) without guides. The Breite Krone and the Piz Davo Sussè were climbed from the Heidelberger hut. Four days were spent in crossing passes to the Jamtal and Wiesbadener huts and back to the Heidelberger hut, the Dreiländerspizze being climbed on the way.

Freeman, with GEORGE ROGER, was in the Chamonix district from 14th to 29th August. They met ARCHIE HENDRY, GEORGE PEAT and GEORGE RITCHIE, and the two parties had a very fine day on the Aiguille du Tour. Four S.M.C. 'Georges' on one mountain is possibly unique! At times it was debatable which George was to do what. The three Huts Sub-Committee members noted the comforts of the Albert Premier hut with interest.

From the Argentière hut Freeman and Roger climbed the Aiguille d'Argentière and the Tour Noir. Roger led Freeman by the longest possible route to the Trélatête hotel and as a result has been threatened with expulsion from the Navigators' Union. Two enjoyable days were had on Mont Tondu and the Aiguille de Béranger; near the latter summit they saw a herd of twelve chamois at fairly close quarters.

The traverse of three peaks of the Dômes de Miage and the Aiguille de Béranger by the Col de Miage was a most excellent day with superb views of the Bionassay and the south-west face of Mont Blanc. Roger's navigation involved the party in leaping over innumerable crevasses on the Trélatête glacier early in the day and progress became a steepchase carried out in a manner which would have delighted Bob Grieve.

By this time the party was reasonably fit and the traverse of the Aiguille du Chardonnet by the Forbes Arête was a most enjoyable finish to the holiday.

MAURICE H. COOKE, with THEO. NICHOLSON and his elder son David, spent about a fortnight in the Stubai and Ötztal Alps from 25th August. A training walk up the Serles Spizze turned out to be an ascent of 5750 ft. from Neustift on the hottest of summer days. Thereafter the following were climbed: Wilder Freiger (with Campbell Steven, on the last day of his holiday), Ruderhofspizze (within 300 ft.!), Wilder Pfaff, Zuckerhüt, Pfaffen Schneide, Stubai Wildspizze, Hochvernagt Spizze, Fluchtkugel and Wildspizze. The following huts were sampled: Neurnberger, Sulzenau, Neue Regensburger, Dresdener, Muller, Hildesheimer, Vernagt and Breslauer. Dry weather was enjoyed throughout, though temperatures varied from midsummer heat to the cold of northerly winds with light snowfall and hard night frosts.

LOUIS M. HILL, with Mr and Mrs J. R. Watson of the Grampian Club, was at Zinal in the third week of July and at Zermatt the following week. They climbed the Pigne de la Lex (3404 m.) from Zinal; the Bieshorn

(4161 m.) and (an unfinished) Tête de Millon from the Tracuit hut. The party then went to the Mountet hut and climbed Mont Blanc du Moming (3670 m.). They crossed to the Schönbühl hut by the Col Durand, climbing Mont Durand (3744 m.) on the way; they found the Col had to be treated with a certain amount of respect. The last several days were spent at Zermatt in weather which had turned from splendid to sour, and the big peaks were impossible, even a last-day's attempt on the Breithorn proving abortive. At the Théodule hut low morning temperature and blizzard conditions forced everyone to retreat.

IAIN OGILVIE and CHARLES GORRIE were in the Dauphiné with Charles Warner, where they attended the A.C. meet. On 17th (? month) they climbed Mont Gioberney from the Pilatte hut and on the 18th, Les Bans. On the 21st they ascended Pic Coolidge in a snowstorm from the Temple d'Écrins hut and then retreated to a valley camp. In the hope of finding better weather in lower hills they moved camp north to Bonnenuit, and on the 24th, once more in a snowstorm, they climbed the northern of the Aiguilles d'Arves. Improved weather brought them south again, and on the 27th they traversed the Grande Ruine from the Adelle Planchard hut. This normally easy mountain gave a fine climb in deep fresh snow. The hut, though reported in the guide book as having a guardian, store and fuel, had none of these and the party retreated for the last time owing to famine.

