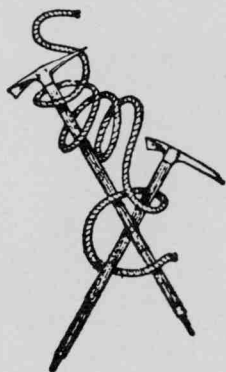


THE
SCOTTISH
MOUNTAINEERING
CLUB JOURNAL



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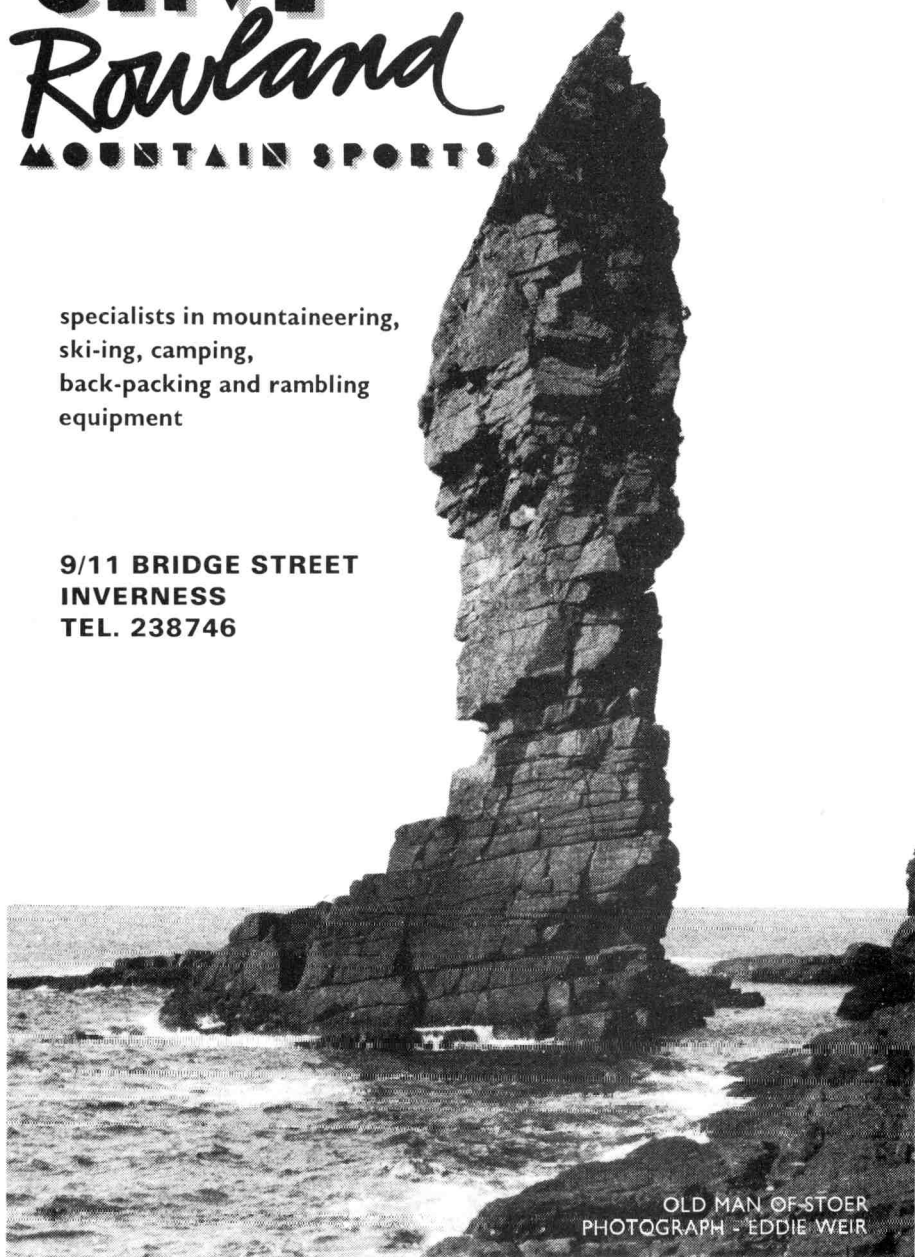
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**OLD MAN OF STORR
PHOTOGRAPH - EDDIE WEIR**



Photo: The A. E. Robertson Collection

'Goggs & Morrison on The Salisbury Crags, 1905'

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THE GAMBLING MAN

By P.J. Biggar

ELLIOT hadn't been on the hill since November. When I visited his home on the Saturday afternoon, he was still dozing between grubby covers. He eyed me quizzically.

'What is there to get up for?' he enquired. Unemployment is not a tonic. However the embers soon crackled into life; John rolled over and rummaged beneath the bed: out came a battered axe and a Terrordactyl, both without wrist loops ...

Sunday morning was cold and calm. Our passage from the East was speedy. There was a good covering of snow on the hills, but the expected minor transformation took place as we crossed the watershed in Glen Torridon; the snowline retreated some 500ft, making the thought of the walk-in a little less discouraging.

We left the car just after nine. Liathach and Alligin sparkled through the pine trees as we walked in leisurely fashion up the stalkers' path. For John, this was new territory and he admired it.

The crossing of the burn which flows from the Narrow Coire was hazardous. Black, glinting verglas sheathed the stepping stones; on the far side the steep heather bank was tufted with fresh snow, unpocketed hands got just a little taste of winter.

Progress up the icy path towards the bealach was fairly swift until our way became an uncertain line across gleaming snowfields beneath which flowed deeply cut waterways. Although it was freezing, water was still moving beneath the snow.

Our troubles began as we left the path to turn for our objective: a lovely slender gully between a sharp buttress and a more broken snowy face; the face was to the left of the gully and the wind was coming from that quarter.

Amongst the many hillocks below the crag the quality of the snow, never very good, became extremely uncertain; going became slow.

'I feel,' said Elliott, 'as if I'm suffering from an incurable disease.' Not only was the uphill struggle arduous, but any attempt to rest was defeated by insidious cold, conveyed through outer clothing by a capricious wind which could be seen, high on the face, raising spindrift into evil little plumes.

Below a rock wall boasting a gross brittle icicle, we stopped at last to put on crampons. As a concession to safety, Elliott put on his shiny black helmet. From an unladen sac he produced our only rope; I festooned myself with gear. On looking down I noticed I'd made the stupid mistake of putting my crampons on with a layer of hard packed snow between them and the soles of my boots; while I rectified the error, my partner began laboriously to kick steps up into the ominous portals of the gully.

His effort, however, was not sustained and quite soon I overtook him. John has never liked kicking steps in any case. His usual policy is to hide behind a rock smoking pungent roll-ups until some party from London has done the dirty work. As there were no Sassenachs about that day - or any other souls - he made do with me.

'Aye,' he said, as I floundered past, 'you're a hard man, Pete. A few more years and you'll look like a Himalayan veteran.' Flattery is part of his usual approach. Perhaps he expected me to stop at the first minor ice-pitch, but I had been that way before, on my own, and was privately determined that we should gain as much height as possible before using the rope. The route was long and the January day short.

To the strains of 'Johnnie Reggae' which I began and John echoed, we fully enjoyed several rope lengths of free motion. In places the ground was quite steep, but the ice was sound and confidence grew. Just once or twice we had to cower down over planted axes as cascades of spindrift passed down the gully, temporarily blocking our view. Once, on a nearby ledge, we spied a fat white Ptarmigan feeding on heather seeds which it had managed to free from the snow. I greeted it with Edinburgh courtesy, John with Glasgow jocosities; the bird looked at us once, then went on feeding: its attitude suggested that our problems, at that moment, were greater than its own.

At length we came to a snowy bay above which there was a steep chimney. Looking down, the coire below us seemed rather remote, and the twin spines of the cleft up which we had climbed uncomfortably sharp. It was time, we agreed, to rope up. Perhaps half an hour was spent looking for something secure to which we might anchor ourselves. In the end, John found enough ice for a screw while I found a solid seeming thread between some frozen turf and the neighbouring rock. While we were thus occupied, the first real spindrift avalanche hurried by ... and then another.

'These seem,' said John abstractedly, 'to be coming about every five minutes don't they?' The implication was obvious. With deliberation, John removed his helmet, stowed it in his sac, lit a roll-up and set off up the chimney.

Shivering, I paid out the rope. To this day I don't know how many downpourings of powder snow I witnessed as Elliott made progress upwards. Each one was preceded by a roar high up on the face, followed by a horrible swoosh. I should point out that the average cascade of spindrift is of no account, what John was climbing through was more of the order of a succession of minor powder snow avalanches. On at least four occasions I actively expected my partner to be swept down the gully and I took appropriate action. Once, a disembodied voice enquired how much rope was left. Then, for a long time there was no communication between us except for the twitch of the yellow rope which lay in a snow mound between my feet.

When at last it was my turn to go round the corner into the chimney, there was no sign of his progress; tracks obscured, apart from the rope above, the pitch might have been virgin.

The chimney was long, steep and good. I was lucky and suffered only a couple of minor deluges as I climbed. Near the top the chimney, broader below, narrowed considerably. Above this narrowing John had placed a shaky peg; he had used no other protection. His belay was good, but his stance was poor, and even as we exchanged greetings, it disintegrated under his stamping feet and fell past me; it was as well his belay was good.

We had come to a choice of ways. To the left, above John's stance, a steep ice-wall led to unknown ground. To the right the gully proper continued. One look told me why John had not gone that way: all the loose snow on the stately summit of the mountain was pouring down it; the ferocity of the downpourings was increasing and threatened to become continuous. Below us the narrow chimney was invisible for long moments together as the falls poured over it. Our choice was stark: climb the ice or retreat. Time was getting on. To judge our progress by the hill across the valley, we might be half way up the route; it was less than well documented.

My vote would have been for instant retreat, but Elliott simply said 'We shouldn't be thinking of giving up yet,' as he struggled up to the base of the ice-wall. Numbly I paid out the rope and watched his progress, always with half an eye on the hell-broth below. Somehow I didn't believe we'd get much further, and, as the falls roared beneath my feet, I wasn't fancying retreat either, especially as one of our ropes, on my advice, had been left in the car.

Elliott tried and failed, but it wasn't his fault: the Western ice was rotten and fell about him in chunks. He left a peg in a crack and retreated to his original stance. 'I'm giving up this game!' he roared disgustedly.

'You may be giving it up a lot sooner than you think!' I replied. We both admire Patey's writings. The retreat had begun.

Several hundred feet of steep ground lay between us and safety. Due to my overconfidence, our longest abseil could be just seventy feet. Plainly the pitch directly below us would be the worst; it was steep and narrow; there could be no escaping the downpourings. Brains had to isolate

themselves from the chaos, the cold, the wind, the roars of the falls, and above all from fear. My thoughts seemed to retreat far into myself. I remember thinking; if only I could be so calm when leading.

With painful slowness my numbed fingers assembled what I needed, then crammed and stuffed away whatever might catch and imperil. Relieved at last to be sliding down the rope, I came to the narrowest part of the chimney below. As a minor torrent passed and the rock became visible again, I spied a little crack below my left boot. Wedging myself sideways across the chimney, the doubled rope still through the krab at my waist, my fingers, through the torn ends of my gloves, sought out a large angle peg. At first the crack was recalcitrant, but just a little further along it began to grip as I leant apprehensively downwards and tapped with the hammer. Every few moments I had to stop what I was doing and press myself against the chimney walls as powder thundered all around.

Eventually I managed to tie myself into the peg with an assortment of slings. The time taken was worth it, but to Elliott above, it must have seemed unconscionable. Perhaps unemployment teaches patience: my friend never said a word. At my signal, he slid down the rope, classic fashion, his usual way. We both own modern fangled devices, but never carry them in winter. As the snow roared about us we exchanged a few terse words. The rope followed sweetly and was cast into the abyss. John slid below me on to a small platform. Here a minor fankle ensued - I don't know why - but, cursing through chattering teeth he sorted it out and slid off into regions where I could only see him, in black and white, when the downpourings eased.

A guttural sound came from below, a hand was raised in defiance or benediction. Now it was my turn. The rope was below me. First I had to lean down and retrieve it on the outstretched pick of the hammer. That was easily done. What followed was not easy and it might have been disastrous; it was also rather ludicrous.

Perched in uncertainty some feet above the abseil point, I became obsessed by the necessity of threading the doubled rope through the krab at my waist and over my shoulder in such a manner that, when I managed to move below the abseil point, I would not be trapped in a horrid loop of frozen rope and slowly drowned by falling powder. Abseiling is easy from a nice ledge with the anchor at chest height: mine was two feet below my boots, and in order to get beneath it, I should have to move from my little back-swirl out into the main current of falling snow. Again, in the normal course of events, all impedimenta is strapped away when abseiling, but now, of course, I needed the hammer in my hand to help me climb down below the peg.

One might have thought that, with some experience and a reasonably well trained mind, the problem would not have been so beyond me ... My abiding memory of what happened, however, is of sliding down the pitch with my back to the mountain, my neck being burned by the rope, and the everlasting powder cascading over me like water over a defeated salmon.

Gasping and spluttering, I hammered the knot in the rope's end through the krab and flopped on to the bed of soft snow where we had searched so long for an anchorage on the way up. John had gone from sight, trusting in his ability to climb down, not waiting to abseil. Several times I shouted warnings as fresh roars broke out above. Now I was alone and he could have been anywhere. Through the dark slit of the gully walls, I could see Beinn na-h-Eaglaise slipping into twilight; time was against us. By the time I reached the next stance the day was really darkening. No John: either he had managed to climb down, or he had been swept away, I had no way of knowing. Incessant noise made shouting pointless.

With some anxiety I sought a weakness in the black walls. Several pegs were tapped to no avail until, at last, a slender blade sank reluctantly into a crack in the roof above my head. Gear was running low. Desperate rummaging in my drift-filled sac brought out a torn polythene bag: in it I found an ancient piece of knotted purple cord. Standing in the darkening chaos I remembered where we had found it - on a sunny day on Lochnagar. Wooden fingers tied it round the rope and through the eye of the blade.

The runout left me a few steep feet short of safety. Often an abseil rope is stiff and thrown to pull down. Relying on this I took hold of an end and kept abseiling. Shaking and cursing, but unhurt I picked myself up at the bottom of the pitch. Trailing the rope in one hand and brandishing the hammer wildly in the other I kicked my way down the last icy step to slip and slither down the last snow chute. Defeat had become a rout.

'Cheesis!' said a voice at my elbow, 'was that no Hellish!' A soggy fish-paste sandwich and a thermos top of tepid coffee were thrust into my trembling hands. Above us the mountain was vanishing in the night, below were weary miles amongst boulders and stream beds.

'That's it,' said Elliott, 'no more winter climbing for me!'

'Put your money where your mouth is,' I retorted, 'I'll bet you a hundred pounds you'll be back!' With sadness rather than anger in his voice he declined the wager:

'I'm not really a gambling man,' he said.

ACHALADAIR

By Donald M. Orr

IT WAS DARK NOW, a deep blue black. Stars and a three-quarter moon were reflected in Loch Tulla where the wind had dropped to a whisper. On any other January evening it would have been a fine night to be out on the hill but now as he limped slowly through the deer grass towards the farm the pain in his thigh pulsed strongly. Ahead of him in the darkness he could hear Iain, struggling under the weight of two rucsacs, crashing through the heather and thick gorse that formed a rough perimeter boundary before the walls of the farm. He looked towards the buildings where the movement of the branches on the trees around the steading appeared to make the outside lights flicker and waver. Their brassy colour brought to mind the copper and bronze junks on Findlater's wall.

Earlier that week they had sat in the lounge bar of Findlater's in Paisley, discussing what they would try at the week-end. Half a dozen new routes on Meall Buidhe had been produced by Little during the previous winter season and they reasoned that they might be worth a look in the light of the lean, freezing conditions and general lack of snow. He tilted his glass back, happy about the prospect of the Sunday ahead, and gazed absently at the metal junks on the wall. They were the single and totally incongruous decoration in a bar devoid of any oriental quality whatsoever. Why junks for God's sake he continued to wonder as, finishing his pint, he noticed some irregularities in his glass caused the copper sails to appear to flap and waver.

Later, back at the flat, he mentioned to his wife that he would be away on Sunday. She paused; while not greatly interested in climbing herself, she was aware of the conditions.

'Where are you going?' she asked puzzled.

'Meall Buidhe, some of Little's routes that he put up last year.'

'There's no snow.'

'I know. Just a day out - o'er hill and moory dale.'

'Perilous seas and faery lands forlorn.'

'Beyond that last blue mountain barred with snow.'

She trumped his last effort by going into French and he grabbed her uttering ecstatically, 'Oh, Oh, talk dirty some more!'

'Get off,' pushing him away she added, 'It would fit you better if you tackled the back bedroom instead of some hill.'

'Okay, okay. We could get the paint on Saturday and I could get started through the week.'

'Right,' she said with finality and turning went into the kitchen, a hint of a smile forming on her lips.

'Thrashed again,' he thought and went into the lounge already mentally chasing the French verse Anne had quoted, very roughly translating it as: 'The sword of sorrows wintering on the mountain wind'. He remembered the line from years back thinking, as he had then, that it seemed a more fitting description for the MacDonalds of Glen Coe than for some French alp.

The farm lights were only marginally nearer. He bent over gripping his thighs just above the knees and closed his eyes trying to deflect the pain and resolve the question of the images that were tumbling forward, spilling into his inner vision. A surreal confusion of symbols that attempted to pass him information he was unsure how to decipher.

The walk-in had passed quickly. They had not seen each other much over the holiday and swapped family tales and New Year party stories about mutual friends as they ascended to the lip of the coire. They paused by a waterfall that spilled out from the hollow and guzzled some of the Lucozade that Iain always carried as they gazed up at the coire wall, trying to make sense of the route descriptions in the guide book. The complete lack of snow made it difficult to discern 'the formidable forked gully on the left'. They eventually picked out a gully with a fair amount of ice and many frozen turf ledges. Three enjoyable pitches followed, full of bridging, delicate placements and front pointing in frozen grass, interspersed with sound rock belays from the plentiful supply of cracks unseasonably available.

On reaching the rounded shoulder of Meall Buidhe they packed the rope and ironmongery away in the sacks and cramponed their way over the frosted turf to the summit, eventually agreeing that if their climb was a Grade III, then it was only just a Grade III. The summit with its low cairn was obviously not a popular spot with hillwalkers, judging by the lack of orange peel in the vicinity.

He perched on the side of the small cairn, leaning on the tumbled stones, and looked out over Rannoch Moor. It undulated away to the north like the vast, crumpled pelt of some colossal, sleeping beast. The fawns and browns of its winter coat seemed to pulse, to breathe rhythmically and exuded an almost mesmeric quality as they dappled off into the distance appearing to draw him to them, into the heart of that flecked and freckled land.

Turning abruptly to break the spell he looked up at the bulk of Beinn Achaladair. They agreed to finish the day by traversing the ridge and walked down to the low pass in silence enjoying the mid afternoon sunshine and the clink, crunch of their crampons in the short frozen grass.

The ascent proved more awkward than anything else. The stony flanks of Achaladair had been blown clean of snow and the verglassed rocks and iced scree through which they climbed were not the conditions that

crampons were designed for. Arriving on the broad summit ridge they were confronted by acres of frosted, shale-like stones across which they scraped and stumbled, cluntering over the rubble like deranged androids, until the situation became ludicrous. The crampons were taken off and attached to the top of his sac. Iain had already done the same and was now clumping across to the summit cairn in his rigid boots with the aid of his long axe. His own short axe was of little use here so he stuck it down diagonally between his back and his rucksac where he could withdraw it easily if needed and went to join Iain. They stood for a moment by the piled boulders. It had been an easy, pleasant day dotted with the odd juxtapositions of winter climbing on rock, cramponing on stone. They noted the edge of twilight approach with a ripple of lilac light and decided on a direct descent towards the farm.

Threading their way through the steep, verglassed boulderfield that formed the upper part of the mountain demanded care and concentration, but eventually they cleared it and came on more open terrain. The sound of a small cascade below awoke a thirst inside him and he angled his path to approach it. A patch of old snow appeared to lead straight to the stream. He stood on the upper section to test it and the crust broke under his boots. Concluding that it would be fine for a heeled descent he stepped from the ledge. His heel bounced off the frozen snow and, for a brief second, his body was horizontal before it crashed on the ice.

The speed at which he shot down the slope was alarming and his ice axe, which he could have used as a brake, was now trapped under him. Simultaneously he realised that he must keep his head down and his heels up or he might well spin round and smash his skull on one of the rocks that protruded through the ice at irregular intervals. His immediate reaction was to try to brake, and thrusting his arms out he pressed down hard with his ungloved hands on to the ice. In an instant the sensations turned from cold to hot to a pain whose intensity made him withdraw his hands. He tried to dig his elbows into the ice but there was no slackening of speed, only an uncontrolled downward rush. In the space of a second his brain had computed all possible courses of action to avoid disaster. There were none and it shut down, leaving his mind strangely empty, devoid of thought. Inside, his head held only the echoes of the ripping sound of waterproof fabric scraping over the ice.