After his climbing in Spain, W. D. BROOKER visited Chamonix. He had a solo day on the Brévent, and then with GEORGE RITCHIE he traversed the Grépon, being benighted by a storm. Then over to Courmayeur with a night in the Fauteil des Allemands. Again bad weather robbed them of the Aiguille Noire, and they had a scramble on the lower part of the Pic Gamba. He thought the most disappointing sight was the 'development' of Courmayeur and the Val Veni—a prelude to worse when the Mont Blanc tunnel is completed!

The PRESIDENT confides that he spent some time ski-mountaineering in the Alps last spring, but had been afraid to communicate his lapse to the *Journal*. There is now, alas, no time to remedy this over-scrupulousness. Heresy? Try to climb in the springtime Alps *without* skis!

ROBIN SMITH writes: 'I passed about six weeks in the Alps, climbing one route over the first two days and three routes in the last four days. With Gunn Clark from London I climbed the Walker Spur on the north face of the Grandes Jorasses. We left the ruins of the Leschaux hut at about 2 A.M. in the wake of two Poles, who kept with us throughout the ascent and were very friendly—except that when they got in front they dropped great numbers of stones on our heads. Conditions were excellent. Few pitons were either encountered or necessary. Technical difficulties were never more than the mildest Glencoe Very Severe, but well sustained between Very Difficult and Severe. We started in the *coulair* to the left of the foot of the Spur, which is rotten but easy if the bergschrund can be crossed and avoids a lot of step-cutting on the ice slopes farther right. The Black Slabs were the crux of the climb, as route finding was hard and we found little

shelter from the volleys of our friends; we all bivouacked on a good ledge just beyond, about 200 ft. below the crest of the Grey Tower. On the second day we kept the lead until we lost the route at the triangular ice-field above the Grey Tower, and then had to wait in a hole while the Poles climbed a rotten *coulair*. We came out at the top around 5 in the evening. The quality of climbing and the situations were marvellous from the 30-m. crack onwards. We went down into Italy by the spur from the Pointe Whymper and through quite a difficult glacier to find the Cabane des Grandes Jorasses by moonlight.

'After a series of misadventures I found myself at the Rifugio Vassoler in the Dolomites. I climbed the Torre Venezia twice by the Via Cassin, with Giorgio Radaelli from Como, and solo by the Via Tissi; finally, with Steve Read from Manchester, I climbed the north face of the Cime Su Alto, a magnificent line full of pitons and a lot of rock like sugar.'

G. J. RITCHIE flits mysteriously through this Section, but it has not been possible to pin him down here either. Still, he must have been ABROAD.

L. S. LOVAT, K. BRYAN and M. THOM (J.M.C.S.) occupied the Sella Inn on 9th August, J. C. and Sheila DONALDSON (L.S.C.C.) arriving that evening; the Slessers camped nearby. On the 10th SLESSER and Lovat failed notably on the sebaceous flanks of the Kamini Schmidt on the Cinque Dita. Bryan and Thom succeeded on the S.W. Spigolo of the 2nd Sella Tower (V), while the Donaldsons investigated the Sella plateau by an artificial route. The next day Slesser and Lovat did a long mountaineering route on the south-east face of the Sassolungo, ending in the sensational Delago chimney; Bryan and Thom were lifted by chair to the first pitch of the Cinque Dita traverse, over which they romped in 4 hours; and the Donaldsons were on the first Sella Tower.

In bad weather the party moved to the Catinaccio (Vajolet hut), the Slessers climbing on the Marmolada *en route*. On the 14th Bryan and Thom were on the south face of the Torre Stadler (V) while Lovat and the Donaldsons made the east face. The following day bad weather forced Lovat, Bryan and Thom off the West Spigolo of the Torre Delago, and the Slessers and Donaldsons climbed the shattered North Tower of the Torre Winkler in mist and rain.