The smash into one of the blocks, sticking out of the ice like a black, serrated blade, sent a searing pain through his upper left thigh. The impact threw his torso forward and he slumped to the right, pivoting and grabbing desperately at the rock, scrabbling at its edges in despair. Fighting down a wave of nausea and dizziness that threatened to weaken him and sweep him further down the hillside he clung to thin flakes with shrivelled fingers that were quickly welded by cold to the shattered edges.

His jacket and rucksac had been pushed up over his head and in this cocoon he heard Iain, who had paralleled his descent, crashing across the boulders to get to him. Swathed in his jacket he heard the gasping breath

and sensed the slow collapse of the man at his side. Due to the fall, nervous reaction or whatever a rasping burst of gas filled his breeches. He groaned from under his coat. 'If it farts, it's alive!'

Iain, looking down at the torn blue jacket, battered sack and bloodstains on the ice, sank to his knees, shaken. With his partner supporting his feet he started to pull off his rucksack and waterproof. He eased himself up and drew in some deep breaths. Iain shook his head and handed him a drink in silence. They sat around for some time looking at the mountains to the north, calming down by acknowledging the world they knew. Restoring their strength through its impassiveness and solidity. Slowly they patched up his hands, which bore the same ragged purple lacerations that now scored the twilight sky, as they tried to accept what had nearly happened.

It was getting dark as he stood up, testing his weight on the damaged leg. It would do; no breakages anyway. Iain took his sack on top of his own and they started off, knowing that the leg would soon stiffen painfully. He began hobbling down towards the farm whose lights were already beginning to twinkle in the gathering gloom.

He was suddenly amongst the gorse clumps around the farm and raised his head to see the hill gate not far from him. As he tottered through the farmyard Iain, having dumped the sacks in the car, came back to meet him.

'Do you want me to take you to hospital?'

'No. I'll be okay.'

'Are you sure' he asked incredulously, 'Don't you think you should get it X-rayed?'

'No. Nothing's broken. Just a bad fall.'

Iain looked at him and shook his head. 'You're a lucky, lucky man, you know. That could easily have been your head on that rock.'

'Yes. I know. Easy eh?'

He sensed the shock and relief that was coursing through his friend now that they were safely off the hill but he was too tired to talk more about it. He wanted only to crawl into the car, out of the freshening wind, and sleep it all away.

He awoke hunched on his side in the front seat of the car feeling distanced from reality. A disbelief in the afternoon's happenings had a mere toehold in his mind before it was avalanched off by the pain in his thigh. He closed his eyes again comforting himself in the warmth of the darkness and in the security of the steady drone of the engine. Opening his eyes he straightened himself out groaning with the pain caused by having to move his leg.

'Are you okay?' Iain asked quickly.

'Sure. I'm fine. Had a wee sleep,' he yawned, aware of an edge of panic in his friend's voice and recognised that while he had the pain he also had the security of knowing that there was no lasting damage. Iain, on the other hand, had received the greater fright and was still shocked by what he had witnessed.

'It's all right really. Just a bit stiff now.'

'God, you were lucky,' his partner said, slowly enunciating each word to add to its weight.

'What, us men of the mountain and the flood, the men of the high passes, lucky?'

'Men of the high bar stools more like,' retorted Iain.

'Well, there's a thought,' he said trying to keep his partner in a lighter mood, although the last thing he felt like was stopping for a beer in some cold Lomondside bar.

'You're going straight home and into a bath.'

'Does this mean we're engaged?'

'Piss off!'

That was much more like it and chuckling he turned and looked out to see where they were. Getting off the hill later than usual they had missed most of the ski and mountain traffic on the way south from Glen Coe and Iain had made good time on the way home. He found that they were going through the haughlands around the southern end of Loch Lomond and relaxed, closing his eyes again, drifting in and out of sleep and fear, floating between comfort and pain. He was already worrying about his wife's reaction to his fall and the problems of getting to work the next day.

The car slowed, gears changed and he slumped left then right. Through the haze of broken sleep he recognised the roundabout above Balloch and made an effort to sit up and clear his head of half thoughts and ragged images. Looking out, the darkness over the Vale of Leven was flooded by millions of golden drops of light that charted the street plans of Jamestown, Bonhill, Alexandria and, in the distance, Dumbarton. For him the nebulae of sodium streetlights in the blackness had always evoked a feeling of loneliness and melancholy that had first awakened on night train journeys to and from college in Yorkshire. The pensive, pleasing sadness of late rail travel, burrowing through the sleepless night, through tunnels of darkness to pass the occasional ill lit street or glowing conurbation, all emotionally linked by darkness, an amber glow and a sense of isolation which somehow mixed loss and desolation with a heartening, human quality that strengthened and lured him on into a more contemplative frame of mind.

A stream of despairing sorrow built up and poured through him catching his breath, filling his eyes. He choked and noisily coughed down the emotion, glad that the car interior was held only in a low greenish light from the instrument panel on the dashboard. Quieting himself he looked out again at the flow of golden lights, still unable to define the subtle interplay of moods that this sight continued to summon. The mingling of strength and hope, of loss and soft sadness was too fine a blend of distillates to be separated by his analysis.

His thoughts were dissolved in the glare of the lights around the toll barriers of the Erskine Bridge and could not be reformed as they sped along the dark motorway towards the multi-coloured mass of patterned light that illuminated Glasgow Airport.

Iain turned into the broad avenue and pulled up at the tenement where his companion lived.

'Will you make it to the top flat?'

'Sure,' he replied, aware of the stiffness as he prised himself out of the car.

He stood awkwardly wobbling on the pavement, supporting himself with his rucsac.

'Do you want me to take it up for you?'

'God no, Anne would have a fit if she saw you having to help me.' He paused, half smiling at his friend.

'What about next week-end?'

'Are you kidding?' Iain burst out, 'That leg will look like a month old black pudding by tomorrow morning! Get up there and get a hot bath!'

He nodded slowly and wandered up the path soliloquising on the mediocrity of modern youth.

As he approached the door of the building a series of images slotted through his central vision like a confused jumble of overlapping slides that related and questioned the events of the day; winter guides and no snow, crampons on scree, soft hands against hard ice, the walk in and limp out, the pull of Rannoch Moor, the spacing of the streetlights.

Were these omens, warnings, puzzles or simply tiredness, enlarging the problems of a day's events?

'I'll phone you during the week', shouted Iain as he got back into the car. He stood at the door of the close in a daze, laughing and waving goodbye. Only as his chuckles resounded and died in the interior of the building did he emerge from his dream state.

A wintered, mountain wind parried the echoes and thrust their mocking resonance back at him, reminding him of another problem he had yet to face and another coincidence. He paused, or was it confirmation? Shouldering his rucsac he limped slowly up the stairs to the flat.

ON THE MASTER'S TRAIL

By Greg Strange

IT WAS DARK and blowing a hoolie as Brian Findlay and I ran the gauntlet of yet another long icy section on the track beside Loch Muick. At times like this I sometimes question my motives for going winter climbing. Perhaps it has something to do with curiosity. In this high-tech world of push-button weather forecasts and snow and avalanche reports there remains uncertainty. We continue to travel hopefully, knowing that the only way to be sure is to go and see for ourselves.

We were on our way to Creag an Dubh Loch and on this occasion we were not travelling very hopefully. In fact we were in a rather black mood, especially when we found the Dinosaur howff buried and had to huddle behind a much smaller boulder to escape the full force of the icy blast. After a while we noticed two figures approaching across the loch. It was Bill Church accompanying his teenage son Eddy on his first winter climbing outing. As they stood watching the rivulets of spindrift racing down the Central Slabs it was hard to tell whether Eddy was actually enjoying the experience. Personally I had long given up thoughts of climbing when Brian, with his usual optimism, announced that we should climb Sabre Cut.

Central Gully is one of the country's more dramatic corridors. It was particularly so that day. Through the driving snow we could just make out the ice-lined corner of The Giant, while from below the Goliath Icicle looked almost friendly (it didn't once we could see it in profile). Sabre Cut lies just up the gully from Vertigo Wall. It was first climbed by Tom Patey, Freddie Malcolm and Sticker Thom, and although short, it is steep and some might say not a good introduction to winter climbing. Nevertheless, Bill has an easy-going approach to mountaineering and it seemed we were all heading in that direction. This became clear a few minutes later when a break in the weather revealed two climbers already on the route. Encouraged by this surprising coincidence (we thought we were the only fools on the hill that day) we became a united party of four.

I led the first pitch up an easy powder-covered slab then the meat of the climb appeared as a long, two-tiered pitch following the main ice flow out on the right. Brian came up and went through. He gave a little whoop as he pulled over the first steep wall of ice. By the time he had climbed the next bulging section Bill had seen enough. He had had to give his own tools to Eddy so not surprisingly he was not keen to lead steep ice with old, borrowed axes. I agreed to take up one of their ropes.

The pitch was excellent. The first step felt close to vertical while the second, although steeper, had formed in a groove so that bridging made it more amenable. When I reached the stance I explained that we would probably have to give Eddy some tension. Brian looked anxiously at his

belay. We worked for a while trying to back up a poor peg then shouted for Eddy to climb. He made good progress at first then he slowed, and finally stopped. We could only imagine the conversation taking place between father and son. Eddy, suddenly realising how steep and hard the ice was, now wanted to go down, while Bill, not wishing to miss the chance of climbing the route, urged him to keep going. The rope came in again then went tight. He was off. Somehow he got back on the ice and with great determination and a tight rope he came straight up the fall line taking the upper bulge direct. He even managed a wry smile as he came into view.

A final pitch of deep unconsolidated snow led to a vague break in the cornice left by the previous party. On the plateau I searched for a belay then remembering that it would be a while before Bill seconded the main pitch, I scraped a hollow between two flat rocks and lay down to wait.

There was a steady gale blowing and drift quickly began to build up over my legs. I could have moved or kicked out, but I was curious to see how quickly the lower half of my body would disappear. I could not help thinking back to a November day in 1971 when Mike Freeman and I climbed Auld Nick on Hell's Lum Crag in similar conditions. As we made our way that day from the top of 'The Lum' into Coire Domhain, we must have been within a few hundred yards of the Edinburgh schools' party, battling in vain to reach the Curran Hut. I often wonder if we could have done something for them if our paths had crossed. There was a sudden easing of tension in the rope. Someone was climbing.

Once all safely up we descended Central Gully and retraced our steps back across the loch. By the time we reached the bikes the promised thaw had arrived. The snow changed to driving rain and if anything the track was more treacherous than it had been in the morning. Brian and I called in at Glas Allt and found Doug Hawthorn and Rab The Flab - two kindred spirits from Aberdeen. It was they who were ahead of us on the climb. We sat for a while steaming in front of the log fire, gratefully sharing a welcome mug of tea. Then it was back to the howling night and more crunching falls before arriving back at the Spital looking like four drowned rats. We stopped in Ballater on the way home and Eddy announced that he did not think he would ever go winter climbing again! Of course, he has youth on his side. He was up again six hours later to go skiing. The older members of the party had a long lie.

After Sabre Cut we mused the possibility of continuing the Tom Patey theme. There was another Cairngorm Classic which neither of us had done, on which Patey had been one of the first ascensionists. Perhaps the time was right for our 'appointment with Scorpion'.

The Saturday evening walk to the Hutchison Hut was most pleasant. A three-quarter moon rose above the Yalla Moss and lit the last few miles into the coire. We were surprised to find four fellow Etchachan Club members already bedded down. They had been climbing at Sputan and on Creag a'Choire Etchachan, where apparently it had been thawing for most of the day. After a few brews and some good crack we turned in.

Next morning it was clear and frosty as we crossed the watershed en route to Loch Avon. From the foot of Castlegates Gully the big crag looked disappointingly bare with only False Scorpion offering continuous snow and ice. We hummed and hawed for a while then moved across to a small bergschrund at the start of Scorpion. We were keen to make a traditional ascent. After all, that was the main reason for taking the longer Southern approach as opposed to the usual race from Coire Cas.

Surprisingly steep climbing on turf and gravel welded together with black ice led to a snow ramp and an apparent cul-de-sac. The next pitch was the one with the subterranean passage. In my imagination I had always thought this to be a crack which widened to form a chimney, like the one to our left on Redguard. I scanned the wall ahead searching for something that resembled a chimney. The only feature was a rightward slanting hand crack. Still unconvinced I took a belay and brought up Brian.

A few moves above the ledge he reached a position where the crack seemed the only option; then for some reason he gave a small piece of neve a good boot and uncovered a hole in the granite roughly the shape of a large letter box. 'Surely you are not going in there' Like a terrier he began furiously excavating snow from inside the mountain. Soon the sack was abandoned and he disappeared head first into the hole only to reappear five minutes later twenty feet above, back in the line of the crack. Then he was out of sight again, muttering something about a steep wall and big jugs. About seventy feet up he belayed, pulled through one of the ropes and hauled the sacks.

After two attempts at the hole I felt sure I was too large. Perhaps the thought of being wedged by the hips half in and half out was subconsciously holding me back. The solution was to slide face in then wriggle rightwards pushing the axes out in front. Just as I was beginning to relax my right Footfang became entangled with some gear hanging from my waist. I was unable to turn or twist to see what was holding the foot and I could not reach it with either hand. My pulse rate doubled. Now I was really trapped. Fortunately I was just able to move my foot a few inches closer to the back of my leg and somehow the loop released itself. With much relief I hauled out into daylight and completed the pitch.

We wondered at Patey and Mike Taylor's good fortune in finding this improbable through-route. We only knew of two other people who had been through the hole in winter and they were by no means portly or long in limb (large climbers beware). Most of the remainder of the climb was on snow and ice. Conditions were thin yet almost perfect. In the upper gully the so-called winter crux was a move or two on steepish ice, then a long snow chute ran up to a final barrier below the plateau. There appeared to be four possibilities, none of which looked easy. We favoured the original line which went out right on a narrow shelf but had a desperate-looking cornice exit. I took a closer look at the overhang directly above before deciding to go for the cornice. After some fifteen minutes of chopping I offered Brian a shift. By now a second party had arrived from False

Scorpion. It was Sandy Allan, Doug Scott and Jim Fotheringham. Following some discussion Sandy set off for a steep groove up on the left leaving the three of us to shout encouragement and enjoy the fine view across the flat top of An Sticil to Hell's Lum and the plateau of Cairn Lochain beyond.

Sandy made impressively short work of the groove and just as he topped out there was a muffled shout from Brian. Fearing the worst I took in some rope and braced myself. Looking up all I could see was a pair of legs threshing in space, gradually being drawn up through the cornice in short, staccato movements. It looked absolutely wild.

The pale afternoon light was fading as we walked back across the crusted ice of Loch Etchachan. The situation felt truly Arctic, similar to the 'easy going' on the surface of Weasel Valley in the Cumberland Mountains of Baffin Island. The combination of space, silence, solitude and inner warmth created a magic tingling sensation. We should be thankful that this quiet corner of Macdui retains its feeling of remoteness.

Surprisingly the good weather held right through the following week. Equally surprising was the sad spectacle of Mar Lodge going up in smoke against a backdrop of snow-capped hills and clear blue skies. That was the last day in January. Since then the place has never been out of the public eye as politicians and conservationists debate the pros and cons of purchasing the estate for the nation. Our problem was less complicated. Could we stretch our luck to a third weekend? Creagh Meaghaidh was the place we had in mind and Patey's North Post was where we hoped there would still be some ice.

Late on Friday we were brewing in a layby beside Loch Laggan. It was a memorable night. From time to time thin layers of cloud dimmed the now waning moon while in the Northern sky a faint aurora gave a crimson tinge to the ever changing cloud pattern. Owls were calling, some from the nearby birchwood, others from far across the frozen loch in the forest of Ardverikie. Every now and again sharp, hollow sounding cracks echoed from the ice, further adding to the eerie scene.

A ridiculously early walk to Coire Ardair almost put us at the front of the queue. Our attention was immediately drawn to the narrow, vertical white line of the North Post. We made our separate ways up the long approach slopes, eventually meeting at a small crevasse below the first narrows. The climb was superb. It resolved itself into six pitches, five of which were entirely on ice. The second, a huge ice-draped chockstone, was the crux. Twenty feet of vertical ice, hollow in places and fringed with icicles. A very impressive solo by Mike Geddes in 1972. I was glad it was Brian's lead.

Above an easier section we avoided a chimney by climbing to the Girdle ledge, using an ice runnel out on the right. By this stage the climb bore little resemblance to a gully. A broad, shallow wedge of slabby rock barred the last hundred feet to easy ground. Down this ran bands of pale green ice varying in width and thickness but definitely more substantial on

the right, where the ice formed an inset corner with the retaining rock wall. I pulled round the righthand rib and swung the axes into smooth dense ice. They went in first time and felt good. Initially the easiest way stayed close to the corner until a slight ramp led out into the middle and over a bulge. It was a moment to savour with the whole climb dropping steeply away below my feet. Higher up, a traverse back right gained a perfect stance and rock belay. The final ice pitch finished up a short leaning groove with a tricky undercut start.

We returned to the coire through the Window. By now the sky was completely overcast and there was a hint of snow in the air. Looking back up the Post Face we tried to pick out the line taken by Patey's party on the upper part of the climb. Somewhere they had traversed eighty feet across the terminal face from right to left, but at which level we could not decide. Much later, while driving back over the Lecht, the night took on an unusual warm glow. At the summit we emerged into artificial light and stared in amazement at a line of skiers descending a narrow strip of snow. Floodlit skiing on the Scottish hills. Whatever next?

Shelter Stone

A kind of cave.
A shelter stone.
Some twenty ton
leaning against the cliff.

Welcome enough
in blizzard or rain
or as a howff
to keep the icy stars off

and shelter your light.
You sleep safe under granite.
Out of the dead weight
of the open night.

G.J.F.D.

THE CRACK

by Rob Milne

AS USUAL, the view from the Cairngorm car park was depressing.

It was mid-January, and the view usually is depressing, but this time the hills were bare. At the time we didn't realise that this would be one of the least snowy winters in modern memory, we just thought we were a week early. Since the weather was good, Rab Anderson and I decided to walk into Coire an Lochain anyway and have a look.

An hour later our fears were confirmed. Although there was some snow, it seemed the chances of any routes being in shape looked pretty slim. We sat and told jokes about the weather with the other fools who had walked all the way to the base of the coire. Perhaps it was the encouragement of others, or perhaps the desire to show them up, but soon we were headed up to the crag anyway. We had convinced ourselves that some of the easy routes would at least warrant putting on crampons and the rope. We were too keen to walk all this way and not do a route, even an easy one. When the weather is good, one is obligated to at least try something.

We decided on the line of turf and grassy bays that formed Andromeda. The snow was deeper than it looked, and at least covered the low angled sections. Unfortunately the turf wasn't frozen. We just balanced up the low angle ground. For a challenge, I led an easy pitch with my gloves off. I thought this would be good conditioning for when the snow finally arrived. Half a pitch later, I had frozen fingers and was bleeding from every knuckle. That proved it was winter climbing, I needed to wear my gloves.

After a few enjoyable pitches, we were on the large flat ledge that formed the last belay ledge for Central Crack Route. From there it was an easy pitch to the plateau. The weather was still fine, and there was a lot of daylight left. We were warmed up and feeling ambitious. Conditions were now frozen, and it felt like winter.

Splitting the vertical headwall above us was an intimidating crack. In Colorado, it would be a three-star jam crack. But for Scotland in winter, it looked impossible, yet inviting. It went almost straight up, with a jog to the left at mid-height where it went through a two-foot wide roof. The angle seemed to decrease higher up, although this was an illusion. In fact, the top of the crack splits another overhanging section. There were virtually no ledges on the wall, only the flake and a bay below the roof.

Hundreds of climbers on Central Crack Route had passed under it. Most probably don't even notice it. But now we couldn't take our eyes off it. There was just enough snow to give it a winter aspect. The angle of the wall meant that it wouldn't hold any useful snow or ice anyway. There wasn't even much turf. Rab decided to have a go.

The move off the ground was simple enough; layback from a small flake with the left hand, place a foot high and balance into a little niche below the first roof. Rab stepped up and placed a Friend in the crack. Suddenly it looked completely different. What had looked like a low angled wall now turned vertical. The lack of footledges was all too obvious. The crack was also too wide for torques with the tools.

Rab placed a fist jam under the small roof. From ten feet away, I couldn't see his footledge. He slowly balanced up on one foot. With a long reach, he was able to hook a small chockstone with his axe. He hung there for ages from one arm while he dug out enough snow to thread the chockstone. When I seconded this section, I was amazed to see the foothold. It wasn't a ledge, but a curved indentation about half an inch wide. Although there was a ledge on the left, one had to lean to the right to get the balance right. The only real option for the feet was friction against the small ripples. In crampons, this doesn't work so well.

The next moves were desperate. The axe over the chockstone was solid, but there were no other tool placements. I had to palm the rounded edge of the crack and pull. Quickly I spotted another ripple for my crampon points and leaned back. I tried to mantel on the one hand, but had to lean back to get my feet to friction against the wall. This was modern hard mixed climbing. One tool placement and nothing for the feet. Although the protection was at Rab's nose when he was starting this set of hard moves, it was well below his feet before he was safe again.

My indecision cost me and I skidded off. On the second try, I combined laybacking from the edge of the crack with a toe jam with my crampon points. This time I focused on a few ripples and managed to get some lift from my feet. A few grunts later and I could pull into the crack and jam up to the roof. I put my Colorado jam crack education to good use.

The roof and flake had taken Rab a long time. The flake was too wide and rounded to take protection. The only other crack was too shallow. Under the roof was good gear, but the hard move was five feet higher. Given the difficulty, that was too long a potential fall. With great difficulty he finally managed to get a reasonable peg into the crack in the middle of the move.

I can clearly remember him making the big move. He slowly reached up with one tool. Gently he reached and grabbed the flake five feet to the left (in other words at full stretch). Suddenly both his feet came loose and dangled in the air. With one good handhold, and a bad tool placement, he somehow got into a layback up the flake. Now it was my turn.

The lack of holds was just cause for concern. The left wall was vertical and smooth. Not even one small ripple for the feet. It did have a thin layer of verglas which would help to hold the points. Under the roof was a good block and it was possible to hook a tool for an undercling. The right arete had one very tiny ripple. After some awkward balancing, I managed to step onto the rounded ripple while underclinging with one axe. The left foot was

placed flat against the other wall both for balance and to get maximum friction. I had a look for the key tool placement.

A few strenuous minutes later I was still looking. Although there was a corner, there was no crack. After a bit of probing I found a wee nick under a tiny roof. It wasn't really a crack, just a gap in the rock. It was wider than my pick, so I would have to torque to get a hold. Since I was going to lean left, this seemed plausible. It was also too short and shallow to take more than the tip of the pick. I had to first pull up on it, then lean left. I thought it would just work.

My shoulder muscles were pulled in every direction at once. I had to lean right to get my foot on the half inch ripple. I had to lean left to torque on the tool. I had to pull straight up to get high enough to reach for the flake. The balance was all wrong, but I managed to get high enough to think about releasing the undercling and reaching left.

To get the angle on the foothold right I had to twist my ankle one way while leaning the other way. This was not an easy move with crampons and plastic boots, but afforded the only chance of staying on the rounded ripple. Just when I could almost grab the flake, I accidentally changed the angle of my boot. Not only did both my feet come free, but both hands as well. Time to think about it again.

Rab shouted down that he used a good hook above the peg. I could barely reach to just below the peg. After close inspection, I spotted another ripple. It was four inches higher, but less than a quarter of an inch wide, and rounded. It was my only hope. The move to stand up was even harder. I had to high step onto the tiny ripple and then layback up from the underclinging tool. It was very strenuous to lean back, but was the only way to get the angle right to keep my foot on.

Soon I was probing the crack at full stretch for the hook. My left foot kept sliding where I was trying to smear it flat-footed against the other wall. The temptation to hook the peg was great, but this was too good a line to waste by cheating. Finally I found the hook.

It accepted only a small part of my pick, but felt solid. I slowly pulled up and left. I released the undercling and held myself by one arm. I had to shift my weight onto the foot smeared against the vertical wall. This is no easy trick when you don't have a foothold. I wanted to rush the move before my feet slipped, but had to be steady. At last my gloved hand got the vertical edge of the flake.

Suddenly I felt solid. I let both feet swing free and pulled up. My arms were almost spreadeagled. One hand on the vertical edge of a flake, the other holding my tool in a small, but solid nick. There was a small, rounded ledge to smear a crampon on, and I pulled onto the flake.

From below, it looked like it would now get easy. Rab had still taken his time to protect it. The wall overhung, with the crack leaning right and getting wider, encouraging me to fall off. The crack was too wide for tools, and there wasn't much else. I jammed one arm in the crack and leaned

against the small corner to stand up. All winter we had been carrying a giant bong I had bought in the days of pegs. After owning it for 20 years, it was used for the first time. It was the only piece of gear that would stay in the icy crack.

The last moves were a real struggle. It was like climbing a leaning off-width crack in crampons. Once again, skills learned during my crack climbing days came in handy. With great effort I moved up using a combination of toe jams (in crampons), arm jams and who knows what. Finally, a crack appeared in the final blocks. I swung out onto the steep face from the deep crack. A few solid tool hooks and I was up.

It was a great view. Blue skies and sunshine. There was snow on the top. More snow on the route would have made no difference, it was too steep and lacked any ledges or turf.

Sitting on the cairn we celebrated. The day had looked hopeless, but our keenness had produced a route. Although the snow gullies and ice climbs were not in condition, the hard mixed routes didn't need much snow and hence came into condition quickly. We couldn't ask for better conditions. More snow would not make the climbing easier, would cause a lot of digging and snow clearing, and make the arrangement of protection harder.

Although the route had been done in summer, no one was sure of its exact grade or name. It is a direct finish to Central Crack Route, but at a very different grade. Rab just called it 'The Crack'.

The last problem of the day was how to grade the route. The Crack is typical of the harder modern mixed pitches. It is much harder than the older grade IV and V mixed routes, but too short to get a traditional grade VI. A leader able to do only mixed Grade V, wouldn't have a chance on that pitch. Only leaders with a lot of mixed experience could lead it in the clean, no falls style which Rab had just exhibited.

The Crack is exactly the type of climb that is motivating a change in the grading system. Overall the climb is a Grade V. But because of the technical nature of the climbing, a technical pitch grade is accurate, and the only way to convey the needed leading skills. Under the new system, this route would get a technical grade of 8. Deep Throat in the same coire is a typical 7. On a 7, hooks, torques and small rock footholds are essential in places, but these are always combined with larger rock holds and good tool placements. An 8 requires good crampon and tool work, with few rock hand and foot holds. Just as on this climb, there are major sections where the use of such techniques are required. There is not yet a consensus whether any pitch climbed so far would warrant a 9.

During the walk back to the car, we continued to discuss the grading. The route deserves three stars and also to become a classic pitch. The technical grade for The Crack will help others to assess whether they should attempt it. However, if you eventually try it, it will be easier for you. I've just told you the secrets of the hard sections!

MUNRO'S TABLES, 1891-1991

By Robin Campbell

IN THE YEAR following the centenary of publication of these Tables it is worth pausing to look back at the original list. In the eight editions that have appeared since 1891, much has been changed. However, there have only been two major revisions. The first of these was Munro's own revision, which appeared in 1921 when the Tables were published in Section A of the Club's Guide (known in later editions as the 'General Guide'). The second major revision occurred in 1981 when Jim Donaldson and Hamish Brown instituted certain reforms, possibly following the prescriptions of Frank Bonsall (see SMCJ, xxx, 153 and 254). In the intervening period of 60 years the only changes made were consequent on changes in mapped heights and hill names. It is generally recognised that the 1981 revision was a substantive one: indeed Donaldson and Brown have been castigated by many commentators for daring to tamper with the Holy Writ of Munro! However, it is not widely recognised that Munro's own revision was also substantive, involving an altered view of the significance of height in deciding what constituted a separate mountain. So my purpose in the present article is to establish the nature of the changes between 1891 and 1921 and to offer an account of the criteria operated by Munro.

Since Munro died in 1919, the 1921 Tables are posthumous. President Ling made the following observations in his Prefatory Note:-

'Unfortunately, [Munro's] revision was only partially completed at the time of his death, and no definite information has been found as to his views on many facts that had been brought to his notice. In these circumstances, it has been thought desirable simply to reissue the Tables substantially as he left them, leaving the debatable questions of inserting additional tops, or of deleting old ones, to be settled when more complete information is available.'

Before 1969, editions of the Tables were supplemented by clarifying Notes. While most of those in the 1921 edition were supplied by Munro, there are various other notes added. Fortunately these are clearly marked as 'foreign' additions and so it is reasonably easy to distinguish in this edition what is attributable to Munro and what is not. In the quotation from Ling the weasel word 'substantially' implies that there may have been some tampering after all, and this possibility is kept open later in Ling's Note, when he observes that 'the re-classifications of the new tops, cancelled tops, and separate mountains are all from Sir Hugh's card index, *with only a few exceptions*.' So it may be that the 1921 Tables are not quite the Holy Writ (Revised) of Munro. My own guess is that there was very

little tampering, and that little rather unimportant. At any rate, subject to this small doubt, it is clear that the 1921 Tables represented Munro's view of what constituted a 3,000ft. mountain, just as did the 1891 Tables.

The 1891 Tables

Munro drew up these Tables at the Club's request between December 1889 and the summer of 1891. He was then 33 years old: no doubt the vigour of youth was an essential tool for the job! His other tools were the O.S. 1" and 6" sheets, supplemented by advice from other climbers - notably Norman Collie and Colin Phillip - whose knowledge greatly exceeded his own. When he began to compile the Tables he had visited only 42 tops (counted from his Application Form and early articles in Volume 1). The 3,000ft. tops are spread over 30 1" sheets. The number of 6" sheets to be consulted would obviously vary considerably, with a maximum of 36 per 1" sheet. A guestimate of 600 maps in total would not be far off the mark. The two sheets provided quite different information: there were no contours on the 6"; on the other hand, there were very few names and spot heights on the 1". So Munro's effort was indeed heroic. That there were a number of anomalies and even a mistake or two in his Tables is hardly surprising. The surprising thing is that there were so few.

Three years ago I published a piece about Munro in the Journal in which I drew attention to the anomalous listing of the Inaccessible Pinnacle in the 1891 Tables. Although listed as higher than Sgurr Dearg and clearly marked as belonging to Sgurr Dearg, Sgurr Dearg summit is counted as the Munro, and the Pinnacle as a mere Top (I use 'Top' with capital T to mean 'top that is not a Munro'). What I did not realise at the time was that this type of anomaly was to be found elsewhere in the Tables. The anomaly may be defined as follows:-

1) Two tops are such that each is the nearest top to the other and at least one of them must be reckoned a Munro.

2) The lower top is designated as a Munro and the higher only as a Top.

In fact, as Table 1 shows, there are 8 such anomalies in the 1891 Tables. In the Table I have indicated the current name for each top where it is substantially different. The names of some tops are marked with an asterisk. This signifies that the top is named only on the 6" sheet available in 1891. Absence of an asterisk means that the top is named on both 1" and 6" sheets. Hereafter I shall use 'unnamed' and 'named' with these meanings. The heights given are those of the 1891 Tables and follow the conventions described on p.278: that is, a plain height signifies that a height is given on both 1" and 6" sheets and that these heights agree. If they disagree, or no spot height is given on the 1", then the 6" height is given first and the 1" height or contour is given in brackets. When no 6" height is available, the 1" contour height is given, or an approximate height from members' own surveys.

Case	Name	Height	Mtn	Top	Section
1a.	Beinn Dheiceach (Beinn Cheataich)	3074	231	423	3
1b.	Meall Glas*	3139(3000)	-	363	
2a.	Meall Chuir (Meall a'Churain)	3007	274	499	3
2b.	Sgiath Chuil*	3050ap	-	445	
3a.	Crom Leathad* (Stob Poite Coire Ardair, East Top)	3441	80	140	6
3b.	Creag an Lochan* (Stob Poite Coire Ardair, West Top)	3460(3250)	-	128	
4a.	Maoile Lunndaidh	3294	126	214	9
4b.	Creag Toll a'Choin* (deleted 1981)	3295(3250)	-	213	
5a.	Meall nan Ceapraichean*	3000c	282	529	12
5b.	Ceann Garbh*	3063(3000)	-	430	
6a.	Meall a'Chaoruinn (deleted 1981)	3004	279	509	15
6b.	Fuar Bheinn (A'Bhuidheanach Bheag)	3064(3054)	-	428	
7a.	Carn Bhac (Carn Bhac, S.W. Top)	3014	269	491	15
7b.	Top of Coire Bhousneag* (Carn Bhac, N.E. Top)	3098	-	402	
8a.	Sgurr Dearg (Ordinance Point)	3234	157	279	17
8b.	Sgurr Dearg ("Inaccessible Peak")*	3250ap	-	256	

Table 1: 'Inaccessible Pinnacle' anomalies in the 1891 Tables

In Case 5 there is a qualified height for Meall nan Ceapraichean, namely 3000c. This means that neither map offered an exact height; the top is above the 3000ft. contour but below the 3250 contour. Obviously this presented Munro with a difficulty! Whether it is rightly regarded as an anomaly is debatable.

What common factors can be discovered in the 7 remaining anomalies? Cases 1,2,4,7 and 8 share the feature that the Munro is named on both sheets while the Top is named only on the 6". In case 6, while the name Fuar Bheinn appears on both sheets Munro notes that 'The point of which the height is given is 1 1/4 mile N. by E. of the *name* Fuar Bheinn on the maps', so in fact the Top is not named on either sheet, strictly speaking. Case 8 is a special case, since Munro states in the Table introduction that he took Cuillin names from Pilkington's Map and approximate heights from Collie's aneroid measurements. In fact it is clear from examining the entries that he did this only when O.S. heights and names were unavailable. Reference to Pilkington's Map shows a name for Sgurr Dearg Summit, but - despite being clearly indicated as a peak - the Inaccessible Pinnacle is *not* named, a surprising piece of modesty by its conqueror! So, strange as it might seem, it looks very much as if Munro took the presence of a name

on the popular sheet as an important condition for a top to be considered a distinct and separate mountain, so much so that the presence of a neighbouring unnamed top - known to be higher - was disregarded. Case 3 remains unexplained.

This proposal is fairly extraordinary, since (I presume) whether or not a base map name was transferred to the 1" map rested entirely on the whim of the Ordnance Survey. It seems very odd that Munro should have taken the Survey's preferences into account, unless he was so pressed for time that he felt that, having to start somewhere, he might as well start there.

An obvious first question to ask about these anomalies is whether Munro applied this curious rule in every case where he might have done so. What must be examined are cases where we have two tops in proximity, the lower named and the higher unnamed, one of which must be deemed a Munro. Apart from the 8 anomalous cases, there are 3 which are not anomalous, shown in Table 2.

Name	Height	Mtn.	Top	Section
Geal-Charn*	3688(3500)	31	51	5
Aonach Beag	3646	41	64	5
Stob Coire an Laoigh*	3659(3500)	35	57	5
Stob Coire an Easain	3545	-	100	5
Aonach Meadhoin*	3284(3250)	131	221	8
Carn Fuaralach	3241	-	274	8

Table 2: Pairs of tops where an unnamed higher top is a Munro.

Munro had visited the first two of these cases and gives interesting explanations (when none is required) in the accompanying Notes, as follows. 'It will be seen that although unnamed and only a 3500 contour given on the 1" map, Geal Charn is the culminating point of the large range immediately to the N. of Ben Alder'. Although Stob Coire an Laoigh is not mentioned, 'It will be seen that although unnamed on the 1-inch map and only a 3750 contour given, Stob Coire Claurigh is the culminating point of the large portion of the Lochaber hills, of which Stob Coire an Easain appears on most maps as the most prominent.' Similar comments are offered about the unnamed Munros west of Lochnagar in Section 16. It is plain from these Notes that Munro was tempted to treat these cases anomalously. Only his personal acquaintance with the topography stayed his hand! There is no evidence that Munro had climbed Aonach Meadhoin, but he did visit Glen Affric, traversing to Glen Shiel, in 1889 (see his retrospective article in SMCJ, xv, 67) and may well have examined the group from a distance, since he enjoyed fine weather. These cases then, with the possible exception of Aonach Meadhoin, tend rather to support the view that Munro strongly favoured - even to the point of height anomaly - tops marked prominently on popular maps.

Although the 8 anomalous cases are evidence enough for my claim - since they are otherwise quite inexplicable - it is interesting to examine



Photo: Campbell Collection

Sir Hugh T. Munro (left), in conversation with Robin Campbell



Photo: K. V. Crocket

A. Walker starting the Serendipity Variation, Minus One Direct

other aspects of the Table for supporting evidence. For example, we might expect Munro to apply a rather high criterion of *separation* when considering the 'promotion' of an unnamed top to Munro but a low criterion of separation when contemplating the 'demotion' of a named top to Top - a kind of banker's spread! Various measures of separation were discussed by Bonsall in the articles referred to: I have used his own measure - the Naismith time to walk to any higher ground.

Considering the named tops first, there are 306 of these in the Table and 59 of these are 'demoted' to Top. All but a handful have separations of 22 minutes or less. There is an obvious factor common to the remainder, which is that they are tops in mountain groups with distinct *range* names - Liathach, Beinn Eighe, An Teallach and Ben Wyvis. In each of these ranges there is no top with the same name as the range, and in none of them did Munro designate more than one Munro. Yet Mullach an Rathain of Liathach has a separation of 42, Sail Mhor of Beinn Eighe 52, Glas Mheall Mor of An Teallach 30 and Feachdach of Ben Wyvis 52. So Munro plainly considered that such ranges should have only one Munro, regardless of separation, and so the criterion applied has to be modified as follows: for a named hill to be accounted as a mere Top it must have a low separation unless it is a top of a distinctly-named range. I am left with one exception, which is Braeriach South Plateau. This named Top has a very large separation of 44 or so, as noted by Bonsall, and does not belong to any distinctly-named range.

There are 232 unnamed tops in the Table and 36 of these were 'promoted' to Munro. Thirty of these have separations of 32 minutes or more. Of the remaining 6, one is the inexplicable case of Crom Leathad already mentioned and another is An Gearanach (Mamores). This latter top was visited by Munro in 1891 and reckoned to be at least 3250 ft., thus higher than neighbouring Stob Coire a'Chairn (3219). However, he was plainly unsure of himself and entered it in the Table as 3200ap. It may be that he made both tops Munros because of these uncertainties. However, the remaining four unnamed Munros seem to have rather low separations and for some reason the presumed 'banker's spread' has not been applied so as to exclude them. These are Stob a Choire Mheadhonach, Sgor Choinnich (Corrour), Creag na Dala Moire (Ben Avon) and Sgor an Lochain Uaine (Cairn Toul). The last three were demoted to Top in the 1921 revision.

A final fascinating product of my scrutiny of these Tables is the discovery of a serious clerical or typographical error. In Section 8 An Socach (Affric N.) is listed as Munro 283 and the following top, Creag a'Chaoruinn, is listed as Munro 265. Creag a'Chaoruinn has a separation so low that it is barely measurable, easily the worst Munro in the Table. However, the top-number for An Socach is 486 and for Creag a'Chaoruinn it is 127. Evidently the Munro-numbers are far too high. What happened was that the Munro-number of 283 belonged to the preceding top - the Ridge South of Creag a'Choire Aird, and the Munro-number of 265

belonged to An Socach. Most unfortunately, these two numbers had slipped down the page a notch somewhere in the process! So Creag a'Chaoruinn was intended by Munro to be a mere Top and the Ridge South of Creag a'Choire Aird was intended to be a Munro. These designations and numberings are listed correctly in Table II of the 1891 Tables, which of course nobody but a pedant would read. So here is a further flaw in Robertson's traverse of the Munros. His notebooks show that he took the trouble to climb insignificant Creag a'Chaoruinn but neglected the worthy Ridge South of Creag a'Choire Aird! Robertson must have remedied this deficiency later since, along with Munro, he is credited with supplying an aneroid height for this top in the Notes to the 1921 Tables.

The 1921 Tables

The 7 certain anomalies in Table 1 were all set to rights in these Tables, showing that Munro had come to the view we share today, that where relative height and other criteria are in conflict, height wins! Several named Tops were added, resulting from the demotion of unworthy Munros, showing that he had narrowed the previous 'banker's spread' of 10 minutes or so. This narrowing of the spread was applied only to the lower end, since the only genuine promotion of a previously-unnamed Top was Na Gruagaichean. The application of the distinctly-named range principle remained in place, unchallenged until the Donaldson/Brown reforms. Of course, it would have been impossible for Munro to persist with his enthusiasm for named tops, since - as a result of his own efforts - the Ordnance Survey had now added 76 named tops to their 1" maps, bringing the total of named tops to 382.

A Moral for Baggers

Given the considerable differences between Munro's and the present Tables, a question which often presents itself is what the intending bagger should climb. Some advocate completing the original Tables, on the grounds that only these hills carry the *imprimatur* of Munro. But against this we can be perfectly sure that Munro would have included the Fisherfield tops had he known that they were of adequate height, etc. Moreover, as I have shown, the 1921 Tables are very largely Munro's own revision. Only very minor changes were applied in the revisions of 1933, 1953, 1969 and 1974: so all of these lists carry the stamp of Munro too. Most baggers adopt the strategy of completing the Tables current at the time of their own round. This occasionally presents difficulties when a new edition of the Tables appears *en route*! This strategy, though very satisfactory from the commercial point of view of the Scottish Mountaineering Trust, suffers from the drawback that, to the bagger, the arbitrariness of his quarry is very evident, particularly in the case of the pursuit of Munros, rather than Tops. In truth, this arbitrariness is inevitable. I have demonstrated, I hope, that Munro himself changed his mind about what were Munros between

1891 and his death, and in quite a fundamental way. As he wrote in 1891 (p.281), 'The decision as to what are to be considered distinct and separate mountains, and what may be counted as "tops", although arrived at after careful consideration, cannot be finally insisted on.' So no bagger should submit to bureaucratic constraints imposed by Masters of the Tables or Clerks of the List. The individual bagger should choose whichever one of the published lists suits best, or better still make up his own Table - after careful consideration, of course, and bearing in mind the recommendations of Mr Bearhop, or whoever! Finally, these ruminations suggest an alternative for the bagger too weary or aged to contemplate moving on from the Munros to the Tops. Climb all the demoted Munros!