The party then moved to the peaks of San Martino and on the 17th found itself at the magnificent new Pradidali hut; the Donaldsons and Mrs Slesser climbed the Cima di Vezzona from the south, and the rest 'did' the *via normale* on the Campanile de Pradidali in a short afternoon. The next day Lovat and Slesser made the Castiglioni on the same mountain, a notably lovely route (V), whilst Thom and Bryan—warned off the east face of the Pala di San Martino by poor rock—in 2½ hours climbed the Cime Canali by its north flank. The Donaldsons were on the Campanile. On the 19th Bryan and Thom did the Castiglioni route and Thom, Bryan, Slesser and Lovat climbed the south-west pillar of the Pala di San Martino on the 20th, a long 'Difficult' with a 'Severe' finish. That night saw an Italo-Scottish *entente cordiale*, with much reciprocation of song and Asti Spumante between hut personnel and the 'Scozzese'!

GORDON WALDIE was in the Valais Alps from 8th to 21st August with his nephew and several members of the Fylde M.C. From the Chanrion hut in the Val de Bagnes they climbed La Ruinette, getting soaked on the descent. Crossing to Arolla by the Col de Chermotane and the Vignettes hut, they made their next base at the Bertol hut. The Aiguille de la Tsa and a north top of the Dents de Bertol gave easy climbs in poor weather. On the 16th the Schönbiel hut was reached by way of the Tête Blanche and the Col d'Hérens. Excellent weather followed. Waldie and a companion traversed the Pointe de Zinal from its south ridge (a recommended route), before the party moved to Zermatt. From the Rothorn hut the Trifthorn and Zinal Rothorn were climbed, before snowstorms put paid to further efforts. Waldie then joined friends at the Tscherswald hut above the Walensee and spent a delightful week in the Glarus hills. The Bachistock was climbed from the Glarnisch hut where, Waldie writes, 'the kindly warden, Frau Bruin, made a pleasant contrast to the tyrannical pirates who rule the high Valais.'

Spain

B. S. FRASER writes: 'We spent ten days of a family holiday—late August and early September—in or under the Picos de Europa in the North of Spain. Along with my son Andrew (E.U.M.C.) I made a north to south crossing of the western massif: we passed three nights in the refuge of Vega Redonda and two nights near, but not in, the rather insanitary Vega Huerta.

'From Vega Redonda (1540 m.) we climbed the Peña Santa de Castilla (2596 m.), the mountain that dominates this massif, working out an interesting zig-zag route which probably approximated to the ordinary way up the north-west face. The standard was no more than Very Difficult, at least when we were on the route itself.

'From the same base we climbed the Peña Santa de Enol (2478 m.). Our first attempt, direct from the col, was abandoned in father's best interests; our second, obviously the normal route, gave us a disappointingly easy scramble to the top of an otherwise well-defended mountain.

'From Vega Huerta (2070 m.) we climbed the Cabra Blanca (2377 m.). Above the shoulder a rock face gave us pause until two chamois demonstrated the existence of a diagonal ledge. This brought us out to a knife edge ridge which combined easy climbing with sensational exposure. The neatness of this unexpected route more than atoned for its lack of difficulty. Andrew added a solo traverse to the east over Los Estribos, and together we scrambled over the two western tops on the ridge. This was the afternoon when Andrew thought he saw another party on a distant peak; otherwise we had the whole range to ourselves.

'Next day we went down from this lunar landscape of bare limestone to the green glen of Valdeón where we joined the ladies whose descent by car into that roadless valley deserves to be recorded. So does the family expedition to where the River Cares plunges into the mighty gorge which separates the central and western massifs. Our return—a first experience on horseback—felt very sensational. In spite of rain and a track churned

up by the feet of many oxen, the car was successfully extricated from Valdeón.

'After driving round to the north Andrew and I entered the central massif from Poncébos. The Naranjo de Bulnes (2505 m.) rises sheer above the refuge at the Vega de Uriello (1980 m.), where we passed two nights on cold, hard, damp, new concrete. Guided by Juan Tomás, the younger of the two Martínez brothers, who have made the peak their own, we rounded the mountain and climbed the south-east face by the 'directissimo' route—500 ft. of steep clean limestone seamed by vertical runnels, with another 400 ft. of exposed scrambling. Mist obscured the summit view. Permanent pitons, inserted in the steep part in the absence of natural belays, enabled us to rope down.