TOWARDS CORRIEACH of BA

THE LANGUAGE BARRIER

By Alan Dawson

ONE OF THE problems faced by English walkers in Scotland is trying to talk about where they're going, where they are, and where they've been. I suspect that many Scots face similar problems, though they seem less willing to admit it. The English are well known throughout Europe for their pathetic attempts at speaking even a few words in another language. In this respect only the Americans are regarded as equally inept, though they seem less conscious of their linguistic inadequacies - even rather proud of them.

Many English speakers seem to see little point in attempting to learn anything in another language, since there are perfectly good English equivalents for all those foreign words. When it comes to the names of Scottish hills however, this is not the case, and so the problem arises of what to call the damn things. Ben Nevis is fairly straightforward of course (though you may come across attempts to call it Beinn Nibheis), but as 90% of the rest have Gaelic names, there is very little correspondence between what is printed on the map and the supposedly correct pronunciation.

Some guidebooks do their best to be helpful by including lists of selected Gaelic words and names and their English equivalents. I have found it well worth studying the phonetic pronunciation given in Munro's Tables before setting out for the hills. Somehow you feel very foolish when you return from a walk and discover that you have climbed a set of hills that sound completely different to those you have been talking or thinking about during the day.

The obviously unpronounceable names are not too bad - no-one can seriously be expected to say something like 'Leabaidh an Daimh Bhuidhe' correctly. It's the deceptively straightforward names that catch you out. Take An Teallach for example; a magnificent mountain, which I have been forced to retreat from by a severe blizzard in late May. It is a mountain to be treated with the greatest respect in fact. An Teallach was the subject of a fine drama/documentary produced by BBC television a few years ago. This reconstructed the circumstances of a tragic accident and the heroic attempts by the leader (Iain Ogilvie) to rescue his two companions. The introduction to this film, by Hamish MacInnes, revealed to me that the mountain is not called 'Ann Tee Lack' at all, but something like 'An Chellach'. Somehow a discovery like this changes the way you feel about a mountain.

A more bizarre example is that of Ben Chonzie - a fairly undistinguished Munro, but one that is conveniently located for climbing in the morning and still allowing time for a long drive south the same day. On paper it looks

easy - 'Ben Chon Zee'. Yet according to Munro's Tables it is either 'Ben Honzay' or 'Ben ee Hoan'. Even the security of being able to say 'Ben' is not always guaranteed - they would have us believe that 'Beinn' is generally pronounced 'Bine', though I remain very suspicious of this one.

One of my favourite phonetic descriptions in Munro's Tables is that given for Ben Lawers. All it has to say is "pronounced as in English". You have to admire the cheek of it - how on earth do you say 'Lawers' in English I've heard many variations - 'lawyers', 'laywers', 'lorwers' etc. Most people seem to mumble something like 'Ben Laws' and hope they get away with it.

There are different schools of thought about how walkers should try to tackle the Gaelic problem. One approach is to try to 'go native'. This means looking up the recommended pronunciation beforehand, trying to use it and hoping that others will do the same. Using this tactic it is possible to pick up a few of the rules, e.g. pronounce both 'Bh' and 'Mh' as a soft 'V', and generally ignore the last half of any word. This strategy does not always work however. For a start, the phonetic pronunciation of hills less than 3000 feet high is not widely available - and there are an awful lot of such hills. Furthermore, as anyone who has attempted communication abroad using a tourist pronunciation guide will know, what's spelt out in a book does not always prepare you for the real thing when uttered by someone who actually knows the language. This was vividly brought home to me a few years ago by a friendly farmer in Glen Lochay.

Easter 1988 brought a settled period of brilliant weather to much of Scotland. Good Friday was dull, with snow showers on the hills, but the next four days were fine, sunny and hot. The main disadvantage of this weather was that the snow remained soft everywhere. Where it was deep as well, this meant very heavy going underfoot. The weather was too good to miss though, and so after four days of superb but tiring hill walking around Glen Clova and Glen Shee, my partner and I decided to make the most of the last day of our holiday by tackling Creag Mhor and Beinn Heasgarnich. It was the first time we had visited Glen Lochay, and we were very impressed. On the map the three-mile walk along the glen (from the end of the public road at Kenknock) looked a bit of a chore before we could begin the 'proper walk'. In practice it was thoroughly enjoyable, largely because our eyes remained focussed on a sharp peak that glistened a snowy brilliance in contrast to the pure deep blue of the surrounding sky. Inspection of the map (or rather the maps - as usual our route kept crossing from one to another) revealed this to be Ben Challum. This is not a particularly distinguished-looking hill when seen from the A82 near Tyndrum, but it was a real jewel seen from Glen Lochay in these conditions.

The ascent of Creag Mhor via Stob nan Clach was hard work but invigorating, with views that grew more stunning as the top grew nearer. To begin with the nearby Corbetts (Cam Chreag and Beinn Chaorach) were dominant, together with Ben Challum, but on the summit ridge it was Ben

Lui that insisted on its presence, showing near perfection of form and beauty from this direction. By contrast the normally impressive Bridge of Orchy hills looked relatively featureless and indistinct from each other. As ever, Ben More and Stob Binnein were familiar landmarks, while Ben Cruachan looked mightily impressive even though about 25 miles away.

The heat was so intense that we were genuinely relieved to see a thin film of high cloud form in the centre of the sky. I was even able to remove the handkerchief that was protecting my scalp from further damage. Already my forehead and lips had started to crack, encouraged by the blinding reflection from the snow and my obstinate refusal to limit the damage by smearing slimy stuff all over my face.

On top of Creag Mhor there was a short, north-facing slope where we encountered the only ice of the day - a small patch but just angled enough to make us feel that the ice axe was a healthy reassurance. We declined to take the direct descent to the col, but ran down the more gentle slope north towards Meall Tionail.

The sight of 'Meall Tionail' on the map reminded me of another strategy for coping with the names of Scottish hills. At 895 metres high, Meall Tionail is not far short of 3000 feet, and if it were located in England or Wales it would have appeared in many lists over the years as a summit of great significance. In Scotland however it has been widely ignored, and no doubt this state of affairs will continue. I would have widely ignored it myself, but for its name. Even now I don't know the correct pronunciation, but it looks irresistibly like 'Meall Toenail', and that is how I will always think of it.

This game of inventing English equivalents for Scottish names is probably frowned upon by hardened Scots, but I know from experience that it can be a great aid to remembering the 'names' of hills as well as an aid to communication amongst the English. It is not a game I am particularly skilled at, but I can appreciate the talents of those who are. Our friend Garrett, for example, was a master of the art. He first revealed this talent on a trip to the French Pyrenees in 1985. French is of course a tricky language for anyone, not least the French, but most of us have some vague memories of French teaching at school, so we at least have some idea of what a French word ought to sound like. For example, we know that as in Gaelic you can generally ignore the second half of any word. Not Garrett however. His inability to master even the simplest of foreign words was almost admirable. Yet this incompetence was also a source of great creativity, as he developed the ability to translate names into English. At first inadvertent, he managed to nurture this talent, refine his craft, and ultimately try to pass on his teachings.

I think his initial strategy was to look at the first and last letters of a word and guess the rest. So en route to the Pyrenees we passed through places such as Blouse (Blois) and Chatterbox (Chateauroux), and later visited Luncheon (Bagneres du Luchon) and Gridirons (St Girons). We also made an abortive attempt on Mount Pernod (Mont Perdu). In Scotland

the following year Garrett's innovation grew more daring, as we climbed Tom O'Connor (Tom a'Choinich), A Bloody Bog (A'Bhuidheanach Bheag), Big Cheesecake (Bidein a'Choire Sheasgaich) and Stop Gobbling the Chocolate (Stob Coire a'Chearcaill). This last name may not mean much to those whose horizon begins at 3000 feet, as it's only a Corbett, but it looks very tempting under snow from Corpach, where we happened to be staying at the time.

I occasionally tried to put these tactics into practice but I could only come up with really obvious translations such as Ben Eunuch (Beinn Eunaich) and Meryl Streep (Streap). I remember on the long walk up Glen Squib (Gleann na Sguib) from Inverlael, near Ullapool, that a small group of us were missing Garrett's presence. The problem was, we had trouble remembering the names of the Munros we were intent on bagging. We knew Beinn Dearg all right, as its name was on the front of the map and it was the dominant peak in the area. It was the others we didn't know. After consulting the map again and giving the matter some thought, we decided that Meall nan Ceapraichean could be known as 'Me No Capricorn', while Beinn Dearg was simply 'Being a Drag'. Someone suggested Cona Coffee for Cona'Mheall, but I felt this wasn't good enough - Garrett would have done better. I've no idea what he would have made of Eididh nan Clach Geala, but as it happened time and weather prevented us getting that far. We had also decided not to attempt nearby Am Faochagach, as we had read that it could only be reached by wading waist deep though a stream, if you were lucky! It wasn't too difficult to think up a suitably abusive English translation for that one. Garrett would have appreciated it I'm sure.

All these memories flitted through my brain as we turned away from what had now become 'Meall Toenail' and began to plod through some deep drifts toward the slopes of Beinn Heasgarnich. The ascent was enjoyably steep in places but never difficult, as we weaved a route through the snow patches, pathetically trying to keep our feet dry. The views from the summit ridge were not as spectacular as those from Creag Mhor, as the light had become a little less brilliant. On the other hand, we had an excellent view of Creag Mhor itself, and the satisfaction of looking back at the distance we had covered. The route was picked out for a long way by our footprints in the soft snow. We had seen no-one else all day. The only sign of human presence was another pair of footprints that we had been following since the summit of Creag Mhor. They looked fairly recent.

Up to this point we hadn't decided which way to descend from Heasgarnich. There was no obvious route from the map, so I thought we'd wait and see what the terrain looked like from the top. In fact it looked pretty much the same east and south - extensive slopes of very soft-looking deep snow. We eventually opted to head east to join the private road from Glen Lochay to Glen Lyon and finish the walk along the road, rather than return direct to Glen Lochay and retrace our steps from the morning. The going was every bit as wearying as it looked, as we ploughed through the snow at somewhere between knee and waist level. We tried running for

short bursts, taking long strides with legs spread wide, John Cleese-style, hoping somehow our momentum would carry us forward rather than downward, but usually these efforts ended in an undignified plunge into a particularly soft and deep patch. Skis would have been ideal, except that they would have been a useless burden until then, and anyway neither of us had ever tried skiing.

When the snow eventually thinned out the peat hags took over, and it was a great relief when we reached the road just upstream of a small loch. I generally enjoy having a couple of slow gentle miles at the end of a long hard walk, to savour the pleasures of the day and look forward to a couple of drinks and a meal in a nearby pub. And, I have to admit, to mentally tick off some more hills from the list. I think I was reflecting on this as we descended the zigzags in the road towards Kenknock. By this time we could see that our van was now alone in the makeshift car park at the end of the road. It was after 8pm, and we had begun to wonder whether we would find a pub still serving food by the time we reached it. We had still seen no one all day, so it was something of a surprise when strolling up the hill towards us we saw a local farmer, coming to check on some of his calves. We exchanged greetings, commented on the wonderful weather, and said how attractive we found Glen Lochay.

'Where've you been then' he asked innocently. He was genuinely interested. My hesitation must have been obvious. As far as I was concerned we had climbed two hills - one called 'Craig More' and one called 'Ben Hees-gar-nick'. Yet somehow I knew I probably hadn't got the names quite right. With brilliant anticipation he told us their real names:

'Crayak Vorr and Beinn Heskarniech I expect!'

'Yes, that's right'.

It was so obvious, hearing him say their names so quickly and naturally. Somehow seeing written down the phonetic 'Heskarniech' gave me no idea of the proper pronunciation, with correct speed and stress.

'Aye, that's a grand walk today. How many Munros is that then?'

'61' I proudly replied. As I'd just been counting up while walking down the road I didn't need to stop to work it out. He laughed at the fact that I was obviously keeping a careful count. We chatted for a few more minutes - we enjoyed his natural welcoming friendliness and interest, while he enjoyed the fact that we showed such appreciation for his glen and local mountains. I found it hard to envisage a similar encounter in England or Wales. Most farmers are probably friendly enough once you get to know them, but we'd often found them suspicious of walkers, particularly in Wales and Yorkshire, though rarely hostile. Presumably they've seen walls or crops damaged and gates left open by careless walkers, and so they tend to regard everyone as potentially guilty. In Scotland and Ireland farmers seemed to have a rather more positive and welcoming attitude to walkers (a sweeping generalisation of course, but one based on experience).

The encounter left us in good spirits as we quickly got changed and drove down the valley to Killin in the gathering gloom. We knew there was little chance of a meal after 9pm. We dashed into the first pub we came to, which happened to be the Bridge of Lochay Hotel, just outside Killin. It was ten minutes to nine, and we were just in time for what turned out to be an excellent curry. The place was almost empty, but seated at the bar were two men obviously enjoying their beer. One had a face like a beetroot and the other's was several shades deeper. I was reminded of what I probably looked like after four full days in the sun and snow. It was obvious they had been out walking, and I couldn't help hearing their conversation as I was being served. They were from Leeds, but one had given up his job the previous year to concentrate on full-time Munro bagging. He reckoned it would cost him about £50,000 in all by the time he finished. He had 49 left to go, and was desperate to finish them so that he could start to 'relax and enjoy walking for its own sake again'. He made me feel thoroughly sane by comparison.

'Where've you been today then?' I asked.

'Oh we had a super day....saw no-one at all...went over Craig More and Ben Heesgarnick...brilliant. What about you?'

I realised that these were the owners of the feet whose steps we'd followed from the top of Creag Mhor.

'Och we had a brilliant day as well...very hot though...saw no-one either, just a pair of footprints. We've been over Crayak Vorr and Beinn Heskameech as well!'

The proper names tripped fluently off my tongue as though I'd been born and bred in Glen Lochay. However, I decided not to mention Meall Toenail. They might not have understood what I was talking about. Not everyone has bridged the language barrier.



EARLY MORNING LIGHT IN BERN ALLIG

JOHN MITCHELL, 1992

SUB-MUNROISM

By Don Green

IS THERE life beyond the Munros? Well, there are the Corbetts and then, for one's declining years, the Donalds. After all, they have for long appeared in successive volumes of *The Tables* under cover of the phrase, 'and other tables of lesser heights'. And one could finish the book.

Another list remains - the Dochartys. These are hills which, while including Corbetts and Donalds, defy definition and might most safely be described as sub-Munro.

The late William McKnight Docharty, M.C., F.R.G.S., a member of the S.M.C., is No. 13 in the roll of Munroists (1948), Topists (1948) and Furthists (1949). Completion for Docharty, as for many after him, brought a time for decision: a second round of Munros or 'to open up a new series on fresh ground' with the Munros and Tops 'no more than incidental' He chose the second option.

In the following years Docharty climbed and catalogued the Corbetts, plus what he considered their Tops, independent mountains 'of interest under 2,500 feet' and some of the Donalds. He also went forth to England, Wales and Ireland to list their 3,000 foot eminences and certain lower heights. The fruits of these efforts in the field, at his desk and in correspondence with the Ordnance Survey were published privately in 1954 as 'A Selection of Some 900 British and Irish Mountain Tops', a handsome volume with nine panoramas in black and white from photographs taken by himself.

It was followed in 1962 by two supplements including a Selection of 1,000 Tops under 2,500 feet.

Docharty's trilogy, copies of which he presented to certain mountaineering clubs and individuals, is much more than a meticulous collection of facts and figures, heights and map references. The foreword to the first volume gives a brief biographical sketch of the mountain enthusiast behind the lists. Having nearly lost a leg in the First World War, Docharty went on to become a hillman of the old school of long walks, for which he mapped out detailed itineraries.

The writing in all three volumes is shot through with evocative shafts of mountain experience and weather, and in a time when foreign travel was far less common he could compare and contrast scenery from the Dolomites to Dingle.

To the word pictures, he added the monochromes from his camera. 'While on excursions over homeland hills, I have taken about two hundred panoramas. Conditions and my performance with the Leica have varied

widely, so in selecting the nine which appeared in the first book and the present eighteen I looked for examples where fortune smiled at the time of exposure combined with subjects most likely to be of interest to the hill walker.'

In a 'tribute to the creed of the long traverse' Docharty strikes chords most hill-goers must know in good weather and bad. Who will not recognise his description of doubts relieved when, on breaking cloud after a long descent of compass-watching, landmarks below and around 'take their rightful places in the picture as do the pieces in a jigsaw ...'

To get to the hills and use his time to the full, Docharty would work out masterpieces of transport arrangements. On one expedition he travelled by air from Renfrew to climb Beinn Mhor (2,034 feet) and Hecla (1,988 feet) in South Uist. Then, by means of a succession of MacBraynes coaches and steamers, trains, hired car and friends' cars, he climbed sub-Munros in Mull, Jura and on the mainland, with the two 'final days of the holiday devoted to a couple of excursions on the Galloway hills'.

He was also a cyclist and reveals at one point that he had covered '2,558 miles by bicycle, 5,291 miles afoot' and had 'reached the summits of 1,628 different Mountain Tops' on his homeland hills. It was a record of achievement which the reviewer of the trilogy in the S.M.C.J. considered was unlikely to be surpassed...

SCRIBBLE LING

By D.J. Broadhead

THE GENEROUS presentation by the President of the Ladies Scottish Climbing Club at our Centenary Dinner, of a rebound volume of the CIC log book from 1949-61, reminded me that I had inherited a similar tome when I took over as Custodian of Ling Hut. Anxious to return this piece of history to its rightful resting place in the Club Library, I rummaged through my loft and eventually located the black leather bound volume, embossed in gold leaf capitals 'S.M.C. CLIMBS VOL. III LING HUT' covering the period 1955-81. Having enjoyed flicking through many such books in various huts and bothies, looking for familiar names or the rare interesting or entertaining entry, I thought that some of the entries in this particular book would be of interest to readers of this Journal.

Unfortunately there is no preamble or introductory remarks, just the first brief entry:

1955 April 9 G.S. Johnstone, D.J. Fraser, A. Horne and D.G. Horne

'Ruadh Stac Mhor by way of Coire Mhic Fhearchair, Coinneach Mhor, Spidean Coire nan Clach. Descent by snow in direction of Hut.'

Spanning almost twenty-seven years, the majority of the entries which follow maintain the same factual and economic style. However, the first page is enlivened by the description of a new route, and the only diagram:

1955 July 11 I.H. Ogilvie & P.M. Francis

'Beinn Liath Mhor and Sgorr Ruadh. Probably a new route on Sgoor (sic) Ruadh (sketch opposite). The buttress lies to the west of Raeburn's Buttress & is divided from it by a deep scree filled gully. It is bounded on the left by a series of overhangs and on the right by steep rocks and a prominent pinnacle. In the centre a line of weakness is afforded by a number of vertical cracks. We started just right of the overhangs in a short steep corner and then traversed along a ledge for 40 feet to the right. From there the route runs almost directly upwards, traversing back and forward only slightly to use the easiest line of ascent. The main difficulties ended about 300 ft up where a through route was made below a boulder jammed in the right hand crack. (Cairn just on the left.) Standard:- Very Difficult. From here 400 feet of interesting scrambling leads to the top.'

This entry was made in pencil, and interestingly the first digit of the numbers detailing pitch length have been altered in ball point, presumably in the wisdom of hindsight following a second ascent

Another entry later that month, also in pencil, has an amendment in ink of a censorious nature, underlining with disapproval some dubious practice:

1955 July 28 J. Mallenson, A. White, R.M. Ower

'Rose at 4 am hoping for a long day out, but thick mist all day prevented a full programme. Spent a happy afternoon pegging routes up overhanging boulders/'tut-tut!' and short walls on rocks at the foot of Mullach an Rathain.'

Then as now, University clubs were active in the north during their Christmas and Easter vacations:

1956 January 3-10 C.U.M.C. MEET

'Jan 3rd. R.O. Downes, M.J. O'Hara arrived. P.R.C. Steele, J.M. Scarr later.'

Apparently not satisfied with the attractions of the hills and crags close at hand, some members of this party made a sortie further afield:

'Jan 5th/6th MJO, ROD, PRCS and Miss J. Scarr. Walked through to Lochen Fhada; over to Fion (sic) Loch and down to Poolewe via Kearnsary.'

They obviously liked what they saw, returning to the Carnmor area later that year and the following for an orgy of new routes. However, Ling Hut obviously retained some appeal:

1957 December 11 Mrs. D. Evans, P.E. Evans, G. Cruickshank, M.J. O'Hara

'Arrived by car from Poolewe after an enjoyable if snow spattered few days at Carnmore. No climbing and the weather is now becoming rather unpleasant.

12 December Tidied and departed for places south.'

The party that followed were apparently as active in the kitchen as on the hill:

1957 December 31 St. Andrews University Mountaineering Club New Year Meet

'Bill Bouthrone & Stan Yeoman climbed Cor'an Laoigh of Beinn Eighe ... Weather comparable to summer Alpine conditions.

Returned at 3 pm. for Hogmany (sic) Dinner consisting of:-

VELOUTE AUX CHAMPIGNONS

WIENER SCHNITZER A LIATHACH

ou

BIFTEC A LING GRILLE
DES PETITS POIDS VERTS
CAROTTES TORRIDONES

POMMES AUX COIRE MHICFHERCHAIR

FRUIT COULIN

FROMAGE MOUSETRAP

CAFE NOIR ou CARE AU LAIT

This prowess on the domestic front was gratefully acknowledged by the next party:

1958 January 11 Norman & Mona Tennent

'It was wonderful to come into such an immaculate hut. Thank you St. Andrews. (My wife says due to a mixed party - Maybe that's why Laggangarbh was a bit squalid at times)'

In the days before local club meets filled the hut most weekends, Ling was a popular base for small parties. SMC members were often active with their hill-going spouses and one wonders why it took so long before women were entitled to join.

1957 May J.H.B. Bell & Mrs. P. Bell

'5th May Beinn Dearg; 6th Beinn Liath Mor & Sgurr Ruadh; 7th Alligin traverse; 8th B. Eighe; 9th Spidean a Choire Leith of Liathach. Cold E. wind all days & snowfall at nights a lot 3000' or more ...'

1962 May W.H. Murray & Anne Murray

'May 3rd Traverse of Beinn Alligin.

4th -do.- Beinn Eighe (east to west)

5th -do.- Sail Liath Mor, Sgor Ruadh, Meall Chin Dearg.

Blue skies and sun.'

Most parties tackled these classic ridge traverses in various conditions of weather and season, while for rock climbing the Triple Buttresses of Coire Mhic Fhearchair were ever popular. There was also some notable exploratory activity from the hut:

1960 August C.J.S. Bonington T.W. Patey

'8th August Left 2.30 pm for Coire Mhic Fhearchair. Climbed Central Buttress part way, then traversed onto the East Wall of the West Buttress - direct ascent abandoned after 130ft of the vertical section - traversed right onto West Buttress & finished out. Wet.

9th August In the best traditions of Ling & Glover, we picked the most remote hill we could find on the map - An Ruadh Stac - & spent a happy day toiling through bogs etc. culminating in an ascent of the north face mentioned in the guidebook as unexplored. The main cliff is in two tiers & gave 600 ft of excellent V.Diff climbing on gneiss & quartzite. Our route started just left of a prominent white scar up a 200 ft slabby rib of impeccable rock - thence walk 100 ft to left of a prominent wet twisting chimney & take the most attractive line on the upper tier trending upwards for 200 ft, then straight up. Doubtless more routes could be made here, probably shorter & harder. Returned via Annat, much the better path.

10th August Patey reported sick with a large carbuncle on the buttock. Bonington attempted some surgery with a razor blade, but only succeeded in causing a minor haemorrhage. Thence to Kinlochewe in search of a chemist - nearest one is at Dingwall. Returned to Torridon & located the local doctor (female) who supplied the necessary pills - also offered to lance the carbuncle, but this was graciously refused.

11th August Sleepless night for Patey lying on his stomach. Left at noon for Mhic Fhearchair. Climbed Central Buttress to top, thence descended to foot of Far East Buttress & made 1st crossing of the Upper Girdle of Mhic Fhearchair 2,000 ft Severe. Route follows an obvious fault fully 2/3 way up the cliff, at half height on the quartzite. Most of the difficult climbing was on the traverse of the Eastern Ramparts as far as the Edge of the East Buttress 4-5 pitches of severe - also on traverse of East wall of the West Buttress - 2 pitches of Severe. A fine climb - very little walking - almost entirely clean rock & continuously exposed. Finished by a new direct variation to West Buttress - the whole of the summit slabby tower being climbed on the left, instead of the usual R hand line which is more indirect. Only difficult move is the start up a clean little wall of 30 ft. Then up the left hand crack behind the flakes. Standard:- Very Difficult.

12th August Day of reckoning. 4 days of dirty dishes to wash up. Then off to Glenbrittle calling at the Cioch of Applecross en route.'

1961 October

'6th October Ben Alligin - A. Fraser, J. Glidden, R.K. Holt, N. Macniven, B. Wakefield (EUMC) R. Smith & A. Wightman (SMC): Left at dawn for Mhuch Fhiercher (sic) (1st Cliff South of Hut). Climbed Eastern Ramparts to top, thence descended to foot of Far West Buttress & made 1st Crossing of the Lower Girdle of Mhuch Fhiercher 200 ft, x.s.

7th October Coire Mhic Fhearchair Central Buttress, Ben Eighe - A. Fraser, J. Glidden, R. Holt.

East Wall of East Buttress - route up centre of steep face! Start below obvious smooth pale diedre. 50 ft - up, right, up & left to ledge. 120 ft - Up corner on left to ledge on left. Pull up to right & climb smooth groove (piton runner). Crawl left over loose blocks, then go up & right to foot of obvious diedre. 130 ft - Go 20 ft right & climb grooves & great flakes onto crest of pillar bounding diedre. Climb half of a corner on right, hand traverse right round edge & go up to stance. 100 ft - step left & climb corridor between roofs to top. Piton Belays. V.S. R. Smith & A. Wightman.

Attempt up grooves 50 ft to right foiled at half height. Ben Eighe. N. Macniven & B. Wakefield.'

If you study your elderly copy of the 'Climbers Guide to the Northern Highlands Area Volume II' you will recognise the description of 'Boggle', though no mention of that first day's activity. Accounts of other new routes seem to have gone no further than the Climbs Book:

1962 June 17

'Central Triple Buttress by 'Brookers Variation'.

W.D. Brooker, R. Harper & C. Gall.

Gnome Wall, Eastern Rampart. (New start - 'Gnomies Passage'.)

A. Graeme Nicol, K.A. Grassick

Fusilage (sic) Wall - new route (R. Wall at top of W Buttress)'

1966 March 19 A. Park, P.F. McDonald, D. Beamish

'Applecross - Bealach na Ba. Climbed Sword of Gideon & 2 new routes on same crag. Both M.S. - 2 obvious lines in gully on right of Sword.'

This latter party was part of an enormous Edinburgh University Mountaineering Club meet, '24 personages in all!' including 'R. Campbell (SMC)'. Custodians were apparently more lenient in those days.

Another Edinburgh party was soon back at the hut, recording two excellent new routes:

1966 May 28 & 29 Bill Sproul, Jim Brumfitt - Squirrels & SMC

'Eastern Ramparts 'SAMURAI' 400' V.S., and Far East Wall 'KAMIKAZI' 350' V.S.'

In contrast, there was little notable exploration in winter, and the true potential of the area remained undiscovered, possibly due to the well documented vagaries of the weather:

1961 December

'30.12.61 A wander round the back of Liathach in deep powder snow - G. Wallace, I. Scott, G. Lehser.

31.12.61 Ascent of first obvious gully on Stuc a'Choire Dhuibh Bhig as seen from path. Deep powder snow with two pitches of water ice - C. Macleay, G. Wallace, C. Stead.

1.1.62 Beinn Eighe, thawing - C. Macleay & C. Pollock

2.1.61 Still thawing

3.1.61 Still thawing

4.1.61 Still thawing

5.1.61 Still thawing probably - went home yesterday C. Pollock, A. Gilmour, M. McKay & M. Watson.'

However, a new decade saw the arrival of new figures who would make a significant contribution to the development of climbing in the area and improvements to the hut itself:

1969 December P. Nunn, A. Riley, D. Goodwin, C. & S. Rowland

'Sat. 27th Dec. Arrived with a surfeit of English Christmas.

Sun. 28th Dec. Set off on beginning of local 'Grand Tour'. To Coire Mhic Fhearchair and up an Alpine approximation to Collie's Climb, finishing up the steep chimney sixty feet left of the dreadful (?) exit to B Gully, and via rock and snow ramp to top of Central Buttress. (Snow easy with one step) Rock severe with ice and aid.

Mon. 29th Dec. A languid haul into the NE Coire of Liathach, buffeted by a belligerent east wind. Up right hand gully there. Maybe 'George' - see Feb 11.67. Anyway II/III.

Tues. 30th Dec. Seaside trips - to Applecross via Pass of Flying Pigs for some, Tollie for others (Poolewe). Ascent of The Handrail in last half hour of gorgeous daylight, (P.N. A.R.)

Wed. 31st Dec. Eventful New Year's Eve. Some in Fannichs on walkies, some wandering quartz hills behind hut, one dying of the Plague

of Ross. To Acluasheen for Hogmanay to become grateful, drunk and unintentional residents of the Station Hotel after first footing for miles. Returning.

Thursday 1. Jan 1970 Cleanse absolve and leave in vile weather.

CC (Alpha Section) Party - Thanks for the hut. We were unable to take it with us.

1970 April 10 John, Brenda, Andrew & Elizabeth Nisbet

Beinn Liath Mhor.'

An entry between these two suggests the existence of a North-South divide, in hut standards at least!

1970 February W. Skidmore SMC J. Crawford Greenock M.C.

'Saturday 21st Arrived in black night bringing foul weather with us so here follow the moans

- 1) The hut was dirty (very)
- 2) Three mantles out of four broken & no spares.
- 3) Gas a bit low
- 4) One small pail of coal in the hut & the remainder buried under 1 foot snow between here & Alligin
- 5) Coal sufficient to demonstrate the uselessness of the stove due to large hole in pipe badly 'repaired' by a piece of tin & some wire

Sunday 22nd. High winds & hail. Cleaned out hut & repaired stovepipe. Now almost up to Lagangarbh standards.

Weather improved throughout week - conditions didn't. Kneedeep powder universally. Apart from the odd pad, concentrated on the social side of things.

Thursday 26th. Involved in a rescue - benightment on Alligin - reached them (English couple) with 2 RAF boys at 10 a.m. and brought them down out of any difficulties. Both well but girl a bit exposed. Easy, well organised rescue.

Friday 27th. Return to civilisation (Greenock)'.

The Climbs Book is not really the best place for making complaints. No doubt there was the intention 'pour encourager les autres' but this merely prompted a couple of succinct comments in the margin:

'IT'S NOT PARADISE SKIDMORE!'

'ACH, QUIT YER HAVERIN, YE GREAT GREENOCK GRUMBLERS! AWA HAME DOON THE WATTER AN STUFF YER GEGGIES!'

Any book of this nature inevitably attracts comments on all sorts of topics other than climbs done. Often attempting to be humorous, the briefest comments are usually the funniest:

1970 December Lomond Mountaineering Club, Glasgow.

'Hogmanay Party in cowshed (friend with key failed to arrive)'.

The plight of the party which forgets the key is a familiar one to custodians, but even they are not immune. I recently received a sheepish call from a roadside phone box from a former custodian of Lagangarbh who fortunately realised his error south of Inverness.

Most of the comment in the book relates to the weather since almost every contributor seems to have felt duty bound to record the conditions encountered. Surprisingly they seem to have been more reticent with their impressions of the climbs recorded. However, a few uninhibited comments confirm that the rock climbs at least are as variable as the weather:

1974 April 21 G. Cohen, I. Rowe, G. Tabbner.

'Groovin' High Far East Wall. Surely the best route in Coire Mhic Fhearchair. Congratulations to 1st ascensionists. + cloud inversions Broken Spectres, Newcastle Browns & French birds.'

1975 April

'19.4.75 West Buttress - Coire Mhic Fhearchair, Beinn Eighe. Very wet on final pitches but a fine buttress with excellent rock scenery. F. Fotheringham & J.R.R. Fowler.

21.4.75 Route 2 - The Bonnaidh Donn - an old Bell climb and not recommended. Pitch 1 only I.D. Brodie & G.J. Paul. Whole route J.R.R. Fowler & J. Durham.'

Surprisingly few comments record the rich wildlife of the area:

1971 September Roger Gaff

'2 Sept. Slioch

3 Sept. Alligin tops and Horns.

4 Sept. Sgorr Ruadh and Beinn Liath Mhor.

5 Sept. Liathach Traverse.

6 Sept. From Bridge of Grudie Ruadh Stac Mor and Traverse of Beinn Eighe Tops.

Fine area this - Heron, Divers, Wild Goats (Slioch) Eagles (Liathach) and very large sea trout and salmon reach the wee lochan ... Look out for Concorde he almost brought down Slioch's ricketty sandstone.'

Nearing the end of the book, one is left with a feeling that part of the appeal of climbing in the North West is the strong element of uncertainty, even on relatively popular routes.

1980 October 25 D. Simpson, S. Kennedy.

'Got lost on Piggot's Route, Central Buttress, padded up verglas on to snow ledges, thereafter all feeling was lost in the fingers, memory is vague thereafter, couldn't decide if summer was finishing or winter had arrived. But Dave really did enjoy his first ever rock (!) climb, or did he? Andy Nisbet had a brainstorm & decided to leave rucksacks at foot of climb, but what can one expect of such an experienced Alpinist?'

1982 January 9

'Helen Geddes & Linda Taylor: Easy Gully of Coire Mhic Fhearchair.

Nigel Rayner, Tony Walne & Mike Geddes: A fine gully of 800 ft, IV, in the coire north of the Giant's Coire, Ben Bhan.

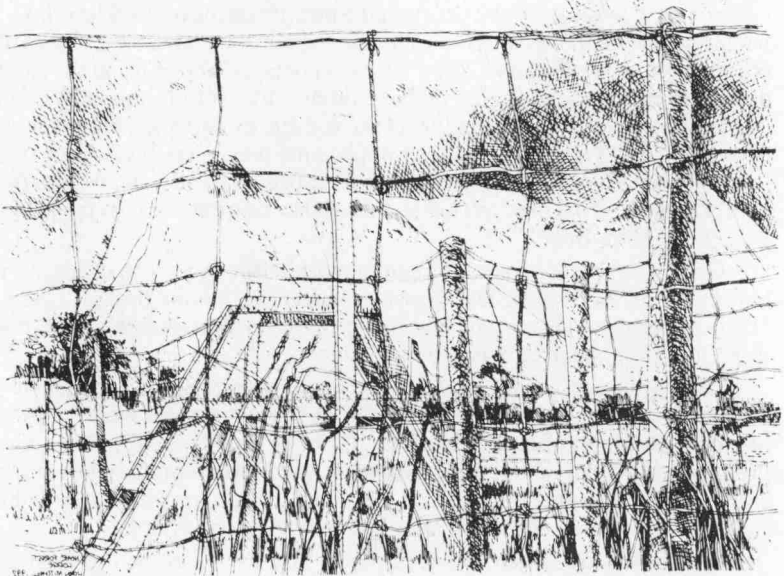
Illumination for the return of both parties spoiled by a full lunar eclipse.'

This is the final entry in the book, followed sadly by a gap of almost a decade in the record of climbing activity from Ling Hut, since the 'Visitors Book' which replaced this one records the barest details of names, dates, home town and club. This has recently been remedied with a new 'Climbs Book' in the hope that users of the hut will continue to record their activities on the hill.

One message on the last page is echoed on almost every preceding page:

1981 October 24-29 Hereford Mountaineering Club

'... Thanks to S.M.C. for the use of this excellent hut once again.'



APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

By Hamish Irvine

HAVING PAID my money and been promised bucketfuls of free wine, I was looking forward to the SMC dinner in Pitlochry.

Plans for the day were very much driven by 'must-do-a-route-before-the-dinner' thoughts, and with little snow or ice to be seen Western Rib in Coire an t'Sneachda was chosen as an easy rock climbing option. Dave Saddler, Andy Tibbs and I left the ski car park at a civilised, early-ish hour to squeeze in a quick climb before driving to Pitlochry for the AGM and dinner. The weather surprised us, being dry and cold with little enough wind to make belaying pleasant, and our expectation of a token route grew to anticipation of a really fine day out.

Puffing our way up the Goat Track we came to hard snow and donned crampons to make our way up to the point where Red Gully and Goat Track Gully go their own ways and Western Rib rises between them. Water ice smeared the lowest rocks of the buttress and dribbled out of the gullies; not enough to be useful but it persuaded us to start up Red Gully in order to bypass the initial steep snout of the rib.

A solid belay was found, ropes were attached all round and Andy led up the start of the gully with axes clanging merrily on the rocks. The relaxed banter on our stance rambled from Indian expedition plans to the merits of possible dinner venues and Andy was soon belayed above us on the rib. I quickly scraped and wriggled up the chimney-like start of the gully. Too quickly! The block which Andy had put a sling around and climbed over deserved careful treatment, and as I stepped my feet up on to a ledge on the left, with both hands on top of the block, it peeled gently away from the wall, accelerated over my left ankle without altering course and crashed its way to the coire floor.

One more boulder on the coire floor makes little impact on the scenery but my leg certainly noticed its passing. I had never before broken a bone, but the way my foot flopped sideways told even me that something was not right, and the sooner I got down the better.

Andy was reassured that despite the lethal-sounding crashes, we were 'all right', and began to lower me. At first I could put some weight on the leg, but soon found that any movement of the foot brought pain so that progress was reduced to an inelegant but quite efficient slide down the snow slope. By resting on my good side, with the left leg supported on the right, I was able to keep the break quite still and comfortable.

With one stop to remove crampons - useless when trying to slide smoothly down snow - and another to untie from one rope and transfer

weight to the one held by Dave, I reached the Goat Track remarkably quickly and painlessly. Had it been an exercise I would have been most impressed by Andy and Dave's evacuation of the casualty.

Dave came down and made me comfortable on the track then set off to the car park and a phone. I had brief second thoughts about a Rescue - sure, if I really had to I could crawl the two and a half miles to the car park, but such heroics would certainly be painful and would probably damage the leg. I left the heroism to Dave, who was running to the car park in plastic boots.

Andy was helped by some climbers from Stirling who were passing, and splinted the broken leg against the good one with slings and cord, then lifted me to a level seat against a rock. This was a gripping manoeuvre for me, but the others merely thought I should relieve some of the weight on the leg. The following hour or two passed quickly and comfortably - ensconced in my duvet and Dave's bivvy bag I was quite warm, despite having the shivers, and several passers-by provided entertainment, painkillers and coffee.

A friendly yellow helicopter appeared, dropped smoke flares and then circled annoyingly for half an hour before dropping a crew member on the floor of the coire. I later learned that Coire an t'Sneachda has notoriously awkward down-drafts which were pushing the Wessex frighteningly close to the rocks. The winch-man sweated up the track, clearly not enjoying the hard snowpatch on the way. He was quite happy with my splinted legs and we awaited the return of the chopper to lift me off. It tantalised us with several more sweeps round the coire before hovering nearby and lowering a wire with a pair of wide slings - to tuck behind my knees and oxters ready for the big wheech into the sky.

The winch-man pointed out what I had already guessed - when the weight came on to the two strops that leg would hurt! It did, but sickening spins on the end of the winch-wire took my mind off it quite well. Pulled inside the body of the chopper, we rattled down the coire as the turbulence slammed us up and down.

Soon I was outside Raigmore, loaded on a stretcher and saying cheerio to the RAF crew. A hundred-yard ride in an ambulance took me into the hospital where a syringe of painkiller went into my bum, and slings, crabs, boots, breeks and long johns came off. As I lay there, comfortably drugged, I weighed up the embarrassment of all this rescue if my leg proved to be just bruised, against the frustration and inconvenience of a broken leg. I was definitely hoping to be embarrassed.

Within an hour I was X-rayed, diagnosed and plastered, and the Sunday Post had phoned. Later, as I tucked into my NHS mince and tatties, I thought of the dinner at Pitlochry, and of Andy inheriting my free wine. I think he deserved it!

CAVEMAN

By Peter Warburton

THE CIRCUMSTANCES of my first visit to Scotland did not, at the time, disturb me although, in retrospect, I realise that they ought to have caused grave disquiet. I had taken a summer job with a holiday organisation. Some secretarial and accounting duties were involved and there was a moral obligation to take part in evening jollities (mainly country dancing of the rougher sort), but the essential element was the leadership of hill walking excursions, as laid down in a fortnightly programme.

The long term effects of this regime were predictable: I became a convinced non-dancer and a solitary walker. In particular, I developed a lasting aversion to the music of Jimmy Shand and to the ascent of Ben Nevis by the waterslide route. However, these blights on my social life lay ahead. At the time I was in clover - all found, plus 30/- per week honorarium and 5/- boot allowance, free passage on the Ballachulish Ferry and on MacBrayne's buses to Fort William, together with profits on all the Bill Thomson postcards and photographic booklets I could sell to the guests.