The Naranjo is an impressive peak by any standards; there is no easy way up. The *directissimo*, climbed first by our guide and his brother about 1942, is graded 6 by the Spaniards but is no more than Severe; the difficulty lies in knowing where to start. The visitors' book at the summit revealed nine previous ascents in 1959, and we were probably the last of the season. Only one other British party (Oxford University—guided) was recorded at the top since 1954, but 'Coventry' carved half-way up suggested that some Midland vandals had reached their limit there.

'The guide—Andrew's reluctant concession to paternal weakness—was an interesting study. He left his gun at the foot of the climb. His footwork, in what looked like ankle-length Wellington boots, was a joy to watch. His rope technique had obviously been worked out in isolation from current European practice and, though disturbing to begin with, appeared effective for his purposes. These purposes obviously included the pulling up of his clients, but our command of Spanish was just sufficient to prevent this happening to us. Like so many Spanish peasants he was a natural gentleman whom it was a pleasure to meet.'

W. D. BROOKER, touring with his wife in Europe, was also in Spain and in the Pyrenees. He did the Pic de Chausenque (9300 ft.), a summit of Pic d'Ossue. They visited Montserrat (in Spain), a ridge of fantastic conglomerate pinnacles with a monastery near the top and where he thought there must be excellent hard rock climbing possible; he enjoyed one scramble.

Norway

A combined Liverpool University M.C. and Edinburgh J.M.C.S. party, consisting of H. BRUNTON, J. CLARKSON, G. HENDRY and G. LEE visited Norway for four weeks from 11th July. They crossed by boat to Bergen, and then travelled 1200 miles northward to Lyngen by car, a journey over rough roads which was accomplished in 3½ days. Clarkson writes:

'We arrived in Lyngen at the start of a week of perfect weather and our first climb was a scramble up Njalavarre (5020 ft.), which lies immediately above the village of Furuflaten, on the east coast of South Lyngen. Then we carried a camp up the Lyngsdal valley to a point about a mile short of the Lyngsdal Glacier and immediately below Jekkevarre (6052 ft.). On our first day there we were defeated on the

south-east ridge of the main peak by incredible heat and loose rock. On our second day we climbed Lauretattind by a buttress of sound rock, up to Severe standard, on the north-west face.

'We had heard quite a lot about the "south face of Jekkevarre" which is about 2500 ft. high and was previously unclimbed. More accurately the south-east face, this is swept by frequent and considerable ice avalanches over most of its width. We climbed the face by a route resembling the Observatory Ridge of Ben Nevis, except at the final pitch which was very difficult. Another route climbed was the north-east face of Balkisvarre, a route up a steep, hanging glacier which went easily in the soft snow conditions then prevailing.

'This area of South Lyngen is full of possibilities for new face climbs giving attractive routes of a mountaineering character. Unfortunately, after our first week, the weather broke and there was a long succession of hopeless wet days. Eventually, we gave up waiting, and travelled south to the Romsdal, a very fine rock-climbing area west of Trondheim. We arrived there in sunny weather, but shortly afterwards the weather broke again, and there was drizzle throughout our last week. Our only climbs were the north face of the Romsdalshorn (5100 ft.) and the north ridge of Store Trollind (5886 ft.). Both these ascents are graded Severe in the Norwegian guide book, but would be quite easy for that standard at home. The area contains much steep sound rock and there are large areas of faces up to 4000 ft. high still unclimbed. A strong British party should achieve worth-while results here, given reasonable weather.'

T. W. PATEY was at Dombås during March 1959 on a Services' ski-ing course, but managed to escape on two occasions to the Romsdal Alps and the Snöhetta group for excellent winter climbing.

The first of these is described in an article in this issue of the *Journal*. On the second occasion, again with Henry Berg, a new route was recorded on Snöhetta. This was the ascent of the Mid-top, or Peder Langdals top, of Snöhetta from the east, *i.e.*, Reinheim. The route followed the *coulair* between this peak and the Vest-toppen: 900 ft. of Severe climbing on iced rock. Descent *en rappel*, by the line followed on the first winter ascent of the peak from the west. The entire traverse of the summit cirque of Snöhetta has not yet been recorded and would be a grand expedition.