On my first mountain excursion, in bad weather on the Mamores, I had a stroke of great good luck. A small experienced party were of one mind in believing that we were mistakenly climbing Sgurr an Iubhair when our route from the Lairigmor should have taken us up the S.W. ridge of neighbouring Stob Ban. Nervously I had backed my own judgement. It is the sole merit of quartzite scree to be unmistakable, even in heavy cloud. The sense of relief when we came upon it is firmly lodged in my memory. A few days later I was on Bidean for the first time with a much larger party. In the afternoon, as I peered into the mist, surreptitiously casting about for what the route book insisted was the only safe way down from Beinn Fhada to the 'Lost Valley', I was amused to hear one of the group assuring another: 'He doesn't say much, but he knows every stone of these hills'. With a reputation like that, however spurious, you can get away with a lot, and I did. However, among the shrewd minority who were not taken in by the myth of the great navigator, was 'J'. This was a source of regret, for I aspired to that young lady's good opinion.

Many of the domestic staff of the guest house were girls who, by profession nurses or secretaries, were taking a sabbatical between jobs, attracted more by the opportunity of access to the hills than by the possibilities offered by the evening jollities. I fell into this category and, having spent the previous summer in the same way, had considerable local knowledge. One day, outwith the official programme, a small select group tackled the Aonach Eagach ridge, east to west. I led in the sense that I went first. J, who was familiar with the ridge, was of our number. After Meall

Dearg, not being one of nature's gymnasts, I grew increasingly thoughtful until contemplation of a chimney brought me, after some unproductive scrabbling, to a halt. J expressed impatience and urged me to stand aside so that she could show the way. It seemed a good idea to call her bluff. Up she went - confident, graceful, apparently untroubled by the exposure. From an uncertain perch at the top she then gave instructions in some detail and, worse, reached down, grinning, with the offer of a hand. A symbolic gesture, given her own insecure stance, but very telling.

On my next free day I wrote the words 'Ossian's Cave' in the guest house route book - but in pencil, so that the entry could be rubbed out if, later, that proved politic. It was a perfect day, bright and cool, the rock would be dry and I had plenty of time.

These reassuring thoughts did not survive my introduction to Ossian's Ladder. Progress was deplorably slow, a fact I attributed variously to an introspective nature and to shortness of limb. Nowhere did there seem to be a resting place from which to plan my next move in any sort of comfort. Indeed most of my halts found me inelegantly spread-eagled as in a still from a silent film. I soon learned that holding the pose brought on a nasty attack of the knee wobbles. At this stage I still had some confidence in the secret weapon I was holding in reserve - a washing line bought in the conviction that it would prove an invaluable aid on the descent. I was accordingly delighted to find just one point where this concession to artificial climbing might prove its worth. With infinite care I found the mid-point, knotted the rope to a small knob of rock, wound it round several times and left two equal ends dangling. Eventually I hauled myself ashore, entered my name in the visitors' tin and sat down to a cheerless meal. The floor of the so-called cave lies at so steep an angle that I felt myself in real danger of sliding out into space, sandwich in hand, but it was thoughts of the return journey that made swallowing so difficult.

Advance planning involved the use of the fixed rope for a gymnasium style descent of perhaps half the full pitch, but the fallibility of the anchorage became obvious when I drew level and that little scheme had to be abandoned. Having reached a point 8 feet or so below the belay, I decided to disengage the line. It would not budge. I would not climb back. Emulating Alexander, I resolved the dilemma by unconventional means, effortlessly dismissing from my mind a vague notion that the action might be in breach of climbing etiquette. Happily, the salvage operation was fully vindicated thirty-odd years later when the two ends were used to subdue and truss up a lively old mattress for conveyance to the municipal rubbish tip.

In 1802 Coleridge, after a hazardous descent from Scafell, probably by way of Broad Stand, wrote: 'My limbs were all in a tremble. I lay upon my Back to rest myself, and was beginning according to my Custom to laugh at myself for a Madman ...'*. I recommend this lying down and laughing

* Coleridge at this point had a vision but Allowance must be made for a Poet with a Drug Problem.

therapy; it seems to have a purgative effect on the mind. Sobered and rested, I came to a decision. Rock climbing (sic) was an utterly pointless pursuit. The day, any day, would have been far better spent in the safe pleasure of reaching the top of some new or favourite hill by orthodox means. RESOLVED - that never again would I venture beyond dignified scrambling. Well pleased with this evidence of an incisive mind in action, I prepared an edited account of the expedition in which becoming modesty should not entirely obscure the splendour of the achievement. Although reasonably well read for my years, I had not yet come across Haskett Smith's reference to solo climbing with 'no ropes or other illegitimate means'. I fear that, if I had, it would have been woven, quite shamelessly, into the intended narrative.

In the event, the rehearsal of any such meretricious embellishment to my tale would have been time wasted, for the first performance never took place. J received my news with frank disbelief. Indeed, she hooted and snorted in the melodious way of which only pretty girls are capable. I led her gently to the route book. I spoke earnestly of my name in the tin. Whereupon, with disconcerting swiftness, she changed position. If I could do it, it must be easy and I should go again, taking her. On the instant I was committed. It would be more creditable if I could report having carefully weighed my responsibilities before agreeing, but the SMCJ is a journal of the record and it was not so, although such considerations did disturb my thoughts in the period before our free time first coincided.

That happened when, following a stormy night and a very wet morning, I cancelled the official excursion, a rare event. The rain eased and faltered at noon, but it was not until about 2 p.m. that we reared our bikes against the trees at Achtriochtan. There were already two motor cycles sharing the same shelter and two figures could be seen on the near bank of the river. We agreed on speed in case they should be bound in our direction. At the river we exchanged brief greetings with two climbers we judged to be Glaswegians. No information on destination was offered on either side. The two were engaged in an elaborate rope coiling routine, an operation they briefly interrupted to look on, with unspoken disapproval, as we crossed the stream, after a minimum of reconnaissance, by the direct, wet feet method. We made good progress up the hillside and, a few minutes later, noticed the serious pair, ropes now over their shoulders, patrolling the bank in search of an approved crossing point.

I cannot claim that our time on the climb showed much improvement on my first effort as the wetness of the rock largely offset the advantage of previous experience. The remains of the line were still in place, looking old and weathered. I was reminded of dramatic sketches of Whymper's party on the Matterhorn (did it break, or was it cut), but J confined herself to a succinct inquiry as to its supposed use. The view across Glencoe from the cave was impressive without being exhilarating: the 'horrible grandeur' of eighteenth century mountain descriptions came to mind, but did not seem a suitable topic. J was not her normal ebullient self. I recognised the mood



Ben Cruachan and the Taynuilt Peak from the East

Photo: Donald Bennet



Photo: K. V. Crockett

'Two halos and a bunnet.' Smart, Levaie & Weir on Garbh Bheinn of Ardgour.

and had just enough sense not to comment. She surprised me by showing no interest in the visitors' tin - perhaps it looked too much like a repository for last messages. Even my attempt at portrait photography was barely acknowledged. The result reflects the limitations of a box Brownie in such unpropitious surroundings. J is just about recognisable to the partial eye - a brooding figure in the general murk - but it does not do her justice. We did not linger.

Soon after we began the descent I looked down between my legs to see two hooded faces gazing anxiously upwards. Assuming as suave and genial a tone as I could muster, I apologised for any hold-up that we were causing and confessed that we were a slow party. The reply was an assurance that we were not inconveniencing them, but would we like any help? Clearly we had been under observation. I declined with thanks. J, not above playing to the pit, now began to deploy a full repertoire of girlish squeaks, interspersed with urgent and highly articulate demands for immediate action on my part. Girls did not use bad language in those days but 'For goodness sake, Peter, move. I don't care if you fall off but MOVE. I can't hold on here any longer' was wonderfully forceful in its vigour and clarity of delivery. I responded to these signs of restored spirits with a series of instructions much concerned with the placing of the knee, which indeed featured prominently in my technique. A quip about the lack of any satisfactory *locus standi* died the deserved death in both the gallery and the stalls, but I made an impression with the direction 'crawl backwards along this ledge, noting first that there is not space for two knees abreast'. These almost innocent exchanges and the demonstration of the knee-first and backward crawl school, with which they were possibly unfamiliar, added to the alarm of those below. The watchers, who had seemed a little taciturn on first acquaintance, were by now half way to babbling. Three times more they offered assistance. In truth, we owed them a debt of gratitude for, in a perverse way, their mere presence was of real help. J at least was enjoying herself again and had no wish to be rescued. We all forgathered at the foot of the ladder, J radiantly bedraggled, me odiously nonchalant, they a little shaken. It had not been a sunny summer but I fancied that they were a shade paler than at our first meeting. I hope the experience did not spoil their climb.

We did not see them again as, for no reason that I remember, we returned by a different route. Beginning upwards along a wide terrace, we made height comfortably until the easy ground tapered to an untimely end. The trickles of water coming down from our left disappeared as miniature waterfalls into the mist filled abyss to the right, but the left hand wall offered an escape route into the unknown up a short chimney. We each inspected it in silence and silently considered retreat. Then I recalled illustrations of the art of backing up. To my surprise, it worked. J, even more surprised, uttered a cry of admiration. With this music in my ears, I extricated myself unhesitatingly at the top, which was not so well adapted for the purpose as in the remembered drawing, but then this was the real

world and I in no way matched the casual athleticism, or even the neat turnout of the exemplar. J had a little difficulty with the steep gravel slope at the exit. Grinning, I offered a hand - not an original gesture but, I hoped, symbolic. In deteriorating visibility we headed off by what I announced as the Dinner Time Buttress. It probably was. Certainly we got down in gratifyingly quick time, confident in the staying powers of our tricounis.

We chose the mahogany top of the new road in preference to the Clachaig route and had it to ourselves as we glided down the gentle gradient to Glencoe village. At which point refreshment seemed in order. We called at a modest establishment for the speciality of the house, ham and egg, with tea and the usual accessories. Towards the end of a leisurely meal I awoke to the realisation that we were already on the point of missing the last ferry from Ballachulish which, in September, left at quite an early hour. J said crisply that in no circumstance was she going to cycle round Loch Leven, and rested her case. I hurried out to telephone for a taxi and, before it arrived, had arranged to leave the two bicycles at the tea cottage until such time as I could collect them. The taxi arrived promptly and the driver, very good natured and obliging, offered to bring the bikes. With care and skill, but also a maddening lack of urgency he loaded up and in due course we set off for South Ballachulish at a very sedate speed. J was perfectly relaxed, but I was greatly agitated by the prospect of our missing the ferry and my then being obliged to retain the taxi, at untold cost, for an additional twenty miles. Girls did not offer to pay for themselves in those days.

The last boat, over ten minutes late, had put out when we arrived and the crew had already swung the turntable. Our driver tooted the horn, the ferry returned, the skipper even refused to accept J's fare. I ought to have known that nothing would go wrong that day.

THE ACCESS QUARTET

THE QUARTET of articles which follow have as their leitmotiv the increasingly vexing question of access to the hills. Some areas excepted, this is not yet a problem, but with the continuing growth in the numbers of hill users some form of crisis seems inevitable. So we begin to raise our awareness levels with the report on a seminar on access which was held last December. Following this formalised debate, we look at a practical problem which faced the members of the Publications-Sub Committee of the SMC. This was the policy regarding the dissemination of information about climbing in a remote area of Scotland - Ladhar Bheinn. The last two movements are more personal, with a past and the current President of the Mountaineering Council of Scotland giving vent to their experiences and feelings.

Not all of us are politically-minded, which might make it even more logical to support those who are and those whom we can entrust to promote our collective responsibilities. A reading of the entrails on the ground indicates that the problem has arrived; to ignore the signs would be disastrous.

THE GREAT ACCESS DEBATE

The Journal and the Club is indebted to Bryan Fleming for taking the notes that recorded these proceedings.

THE MOST NOTEABLE innovation at the 1991 annual general meeting of the SMC in December was the seminar organised by the President, Iain Smart, to discuss present and future problems relating to access to the Scottish hills. When this idea was first mooted at a committee meeting there was some nervousness, not least on the part of the President, about the numbers that it might attract. However, attendance by approximately 100 members and guests more than justified the decision to proceed.

The President had assembled a well qualified panel of speakers consisting of himself, representing the point of view of the concerned individual, David Laird, Chairman of the North East Board of the Nature Conservancy Council, and Patrick Gordon Duff-Pennington, till recently the Convenor of The Scottish Landowners Federation, all under the benign chairmanship of Malcolm Slessor.

THE MAGNITUDE OF THE PROBLEM.

IAIN SMART opened the proceedings by saying that Scotland could not be considered in isolation. World population would double in the next few decades; the great conurbations were already becoming less and less

pleasant places to live in, hence the phenomenon of the aesthetic refugees, who were tending to move north in search of a better life. Equally important was the fact that there were no restrictions on land purchase, which coupled to the mobility of capital enabled its possessors to buy whatever land they wanted - today the Japanese could buy Pearl Harbour for a fraction of the cost of attacking it! Nearer home a large Highland estate could cost less than a waterfront property on Lake Geneva. Individuals and companies purchasing wild or even rural area may assume they have also purchased the right to secure privacy by restricting access. Institutional capital may also bring problems associated with the objective of maximising returns on investment.

IAIN SMART referred to the growth of the outdoor leisure industry, which, like others, seeks to expand its market as much as possible. Commercial developments in the form of time shares, residential areas and leisure complexes may grow in size to encompass a whole estate; for example an inner sacrosanct mountain core.

The emergence of professional guides, each of whom might take three to five hundred people to the hills in the course of a year introduced an element in which landowners might legitimately argue that they share in the profits, and so introduce a precedent for payment for access. Another issue was also the psychological effect of land passing out of local ownership on the behaviour, often deleterious, of local residents and visitors. A landowner might well ask why the users should not pay for damage or pollution caused.

The President concluded by saying that we must re-assess our approach to these problems, bearing in mind that pressures increase during booms and decrease during recessions, and now was the time to build defences before the next economic boom. He said that the Countryside Commission's study on access to mountain land was very impressive, not least in the zoning principle which it advocated. Zoning seeks to maintain the essential wildness of the core area by limiting commercial developments to its periphery. A good start would be to put the Club's weight behind these proposals.

FUTURE ACCESS PROBLEMS.

The next speaker, DAVID LAIRD, began by saying that the views he was about to express were his own, and not necessarily those of the Nature Conservancy Council for Scotland. He outlined the historical background to the problem in Scotland, beginning with the 1745 Rebellion in Scotland against the British government, and the Hanoverian policy of eliminating the clan system. As a consequence of this the highland chiefs ceased to be trustees of the land which their clans occupied and became outright owners. This led to the assertion of rights and was followed by the clearances, large scale sheep farming and the conversion of much of the land to deer forest.

Mr Laird pointed out that the tacit right to roam at will came to be restricted, and a series of cases led to the trespass law of 1865 which created a form of criminal offence under the act, including for example lighting fires and camping without permission. At the same time casual trespass for recreation came to be tolerated and access is now regulated by a combination of tolerance and the Trespass Act. However he emphasised that freedom to roam is a myth with no legal standing, and the present position is a combination of three main elements:-

1. There are statutory powers under certain Acts to create rights of access, although these have not been invoked to any significant extent.

2. Rights of way.

3. Rights of access negotiated between landowners and user groups. David Laird could not see the problems being resolved by either tightening or revising the present laws and believed it would be unwise to try to restrict access by legislation. Instead he put forward the following principles:-

1. Identify a common objective, which he suggested should be to secure facilities to ensure that all who wished to do so could resort to open spaces for recreation.

2. Users of the open country have corresponding obligations to exercise their freedom in a responsible manner.

3. All parties must recognise that there would always be other legitimate competing interests and therefore some form of partnership must be established to bring the various interests together.

4. A change of attitude was required rather than a change of law.

He added that he could not see the possibility of any satisfactory mechanism for paying for access. He quoted the passage from John Buchan's 'The Three Hostages' in which the stalker, Angus, sharply distinguishes 'Towrists, blatant, foolish and abundantly discourteous, who were the poison in his cup, from Muntaneers, a class which he respected as modest and civil folk, who, if they came in the stalking season, discussed their routes with him'. He concluded by saying that this respect in which we (i.e. mountaineers) were held should be used to help to preserve Europe's last wilderness.

CHANGING ATTITUDES TO LAND STEWARDSHIP.

PATRICK DUFF-PENNINGTON introduced his paper by saying that he believed that everyone in Scotland had the right to go to the hills and that legal processes could solve nothing. The only solution was through information, education and people talking to each other. More people would inevitably wish to come to the Scottish hills, and it was no good saying that we did not want them; the only objectionable ones in his view were those who wanted to make a political point. He added that he was appalled by the fact that the education system virtually ignored the question of access.

He referred to the practical problems involved in posting notices about stalking and continued by saying that direct payment for access was probably a useless idea as there was no way in which the money could be reliably collected. He thought that any money required would have to come from taxation, perhaps tied to voluntary access agreements.

Speaking of the political aspects of the problem he said that the government had to realise that it was desirable to have a certain number of people living and working in the countryside to ensure the maintenance of the kind of environment city and rural people wanted. If the Common Agricultural Policy were to be abolished then other means would have to be found to enable the rural population to survive.

Patrick Duff-Pennington's paper was enlivened throughout by quotations from various poems which supported his views in a most apt and attractive way, and he concluded by emphasising that *de facto* freedom to roam would be his position to the end.

DISCUSSION.

MALCOLM SLESSER, as chairman, opened the discussion by commenting that though much had been said about the pressure of hill walkers, neither of the other two speakers had responded to the President's point about the pressure of mobile capital. PATRICK D P replied that this (*sic*) was absolutely repulsive, and the main problems in his experience stemmed from absentee landowners; there must be an identity with the land, otherwise land ownership had no point.

ADAM WATSON raised several points:-

1. Referring to the effects of people on wild life, he said that many of the problems had nothing to do with hill walking, but were due to forestry and agriculture. There was a tendency to over-state the damage done by people and there was a need for proper, objective independent research on this subject.
2. Referring to conflicts between mountaineers and other hill users, he said that, in the case of deer stalking, for every stag moved away from the stalk there must, logically, be one moved into range, although the quality of the stalk might be different. Walkers and cross-country skiers could, however, cause difficulties on wintering grounds. He added that there could also be conflict with skiers, bikers and sponsored walkers.
3. He said that freedom to roam must go with responsibility, and referred to the biologist Garret Hardin's seminal paper 'The Tragedy of the Commons' - what nobody owns nobody respects. Experience in the U.S.A. indicated that pricing could lead to better management.
4. Real wild land quality must go along with elitism, but the answer was not to keep people out but to make them work harder for their access.

SCOTT JOHNSTON asked if a local tourist tax might be an acceptable way to raise money from all users. PATRICK D-P replied that this had been suggested in the Lake District but appeared to be unacceptable. SCOTT

added that information about access was read by only a small fraction of hill users, and it could surely be given to tourist offices. Patrick D-P agreed that this was a very good idea and it would be much simpler to have only one reference point in each area.

BILL BROOKER endorsed the point about information, but he pointed out that this was often needed at inconvenient hours, when information centres were closed. Referring to rights of way, he said that the concept was not very popular on high ground, but it may be more important (and acceptable) on lower ground. Little information was available and he wondered if there should be some kind of legislation to make the establishment of rights of way easier. Finally he spoke of the economic imperatives on the land owner and raised the question of the claim that there were too many red deer in the highlands.

DAVID LAIRD, replying, said that the Scottish Rights of Way Society had produced a paper suggesting various ways in which the law could be simplified. He said that a right of way is intended to join two points, but in practice there was little possibility of a simple system because of fragmented ownership. PATRICK D-P responding to BROOKER's other main point, said that there were certainly too many deer in some areas, but not everywhere. He said that we must consider the welfare of both the deer and the land, and the deer were getting a pretty raw deal. He said that he would like to see deer and forestry run on German lines, and that it could not be in anyone's interest to run unsustainable herds. Nothing had been put back into the land to restore fertility after years of culling sheep and deer.

IAIN SMART raised the question of planning, saying that we could not rely on people's good intentions. He said there was 'gold' in the hills, and asked what there was to stop someone from building a time-share or leisure complex in a sensitive area. He also asked if the National Heritage Council would implement the Countryside Commission's plan for the Cairngorms.

DAVID LAIRD replied that his crystal ball was slightly hazy on that subject. He felt that existing controls were inadequate and in time there would have to be an extension of planning rules for forestry, agriculture and open land.

PATRICK D-P described the situation in the Lake District as a mess. He said that the people who live in the area must feel that they were properly represented because without their co-operation any conservation plans were doomed to failure. He thought that things were gradually getting better in this respect.

JOHN MACKENZIE said that the Club needed an agreed policy on access and he read a draft policy which he had prepared, covering access, conservation and policy. Because of its length and time constraint on the meeting the chairman suggested this be referred to a future Club AGM.

DONALD BENNET referred to the changes proposed by the Scottish Rights of Way Society to move towards a more administratively based system. He commented on the composition of the Cairngorms working

party and said there was no one on it to represent recreational interests, which was very disappointing, and there had been no response from the Scottish Office to a complaint about this.

Referring to money for access, he said it was right that money should be put into the land, as, for example, the Scottish Mountaineering Trust was doing for footpath repairs, but he suggested that the landowners themselves should receive some money to maintain their own paths.

DAVID LAIRD, responding, said that one of the problems was the feudal nature of land tenure. A proposal to abolish feudal tenure was being considered but it was not likely to be implemented quickly. However when it came it could make an administrative rights of way scheme workable.

ROBIN CAMPBELL said that we should not lose sight of other pressures on land, such as over-grazing, crop forestry and convenience road building. The scale of the problem, he said, is under-estimated, and if the number of Munro completers continued to grow at 15% per annum, then stronger measures than education would be required. Radical problems needed radical solutions.

PATRICK D-P responding said all a private landowner could do was his best. He added that it had been suggested that an administrative rights of way system worked in England, but he had to say that in his experience it was not satisfactory and still left many problems.

BOB REID asked how the Club could effect or influence change when we seemed to have very little representation or influence. In his view every club should have someone within specifically addressing these problems. He said that he did not want to see any changes in the law, apart from abolishing 'Criminal camping', and asked how David Laird saw these problems being addressed by the Scottish National Heritage Council

DAVID LAIRD replied that they were not being sufficiently addressed, but the Heritage Council must build on the very good work done by the Countryside Commission. The question was how to get the message across to the general public.

ADAM WATSON interjected that in the past the bulk of this work had been with problems near towns, less on open country, but there was now much more concern about open country.

PATRICK D-P said that he hoped the Scottish National Heritage budget would stretch to doubling the ranger service.

GEOF. DUTTON thought that restriction of access coupled with pricing would probably increase. This already existed in skiing developments and they were getting away with it. In effect you had to pay to get on to the Glenshee hills as you were forced to pay for parking in the skiing season. He added that it had to be recognised that many activities were completely incompatible.

BOB AITKEN (guest) said that it was very encouraging that the SMC should have had this meeting, but though the times were propitious for these concerns, the political environment was not encouraging. The

Countryside Commission proposals had been very firmly slapped down by the present government and current administrative mechanisms had failed miserably. He pointed to the fact that Scottish National Heritage had only one mountaineer to represent the whole area of recreation, whereas there had always been a reasonable representation on the Countryside Commission. He said the time had come when none of us could afford to be complacent, and if we wanted to see proper protection of the environment then we must all start doing something.

DOUGLAS NIVEN said the meeting had been interesting but cosy, and the reality was that anyone could buy a piece of the Scottish highlands and do what he or she liked with it. The landscape was degraded and continued to be further degraded all the time. Local people could not afford to live in their own places and too much was being sacrificed to vested interests in sheep, deer and crummy forestry. He regretted that the discussion had not been on a higher plane.

DAVID LAIRD, responding, agreed that degradation was continuing and that there were too many mouths to feed on the hill, but he pointed out that many of these mouths were owned by tenants and crofters who had statutory rights.

JOHN HAY asked why we should not pay for our recreation if fishers and shooters paid

PATRICK D-P that the difficulty lay with the many people who did not belong to any organisation and he did not think that this was a practicable approach.

ALAN WALKER suggested that we could make access more difficult by restricting information.

SANDY COUSINS said that education and communication were the only ways to solve these problems. Communication between the hill goers and the people living on the ground was essential and the contact points should be the stalker and the farmer; we should stop and talk to people more often. In the case of education he thought that it should be through colleges rather than schools.

BILL BAND (guest, Countryside Commission) said that the Commission had been undertaking an access review over the past two years and the results would be published in 1992. There were three important topics:-

1. The cumbersome nature of the procedure for establishing rights of way.
2. The enormous scope for the government to channel funds to land owners and farmers for conservation purposes.
3. The mismatch between the rights the public think they have and the reality of the law.

DONALD BENNET referred to the SMC guide books, saying that the Club was continuing the past policy of publishing all the best information available but he accepted that it was legitimate to question if this policy were appropriate for the future.

BILL WALLACE described the way in which the Scottish Mountaineering Trust was ploughing money from guide book sales back into footpath repair.

IVAN WALLER said that he had been very upset to hear of all these problems which he had not hitherto known existed, as he had been mountaineering for seventy years with no trouble whatsoever!

MALCOLM SLESSER, in summing up the discussion, reminded us that the pressure came from economics as well as from people. Litigation and different laws were not the answer - tolerance was the important thing, and rights and obligations must be balanced. As the President had pointed out at the beginning, pressure was arising from mass migration northwards, and that pressure was ending up right here in the Scottish highlands. PATRICK D-P said that he had been going back to Ardverikie since he had been a boy and hoped that everyone else who came would feel welcome and at home, and he invited the Club to come for a day out.

BILL WALLACE thanked the chairman, the speakers and all who took part in the discussion. He said that education had cropped up frequently in the course of the afternoon and there was clearly an awful lot we all had to learn. On behalf of the Club he warmly accepted this invitation to visit Ardverikie in the summer.

LADHAR BHEINN - DECENT OR INDECENT EXPOSURE

Edited by I.H.M. Smart

IT WOULD BE a great thrill to stumble on a part of the Highlands that was completely unknown, an area perhaps with a couple of Munros with mighty ridges and gullies that had somehow escaped the surveyors. Let us call it Gleann Paradise. Once we had bagged everything in it we would record our ascents in the New Climbs section of the Journal, write an article or two for some glossy magazine and eventually, maybe, become the Editor of the Definitive Guide Book to the area. Alas, close on our discovery competitors would press upon us. They would publish better photographs and better articles. Our most recent book 'Jock Tamson's Gleann Paradise' would have to compete in the Christmas market with other titles by other authors; 'The real Gleann Paradise', 'Secret ways in the heavenly glen' and no doubt a dozen others. Gleann Paradise would become a commercial success and a factory farm for golden calves. When it comes to the point we will all turn the sacred Ben-lore into gold (SMCJ, xxxiv, 720-1). We don't need a black affrontit Deity to turn us out of any garden of Eden we happen to chance upon; we are quite competent to do that sort of thing ourselves. Any serpent that got between us and the apple tree would be trampled in the rush to grab the fruit.

More to the point the members of the Publications Sub-Committee were asked recently to consider excluding Ladhar Bheinn from the forthcoming Northern Highlands Guide, in order to protect that area from guide-book-attracted visitors. The suggestion came from Con Higgins in a letter to Douglas Anderson, the Convenor of the Sub-Committee. Douglas circulated the letter to the other members and asked for comments. Most sighed and said what a good idea it was. Then reflected sadly on the failure of the Rowe-Tiso Moratorium of the seventies, which forbade publication of any details about climbs north of the Great Glen; it was ineffective in practice. Most respondents in the end gave way to the populist view expressed most enthusiastically by Andy Nisbet, that everything should be revealed to everybody as quickly and efficiently as possible - any other course would be selfish. We, the Committee, being children of our time went along with this view; most of us, to our credit went sadly but nevertheless we went. This was the realistic decision. The alternative, however attractive, would require a degree of intellectual sophistication and commercial self-discipline impossible to exert in our present society where the populist approach we have decided to follow is consistent with increasing the cash flow, the major force that drives the windmills of our mind. The coffers of the Trust and freelance entrepreneurs,

however dubious, are filled alike by selling the wilderness. Indeed, the ambience in which we live persuades us that somehow it would be selfish to try to hide any commodity that can be profitably marketed. By this logic the solution would be to discover how to make unspoiled, unwritten-about wilderness generate a bigger cash-flow than the hack-ridden, sub-utopian alternative. We print the edited correspondence below. It gives a good cross-section of contemporary opinion.

Letter from Douglas Anderson, Convenor of the Publications Sub-Committee to members of the Committee:

'As convener of the SMC Publications Committee I have recently received a letter from Con Higgins regarding the inclusion of Ladhar Bheinn in the forthcoming Northern Highlands Guide. I attach a copy of his letter which explains his view. I would be grateful for comment on the specifics of Ladhar Bheinn and also the concept of information restriction to reduce public awareness and hence pressure on particular environments.'

The letter from Con Higgins:

'I'm writing in connection about the inclusion of Ladhar Bheinn in the forthcoming Northern Highlands Guide being prepared by Geoff Cohen. Whilst realizing that it is rather late in broaching this subject to you, I hope not too late.

I would like you as chairman of the SMC/SMT Publication Committee to consider not including Ladhar Bheinn in this guide. All information regards climbing on this mountain (indeed any mountain in Scotland) is readily available thro' SMC Journals and kindred sources, any inclusion in a formal guide will only exacerbate the human pressure on this quite special area. Pressure of this type should be lessened wherever possible. That Ladhar Bheinn should be singled out for exclusion would I know be setting a precedent. The area does not have a guide book at present - the information is available for those who want to climb and who won't let the lack of a guide stop them (has it ever anywhere). This is one major difference from other areas - but not be used as an excuse to produce a guide book. Can't Knoydart be left as a much needed mountaineering lump free from the tyranny of a formal guide.

It is quite possible that the human presence may not increase and in fact may even decrease quite independent of whether there is a guide book or not, but the evidence from recent history does not suggest this. While we can act, we should.

The views expressed are personal and I hope that they may elicit some action by your committee in meeting them.'

Response from Bob Duncan (climber, joint editor 'Climbers' Guide to Central & Southern Scotland', 1986):

'If it was entirely up to me and any guide was purely for my own benefit, I would happily go along with Con's suggestion. Knoydart is

different and it would be nice to have one area where some mystery remained. The rest of the country is available if people want detailed descriptions for everything. Moreover, such a course could well reduce pressure on Knoydart in the future and help preserve its special qualities.

However, the guidebooks operation is to an extent a service, and so it could be argued that what we might consider desirable should be tempered by what we think is actually wanted by climbers in general. The last guide to the area was deliberately selective and left much undescribed; it did not go down well, or at least pressure to have it updated in a comprehensive fashion has been enormous, as you well know. People always want to know what's been done.

Against that, I think that the Club has a right - if not an obligation - to make decisions based on more than just what we think 'the herd' (or maybe just those who shout loudest) want, and associated commercial considerations. There are precedents elsewhere for such an approach. I don't think we should be in the business of being pimps nor forgetting our responsibilities to future generations.

I've always been one for trying to extract the average person's point of view from the noise generated by all the special interest groups, like the new-routers and tickers. It may be that there would be support for Con's idea, or something like it, but I feel that we'd have to seek a wider mandate for it.

I suggest that this item is put on the agenda for the next Pubs. Sub-ctee meeting, unless the timescale makes that impossible, and that members are encouraged to ask around in as disinterested a fashion as they can manage (!) so we can have a proper discussion, based on more than just personal prejudices. The notion of deliberately withholding information in order to help reduce pressure on particular areas is one which at least merits discussion, and certainly in a wider forum than just the Publications Sub-committee. As I write, it sounds hopelessly idealistic, but I live in hope.'

Response from Roger Everett (climber, Editor, SMC Climbers' Guides):

'...presents a point of view that has been discussed before: indeed, at one time there appeared to be a policy that no climbing routes in the whole Northern Highlands be published. The aim of this idea was to preserve an environment where climbers could engage in exploratory mountaineering in a way which would not be possible if a guide book existed. This viewpoint no longer has the support of the vast majority of climbers, who eagerly await the publication of the guide. However, Con Higgins' argument is rather different. He is worried by the impact of a greater number of climbers visiting Knoydart as a consequence of the guide's publication. While I too enjoy wild and remote places, and the solitude of a good climbing weekend on Ladhar Bheinn, I think that his argument is aimed in the wrong direction for the following reasons:

1. The overwhelming majority of visitors to Knoydart and Ladhar Bheinn

are walkers, not climbers. Indeed, I suspect it would be a rare day to find more than one party climbing on a crag in Knoydart at any time of year.

2. It follows that anyone desiring to reduce the human pressure on the mountain should argue for the elimination of Ladhar Bheinn from the District Guide and The Munros (not to mention Munros Tables!). This questions the whole publishing aims of the SMC and SMT; a difficult problem which in my opinion is now circumvented by SMT donations to footpath funds and conservation bodies, including the owners of Ladhar Bheinn.

3. Another far more effective deterrent to visitors to Knoydart would be to remove all the bothies. Again, I suspect this would not be acceptable to the majority of hill users.

4. If the SMC were to restrict the climbing information in its guides, logically it should also do this in the Journal. Such restrictions (why limit them only to Knoydart) would not be acceptable to those who collate the new route information.

5. Climbers who wish to limit the impact of future climbers could do so by not publishing their first ascents, something which Con Higgins has not adhered to in the past.

6. The owners of Ladhar Bheinn wish to encourage responsible recreational usage of the mountain by all interested parties.

So, I am strongly against removing Knoydart from the forthcoming guide, both in principle and on the practical grounds that it wouldn't make the slightest difference to the overall human pressure on the mountain. There will never be a large number of climbers willing to walk in to Barrisdale, guide or no guide. So why penalise this small group for a problem which (if it even exists) is not of their making. I respect Con Higgins' viewpoint, but he is aiming at the wrong target.

In more general terms, I am also against restriction of information as a means to reduce access to the hills. This is rather a non-policy which will be ineffective because, once the demand for information is present, it will be filled by someone, so why don't we do it properly ourselves (the argument put forward for publishing The Munros in the first place). If one really wants to restrict access, the only effective way is to introduce entry quotas and booking systems, as in North American National Parks.'

Response from John Fowler (climber, Secretary SMC):

'I have read Con Higgins letter - interesting. The idea of course is not new and you will probably recall that the idea of a moratorium on recording or publishing of new routes in the North-West was suggested by Iain Rowe and Graham Tiso back in the seventies, all too sadly after the publication of Rowe and Turnbull's guide books to the area. The damage had been done and there therefore seemed little point in denying further information. Also the area was vast and restriction of information would have been hard to control.

The situation here I think is different. This is a small isolated area for which no information has previously been published other than in the Journal. My view is that the idea of a moratorium in this area is worth a try and might be appreciated by many climbers who still like to visit unrecorded areas. It would also fit in well with the aims of the John Muir Trust who now own the substantive part of the climbing area and who are keen to retain the unspoiled character of the area.

My own view is that we should give the idea a try. We can always add it to future reprints if there is enormous objection.

Exclusion of the area from the guide might not however bring the desired result. The area will soon be seen to be missing from the guide and if it becomes general knowledge that this was as a result of a policy decision then might this not serve as an attraction for people to go and see what they have been missing?

Response from Andrew Nisbet (climber, joint author 'Climbers' Guide to the Cairngorms', New Climbs Editor SMC Journal):

'I cannot agree with Con Higgin's suggestion that Ladhar Bheinn be missed out of the Northern Highlands Guide. Although a personal opinion, I presume that the committee would be in agreement. In the mid seventies there was a moratorium on publication (even in the SMCJ) of routes in the Northern Highlands. This was unpopular amongst SMC members and others and was overturned. I remember as a young climber finding it frustrating and disappointing, and was pleased to see the end of it. Soon after, the Northern Highlands Guide was initiated. Having made the decision to 'publicise' these remote areas, I cannot see the arguments being different in Ladhar Bheinn's case. No doubt there are others with a special affection for Letterewe/Carn Mor, and who would like to see it omitted. Apart from the general principle that secrecy is unreasonable (selfish), I doubt if it is effective in the long term, private publications and similar undermining it.

The Knoydart area is a special wilderness, but much less so than 10 years ago. Thousands of walkers and bothy users now travel through (largely due to publicity, but not by the SMC). Let's say Ladhar Bheinn is in condition once every 5 years and 5 parties climb there. This is two per year compared to thousands of walkers so from the environmental point of view will make no difference. As a personal view, I quite like other climbers on a cliff. It is more sociable, and only occasionally are they on my intended route.

From a practical point of view, whoever put the time and effort in writing up Ladhar Bheinn for Geoff's guide cannot be expected to see their work thrown away.

I have sympathy with Con's viewpoint but omission of Ladhar Bheinn would be symbolic only and might even attract climbers for that reason.

As a general principle, information restriction is only going to work if

carried out on a huge scale, both walking and climbing guides, SMC and others, and even if it were practical, I would see it as slightly selfish. More important I think is to educate the increasing number of visitors about protection of the environment, and climbers are very much the minority over walkers.

Response from Iain Smart (climber, President SMC):

'I am in favour of the idea. However I can't decide how it could be done. The options are:

- 1(a) Just leave that section out with no explanation
- (b) a declaration that this has been done purposely and exhort others to follow our lead.
- 2 Include it but write about Knoydart in opaque, ambiguous prose, conveying the message that it is a part of Scotland not really worth visiting.

I am inclined to favour 1(b) above. That is to try to make a 'cult' of keeping this area obscure so that anyone who writes about it will be considered a vulgarian who is on the make.

However I imagine if Geoff Cohen has put in a lot of work on the area, he will be unwilling to ditch it. In this case we could rely on Knoydart surviving unknown because it is described just like anywhere else.

In the end we are going to lose.'

Response from Noel Williams (climber, author 'Scrambles in Lochaber'):

'Regarding the letter from Con Higgins. I had already been in contact with Con myself back in April when I was putting the finishing touches to the manuscript for Knoydart. It was Con that first told me about Ladhar Bheinn and encouraged me to go there back in 1979. He probably knows more about the climbing there than anyone else, and I asked him if he would be prepared to look over the chapter that I had written. When I spoke to him face to face he agreed, but a couple of days later I had a letter from him withdrawing his offer of help. I quote ...

"... my original feelings about this mountain being included in a guide book have surfaced again. I can see no justification whatsoever in wilfully increasing human traffic in this area that a formal guide would do. It is not needed. Those who wish to climb there will - and won't lack information.

Therefore it would be hypocritical of me to be connected in any way with the production of such a guide and I withdraw my consent to look over your manuscript. I'm sure this will not hinder your project."

I was rather disappointed in his change of heart, especially since he is responsible for putting up more routes on Ladhar Bheinn than anyone else. But I have a great respect for Con's opinions on many matters to do with mountaineering, and so I did not pursue the matter any further with him.'

While I have some sympathy with his position I do not agree with him for two reasons. Firstly, it is not true to say that the information on Ladhar



Mt. Kenya

Photo: Donald Bennet



Trotternish from the Quiraing, July 1938

Photo: R. M. Adam (with thanks to St. Andrews University)

Bheinn is 'readily available' as he claims in his letter to you. Not everyone has easy access to a full set of SMC Journals (the routes on Ladhar Bheinn date from 1897). And secondly, the combination of fairly difficult access and the rarity of good climbing conditions on the extremity of the west coast together tend to restrict the number of climbers anyway. It would be horrible to see Knoydart become as popular as Ben Nevis, Glen Coe or the Cairngorms but I cannot see that happening.

A possible compromise might be to omit star ratings for the routes on Ladhar Bheinn and/or give minimal descriptions. I think it would be worth discussing this option at the next meeting of the Publications Sub-committee.'

Abstract from Minutes of the Publications Sub-Committee of the SMC:

'D. Anderson referred to the letter that he had received from C. Higgins proposing that information about climbing routes on Ladhar Bheinn should not be included in the forthcoming Northern Highlands Rock and Ice guide. The views of Sub-committee members had been sought by letter, and it was agreed that there should not be any such withholding of information. D. Anderson would write to C. Higgins accordingly.'

ACCESS - THE NEXT DECADE

By Robin N. Campbell

I HAD the good fortune to be MCofS President from 1982 to 1986. A tour of duty with the MCofS gives a perspective on the world of mountaineering which is not available to the inward-looking, complacent SMC member, secure in the knowledge of his superiority, and confident that the 100 years of the Club's existence gives his opinions weight and authority, however eccentric and stupid these might be - to someone like me as I was in 1982, for instance. In fact, our mountains are a battleground fought over by a rabble of owners, developers, farmers, voluntary bodies, government and other statutory agencies. We mountaineers - despite our intimate knowledge of the terrain - are a small and puny force. Moreover, our opinions, even when well turned and dexterously delivered to the other players by the MCofS - which sometimes happens - rarely leave the faintest scratch. We don't live in the mountains, we have no financial interest in them, we provide jobs only in the equipment business, and no statutory body is obliged to take formal account of our views. We are just barely in the game. So although I agreed to take part in this Journal discussion, I do so with considerable misgivings. The last thing that MCofS needs is to have its carefully-considered, democratically-approved and astute policies undermined by our Club trying to do its job for it, in the utterly mistaken belief that we know better. What we should be concerned with is how to inject new purpose and direction into our own Club, and with how best we can assist the MCofS in its struggle to defend our recreation from the predatory forces which threaten it.

I see two main *new* developments affecting Scottish mountaineering in the next 10 years: restriction of access and internal schism. As for old threats, these will continue to vex us, of course. Some come from without, some from within. In the first category are an appalling forestry and worse forestry practices - most especially the barbarous practice of ploughing hill slopes, ski-facilities that rape our mountains even more vigorously than do those of the Alps, sporting roads, nannyng safety-mongers, overgrazing by sheep and deer, etc. In the second category are various self inflicted wounds: sponsored walkers, hill-runners and scotblobbers; head banging uses of deplorable mountaineering aids such as bicycles, chalk, bolts, and ice-picks - an ice-tool is nothing but a piton which is easily inserted and removed, and besides, it is a piton used not just for protection or resting, but for upward movement! These threats, then, are always with us, the bad knees and ingrown toenails of an ailing recreation.