He thought Aandelsnes the finest centre for mountaineering north of Chamonix, especially in the winter time. Too many climbers who visit Norway at Easter spend their entire holiday skiing, apparently without realising that skis can be employed equally profitably as a means of access to many fine ice routes in Romsdal, Sunmore, Jotunheimen, etc. Guide books to all the major climbing areas, in English, are available through the Norway Travel Association, 21-24 Cockspur Street, London, W.1.

Africa

A. L. CRAM, whose exotic adventures on summit ridges 'complicated a little by game' have enlivened previous 'S.M.C. Abroads,' sends us this latest instalment of his tropical ascents:

'I have made about a dozen safaris to the unclimbed east face of Mawenzi in the last year or two, each time reaching a little higher and unravelling the complicated route. In November 1959, after three camps on the way, my wife and I and two Africans reached a point on the so-called "Mittelrippe" of the German maps within a few hundred feet of the main ridge crest. Above this, the way looks steep but loose and the difficulties increase. One factor to be kept in mind is that the main ridge itself, during the first and only traverse in 1938 by Eugen Eisenmann of Stuttgart, took three days—so that a night might have to be spent between 16,000 and 17,000 ft. after climbing the Mittelrippe.

'We then descended and climbed the west side to the top of Lathom peak, the first big peak on the summit crest, but did not cross the great gap towards the top of the Mittelrippe. We found a record left by Eisenmann on the crest. While the Mittelrippe is not at all exposed to falling stones or ice, the faces on either side (particularly to the left) are very steep and of an exceedingly poor conglomerate.'

BOOKS

WE note briefly publishers' copies, as they feed the Club library. It is hoped to enlarge this Section in future issues, and so constitute a guide to this branch of mountaineering exploration which, normally carried out in South Bridge or Sauchiehall Street, requires strength and stamina to maintain a precarious stance and a satisfying fingerhold; it may be that we shall save much time and the embarrassment of a benightment.

An Eccentric in the Alps. By Ronald W. Clark. (Museum Press. 35s. 217 pp. text, 16 illustrations and index.)

The sub-title is 'The Story of W. A. B. Coolidge,' a great Victorian mountaineer, 1850-1926. His first climbing season was in 1865 along with his aunt, Miss Brevoort. Soon he always climbed with Christian Almer, and latterly with Almer's sons; and often with the dog Tschingel, a gift from Almer. He climbed in all Alpine districts, and made many first ascents, principally in the Dauphiné. He was prone to indulge in controversy, often acrimonious; most entertaining episodes. He was a great writer and authority on Alpine matters, author of many books and editor of guide books. The book is most interesting, especially to readers with some background knowledge of Alpine exploration. J. H. B. B.

Ski-ing in Scotland. Edited by J. D. B. Wilson. (Scottish Ski Club. 5s. Some 70 pp. text, many photographs and diagrams.)

John Wilson edits this latest edition and it is not surprising that the 'Great Off-piste' is very well represented. Indeed, the touring section makes fascinating reading for those who are following out the winter exploration of Scottish hills on ski, probably the last large-scale topographical adventure we can have here. The advice on equipment, weather and snow is admirable. Equally valuable are the detailed instructions on How To Find The Pistes; especially for those of us who wish to avoid them.

G. J. D.

Climbers' Guide to Glencoe and Ardgour. Volume 1: Buachaille Etive Mor. Edited by L. S. Lovat. (Scottish Mountaineering Club. 7s. 6d. 116 pp., 10 diagrams.)

Many mountaineers regard their rock climbing as exploration in a vertical plane, and like their guide books reasonably vague as to detail. On the other hand, the purist rock climber prefers precise descriptions and detailed information: a calibrated scale by which he may gauge his nerve and ability. In this second edition, Lovat sails most effectively between these two extremes, creating a guide of legal (one might almost say, scientific) precision well suited to the character of the mountain. The starting points of climbs have been described with care and on the whole the instructions are easy to follow; even a complete stranger should have no difficulty. Most of the climbs are illustrated by diagrams, largely new and of excellent quality; it is a pity, however, that diagram numbers are not linked with the description of each climb.

As expected, the style is crisp and not without humour. 'Left and right' are from the point of view of 'a climber facing upwards.' If a criticism has to be made it is that too many small routes, which will ever multiply, have been included. It is ironic that the least of these is one incautiously made by the author in the company of the reviewer.

C. G. M. S.

The Exploration of New Zealand. By W. G. McClymont. (Oxford University Press. 2nd Ed. 21s. 118 pp., 6 illustrations and 3 maps.)

This is a pretty short book, very concise and matter-of-fact and is probably excellent as a work of reference. It is a summary of exploration directed mainly towards settlement, agriculture, minerals, surveys, etc., and only dealing briefly and incidentally with mountains and passes as means of communication. Reading between the lines it is clear that we have the dry bones of heroic adventures and amazing feats of endurance in the repeated journeys of explorers across the Southern Alps, and in the not infrequent tragedies from terrible weather, very difficult country and rudimentary equipment. Some day a wonderful story will be made of this.

J. H. B. B.

Journals of Kindred Clubs. Among the many received and enjoyed we pick at random: *Irish Mountaineering*, 1958-59 (63 pp.), a lively journal ranging far abroad and full of humour; there are some short articles on Irish climbing. *Rucksack Club Journal*, 1959 (78 pp., 11 illus.) with an excellent article on the Caucasus by Thomas. *Sheffield University M.C. Journal*, a Jubilee number, cyclostyled and typical in its raciness of the Gritstone Universities. And the current issues of *Appalachia* and the *Sierra Club Bulletin*, organs of bodies which—even if too jovially avuncular for some of us—are still fighting manfully to prevent the last of wild America from going down before militant Industrialism and industrious Militarism.

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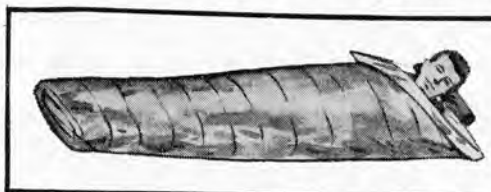
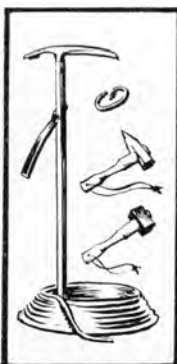
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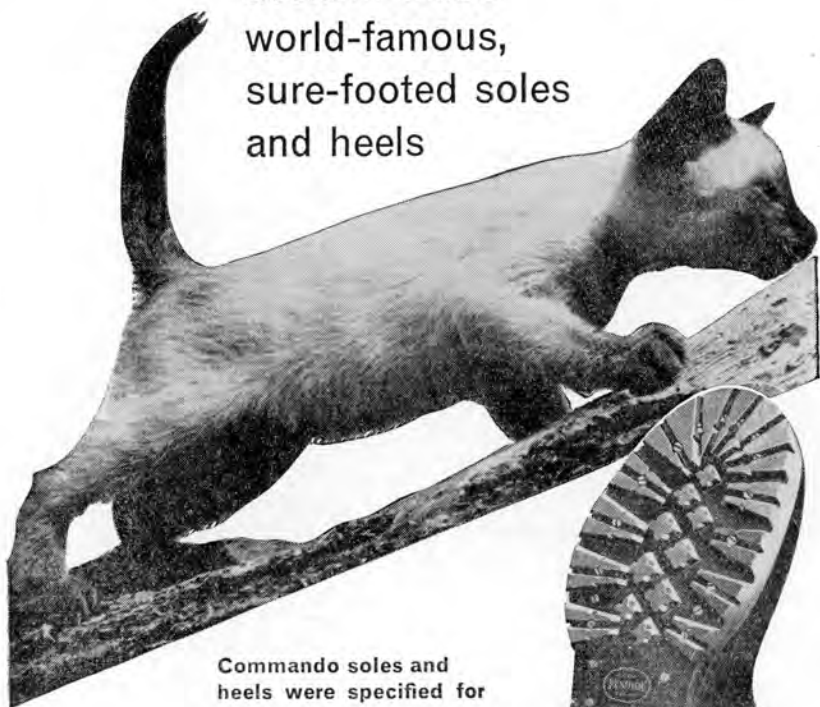
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