Restriction of Access

Some make out that the coming crisis over access is due to changes in patterns of ownership, with good old traditional chaps being displaced by newly-rich yuppie foreigners, sheikhs and samurai. Even if it were true that some such radical change in patterns of ownership had occurred (I doubt that it is), I would not share this view. The crisis is coming because of burgeoning mountain recreation. A variety of indicators show growth rates of participation of between 10% and 15%. For instance, if sustained at this level, the millionth Munro-compleater will reach her final cairn around 2050! We turn paths into quagmires or grooves, we drive up any road or track not efficiently locked, we park our cars at need on road verges or simply on the road, we go wherever and whenever we please, dropping litter, enraging owners and disturbing wildlife. Fundamentally, there are just too many of us to be assimilated comfortably by traditionally-managed estates or by a local authority structure in which the provision of roads and car-parks is completely sundered from the servicing of leisure and recreation, and in which there is no statutory responsibility to provide for tourism. Those agencies that do have responsibilities for tourism have little money and in any case they have a different sort of tourist in mind. Unchecked, the combination of *de facto* unrestricted access and rocketing numbers will result in yet another 'tragedy of the commons', with the price of our access being paid for by the land.

I do not think this will be allowed to happen. This is not because government will stand up for hill land - it has seldom done that, and then only when scientific values have been involved - but because it will act to defend landowning interests as soon as nuisance and loss of value become intolerable. We will be made to pay, probably not directly but through payment for car-parking or by other indirect means. It is a moot point, of course, whether this would have any lasting effect on numbers, but I imagine it will be tried anyhow. Can we or should we do anything to prevent this? I do not think so. Where hill land is concerned, recreational interests have always been squeezed out between the opposing forces of scientific and commercial interests. Our effort should be to make sure that whatever money is extracted from us is well used for the benefit of the mountain recreation, and not simply put in the pockets of landowners already bulging with grants and tax concessions, nor swallowed up by government agencies such as the Forestry Commission, Scottish Natural Heritage, or the Sports Council - bodies that have done precious little to serve our interest in the past. Moreover, the fact of payment will make it impossible for these agencies to resist demands for proper representation of mountaineering interests.

There is no point in being down-hearted about any of this. The only satisfactory solutions to the problems of access depend upon there being fewer people interested in obtaining it. While this could be achieved by reducing population, or by educating the public to loathe and fear mountains as they once did, neither of these programs is at all likely, although there

is always the chance of an outbreak of plague. So the only option left is to reduce interest by making access costly, by one means or another.

Internal Schism

Old fashioned types like me may choose to sneer at quarry-climbing, competitions, climbing walls, weight-training, etc., but these are undeniable symptoms of a sport emerging from a recreation and it is futile to hope that the sport will go away. The problem will come to the MCofS long before it comes to us, since our traditions and entrance qualifications make our Club an unlikely refuge for the sporting climber. Moreover, we have the great good fortune that our mountains are too worn down to offer any really steep rock, so sporting climbers are unlikely to be much interested in going up hills. By the time they burn their underwear, with any luck assorted sports injuries will have taken such a severe toll that they won't be *able* to go up a hill! So my guess is that the amount of shared interest between sporting and recreational climber is so slight that schism is inevitable. This development should be welcomed: its advent will make it easier for us to concentrate on enjoyment of mountains and on preserving them from damaging exploitation.

Whither the SMC

We badly need to find a new purpose to guide our activities, or to revive an old one. The pursuit of technical prowess clearly falls to the sporting climber now. And lobbying on behalf of mountains or mountaineering is the MCofS's task now, not ours. What is left to keep us interested, besides the routine maintenance of traditions such as our Journal, our Huts, our Dinner and our publishing programme? I think that the only basis for lively continuation of our Club is exploratory mountaineering. We ought to place more emphasis on this in our existing traditions, in the location of Meets and Huts, in entrance qualifications, in the subject matter of our Journal and publishing programme and, of course, in our personal recreation.

I'D LIKE TO SOLO THE EXUM

By Bob Reid

'I'D LIKE TO solo the Exum.'

'I'm sorry, the Exum's fully booked.'

The Park Ranger's words affronted sensibilities I hadn't imagined existed. Was this really mountaineering in the USA and was I really being sandbagged by a uniformed bureaucrat? His gun looked real enough judging by the way its weight tugged at his belt.

'Excuse me,' I said again, trying not to sound indignant or pompous. 'Could you run that past me once more?'

'The Exum? Man, there's enough of you climbers up there already.' He sounded like Garrison Keillor affecting grumpiness.

He turned and pointed to a notice board behind him. At its top were the names of the more popular of the Teton routes. I read them off quickly; Owen-Spalding, Irene's Arete, the Northwest Couloir of South Teton, the Black-Ice Couloir amongst others. Beneath some were white dockets, which I soon realised were climbing permits, with lists of climbers neatly written out in the prescribed manner. The Exum had more dockets below it than any other route.

The ranger explained that this climbing permit system was designed to minimise the impact of climbers on this fragile resource, which soared up ruggedly behind the ranger station for fully 7000ft. Even climbers heading in for a day's cragging had to register.

I couldn't help feeling as though I'd fallen into one of those dreadful fictional pieces written about evil bureaucrats governing climbing. Since the exploration of these methods was in part my purpose, I hung in there.

'Well, if the Exum's fully booked, can you recommend something else that isn't?' Guide books and aerial photographs of the Tetons were produced as I tried to decide upon an alternative. The photos were spectacular, Bradford Washburn black and whites taken from the air. I liked the look of the Owen-Spalding on the Grand, but that too had been over-subscribed, and I was pointed in the direction of the Middle Teton's Southwest Couloir.

'A classic?' I asked.

'Three stars,' the ranger assured me with all the enthusiasm of a car salesman. So I duly filled out my permit. A copy was kept and pinned on the board, along with several dozen others. I remember noting at the time that mine was the only permit on that particular route, and my heart momentarily quickened at the prospect of having the route to myself. Of

course I'd leapt to the wrong conclusion. The scarcity of permits issued strongly correlated with the paucity of sound rock in Middle Teton's Southwest Couloir, as I later discovered.

The walk-in that evening led me to a bivouac site known as the 'Meadows' at the entrance to the upper South Fork of Garnet Canyon. Several such bivouac sites were set aside, with notices urging climbers to leave the grassy bits alone and camp on the gravel. A not-unreasonable request, but one that underlined the old adage that hard won is well remembered. A stony bed and a temperature inversion weren't ideal partners for a good night's sleep.

A local couple on the neighbouring bivvi-site (their's was number 8, mine was number 9, according to the metal spikes that had been hammered into the ground) were in fact climbing the Exum. I had been duped. It was not the ridge that was too busy, simply that the best bivvi-sites were taken. In theory I could have done the Exum from the Meadows, but alas I had the wrong permit.

A dilemma presented itself. There I was, a stranger in a weird system, sponsored by the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust, (a more august body you couldn't imagine) with thoughts of 'just-nipping-up-the-Exum'. My bivvi-neighbours even encouraged me in what would undoubtedly be considered a pre-meditated felony. Press headlines flashed before my eyes. 'Churchill Fellow climbs wrong route', 'Environmental crime admitted by Scottish climber'.

Sense in the end, perhaps sadly, prevailed. I headed up Middle Teton, where, if I were to be completely even handed, I would have to admit that there was a splendid view from the top.

On the way down I met another ranger, perhaps two miles from the trailhead. My feet were weary and I whiled an hour with him discussing his work. During that time climbers heading for bivvi-sites passed us and showed their permits on request. Two parties had none, for it was Labour Day weekend, the hills were busy, and the sites were fully booked. The ranger gently but firmly turned them back, in spite of their pleadings that they had travelled many miles. And head back they did, without histrionics. My new found friend however did seem a little disappointed, as though still hungry after an expensive meal in a restaurant.

'I'll book the next party that arrives here without a permit,' he assured me as I left.

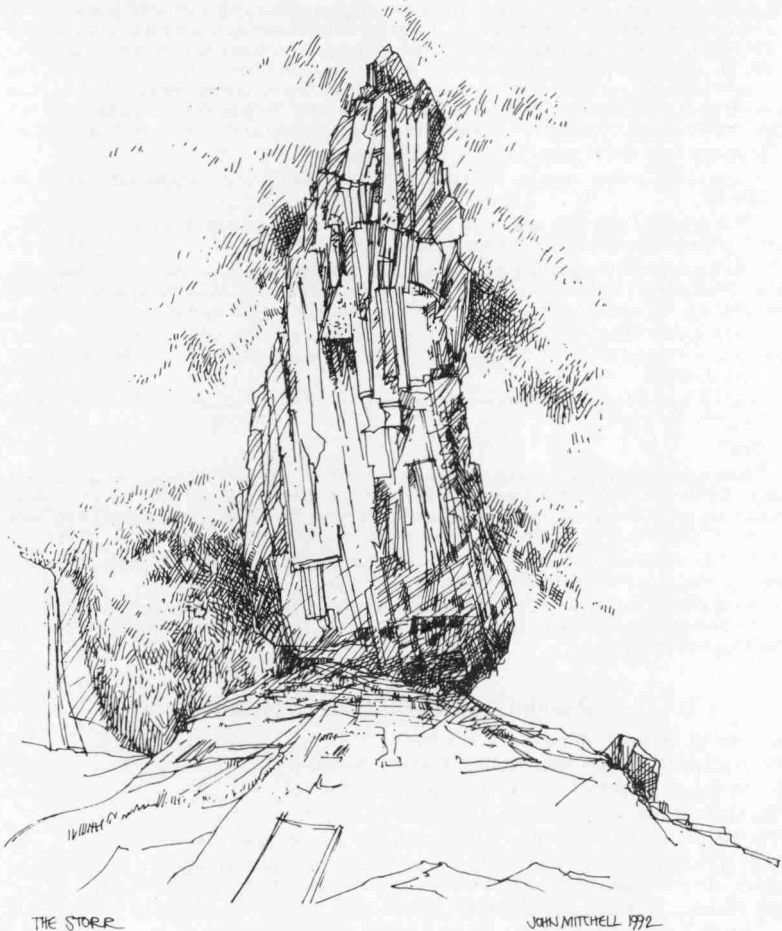
Trudging down into the darkness, I passed other parties heading up and a complicity with their purpose led me to warn them of the ambush up the trail. As if to pour water on my rebellious act they of course all had permits.

The ranger service is the police service in American National Parks. Criminal, as well as environmental law is enforced by them and I don't envy them their task. One more enlightened ranger (he was a climber) left me with my other abiding memory of the Tetons.

'If you're going to manage visitors to the mountains in Scotland, DON'T have a compulsory registration system for climbers. It sucks.' The finality of his words suggested that he knew the individuality of the Scottish climber, indeed of all climbers, only too well.

I was reminded of W.H. Murray's words on mountaineering in *Undiscovered Scotland*. 'Here is a field of free action in which nothing is organised, or made safe or easy or uniform by regulation; a kingdom where no laws run and no useful ends fetter the heart'.

Footnote: The author, who is currently President of the Mountaineering Council of Scotland, received a Winston Churchill fellowship in 1991 to examine the techniques employed in the USA's National Parks for managing the impacts of climbers and hillwalkers. This account is one of the more lurid experiences that he remembers.



NEW CLIMBS SECTION

WINTER GRADES

Suggested Gradings of Scottish Winter Routes, compiled by Simon Richardson, March 1997

(**Note by Ed.** Some leading winter climbers are dissatisfied with the present grading system. What follows is their collective argument. It is most certainly not our intention to enforce a new system; rather, general usage will define the system in use, changing it, or not, depending on what active climbers send in to these pages. Meanwhile, no harm in having a debate. Now read on.)

The intention of this review is to modernise the winter grading system, to take into account rising standards and improved equipment. Many leading winter explorers have been consulted, and their averaged grades listed below, with a little editorial interference. The listed grades are by no means final. It will be observed that the system used in the new Glen Coe guide is slightly different to that below.

The system which has met with most approval uses overall grades (Roman numerals as before), and technical grades (Arabic numerals). The technical grade applies to the crux section of the route and has not been used for pitch gradings. The relationship between overall and technical grade is akin to rock climbing grades, i.e. it reflects seriousness (protection) and any sustained nature. The latter is less easily defined than in rock climbing, since many winter climbs have no hand rests at regular intervals, and several factors influence the likelihood of success and therefore the overall grade. The frequent rests may not apply to the higher grades, with near vertical rock and ice, where an extra overall grade may have been added similar to that in summer. Otherwise, the main factor which will have influenced the overall grade is the length of the route allied to the number of crux sections.

The system is illustrated using Grade V as an example.

V, 3 A very serious route, poor runners and belays, possible severe injury/fatality following leader fall.

V, 4 A serious route with at least one poor belay and a poorly protected hard section, e.g. Zero Gully. Normally an ice route, so ice screw runners expected.

V, 5 A route of average safety, either an ice route with good belays and short crux sections, e.g. Point Five Gully, or a mixed route with a serious factor; good belays assumed, but a poorly protected section, or a very sustained crux pitch, or a remote route with several hard pitches.

V, 6 A safe route. A typical mixed V with good belays and runners, but with some factor preventing it from being classified as very safe, e.g. sustained, long, remote, a short but poorly protected section.

V, 7 A very safe route. A short, well-protected crux. Short, accessible climbs are more likely to be given this grade.

NOTES:

1. Routes are graded for the conditions under which they are normally climbed. An ice route will be graded for good ice, perhaps unusually good if rarely in condition. A turf and rock route will be graded for snow cover and therefore will be more often at the described grade. A mixed ice and rock route will probably be dictated by the ice quality and graded for good ice conditions.

2. V, 3 not used so far. Grading for good ice conditions arguably eliminates the grade. Would not apply abroad, e.g. routes threatened by seracs.

3. Harder mixed routes, particularly VII, often have very sustained and physically draining pitches without necessarily possessing a crux move. The Grade VII, 7 is sometimes sustained and strenuous but very well protected.

Rough Guide to the Overall Grades.

I, II, and III. Generally unchanged.

IV Traditional IV gullies. Most III/IV and easier IV mixed.

V. Traditional V gullies. Harder IV, IV/V and easier V mixed.

VI. Modern steep or thin ice routes. Most V mixed.

VII. Steeper or thinner ice routes. The hardest V, V/VI, easier VI mixed.

VIII. No such thick ice route in Britain. Steep thin ice unlikely ever to form more thickly. Mixed climbs of top standard, somewhat speculative since none have been repeated.

IX. Futuristic, or does it exist already?

Thanks to Simon Richardson as the driving force and secretary.

ROUTE NAME	CRAG/HILL	YEAR PUBL.	SUGGESTED	
CAIRNGORMS				
Mitre Ridge	Beinn a'Bhuird	1953	V	V,6
Hourglass Buttress	Beinn a'Bhuird	1970	IV/V	V,6
The Carpet	Beinn a'Bhuird	1970	IV/V	VI,6
Bloodhound Buttress	Beinn a'Bhuird	1975	V	VI,7
Cumming Crofton	Beinn a'Bhuird	1977	V	VI,6
Gold Coast	Beinn a'Bhuird	1982	V	VI,5
Ghurka	Beinn a'Bhuird	1984	V	VI,7
Thief's Corner	Beinn a'Bhuird	1984	V	
The Actress	Beinn a'Bhuird	1984	V	VI,7
The Grail	Beinn a'Bhuird	1984	V	V,5
The Watchtower	Beinn a'Bhuird	1986	V	
Bell's Variation	Beinn a'Bhuird	1986	V	V,7
White Nile	Braeriach	1977	IV	V,5
Ebony Chimney	Braeriach	1982	V	VI,6
Tiara	Braeriach	1984	V	VI,7
Kangaroo	Braeriach	1986	IV/V	
St Andrew's Climb	Braeriach	1986	IV/V	V,6
Koala	Braeriach	1987	V/VI	V,6
Tower of Babel	Braeriach	1987	V	VI,7
Phoenix Edge	Braeriach	1991	IV/V	V,6
Didgeridoo	Braeriach	1991	V/VI	VII,6
Bugaboo Rib	Cairntoul	1970	V	V,7
Scorpion	Carn Etchachan	1952	V	V,5
False Scorpion	Carn Etchachan	1970	V	
Red Guard	Carn Etchachan	1978	V	VI,7
Boa	Carn Etchachan	1981	V	V,6
Python	Carn Etchachan	1981	V	V,6
Equinox	Carn Etchachan	1981	V	VI,6
Nom-de-Plume	Carn Etchachan	1982	V	VI,7
Pythagoras	Carn Etchachan	1986	V/VI	VI,7
Bastille	Carn Etchachan	1986	V/VI	V,7
Time Traveller	Carn Etchachan	1987	VI	VII,7
Inside Edge	Carn Etchachan	1987	V	
Snakebite	Carn Etchachan	1990	V	V,7
Talisman	Choire Etchachan	1965		V,7
Square Cut Gully	Choire Etchachan	1966	V	
Scabbard	Choire Etchachan	1985	V	VI,7
Avalanche Gully	Choire Etchachan	1985	IV/V	
Switchblade	Choire Etchachan	1991	V	VI,7
Savage Slit	Coire an Lochain	1957	IV	V,6
When the Wind Blows	Coire an Lochain	1984	V	
Ventricle	Coire an Lochain	1984	VI	VII,9
Auricle	Coire an Lochain	1984	IV	V,7
Fallout Corner	Coire an Lochain	1985	V	VI,7
Torquing Heads	Coire an Lochain	1986	V	
The Migrant	Coire an Lochain	1986	V	VI,7
Gaffer's Groove Summer	Coire an Lochain	1987	V	V,8
The Hoarmaster	Coire an Lochain	1988	V	V,6
Hookers Corner	Coire an Lochain	1988	V	V,7
Torque of the Devil	Coire an Lochain	1988	V	VI,8
Bulgy	Coire an Lochain	1988	V/VI	VII,7
Deep Throat	Coire an Lochain	1989	V	V,6
Tracheotomy	Coire an Lochain	1989	V	V,7
The Deviant	Coire an Lochain	1989	V	IV,6
Ventrolquist	Coire an Lochain	1990	V/VI	VII,7
Conundrum	Coire an Lochain	1990	V	V,7
Big Daddy	Coire an Lochain	1991	VI	VIII,8
False Gully	Dubh Loch	1964	IV/V	V,6

Labyrinth Direct	Dubh Loch	1972	V	VI,5
Vertigo Wall	Dubh Loch	1977	V	VI,7
White Elephant	Dubh Loch	1980	V	VI,5
The Last Oasis	Dubh Loch	1980	V	VI,6
Mousetrap	Dubh Loch	1980	VI	
Goliath	Dubh Loch	1980	V/VI	VII,7
Black Mamba	Dubh Loch	1984	V/VI	VII,7
The Rattrap	Dubh Loch	1986	VI	VIII,8
Nemesis	Dubh Loch	1987	V/VI	VI,6
Sabre Edge	Dubh Loch	1987	IV/V	IV,6
Four Corners Route	Dubh Loch	1987	V	VI,7
Late Night Final	Dubh Loch	1987	V	VI,7
The Titan	Dubh Loch	1991	IV/V	V,6
G Force	Glen Clova	1986	V	VI,5
Crestal Clear	Glen Clova	1988	IV/V	V,5
Chancer	Hell's Lum	1970	IV/V	V,5/6
Devil's Delight	Hell's Lum	1973	IV/V	V,4
Clean Sweep	Hell's Lum	1978	V	
Towering Inferno	Hell's Lum	1986	IV/V	
Good Intentions	Hell's Lum	1986	V/VI	VII,7
Hell's Lump	Hell's Lum	1986	IV/V	
Eagle Ridge	Lochnagar	1953	V	VI,6
Parallel Buttress	Lochnagar	1956	V	VI,6
Parallel Gully B	Lochnagar	1958	IV/V	V,5
Pinnacle Face	Lochnagar	1966	V	VI,6
Winter Face	Lochnagar	1974	V	
The Link	Lochnagar	1979	V/VI	VII,7
Crypt	Lochnagar	1979	V	VI,7
Epitome	Lochnagar	1980	VI	
Parallel Buttress, Left Edge	Lochnagar	1980	V	VI,7
The Straight-Jacket	Lochnagar	1980	V/VI	VI,7
Pinnacle Grooves	Lochnagar	1980	V	VI,7
Ice Ox	Lochnagar	1984	IV/V	IV,4
Nymph	Lochnagar	1984	VI	VII,8
Link Direct	Lochnagar	1984	V/VI	
D-G Gully, Central Fork	Lochnagar	1984	V	
Psyche	Lochnagar	1984	V/VI	VII,8
Tough Guy	Lochnagar	1984	V	VII,7
Shadow Buttress A Direct	Lochnagar	1984	V	VI,7
Katsalana	Lochnagar	1984	VI	
Pantheist	Lochnagar	1984	VI	VII,8
Solstice	Lochnagar	1984	V	
Slime Lords	Lochnagar	1984	V	
Dod's Diversion	Lochnagar	1985	V	
Trail of Tears	Lochnagar	1986	VI	VII,8
Diedre of Sorrows	Lochnagar	1986	VI	VIII,8
Raeburn's Groove	Lochnagar	1986	V	VI,7
Torquing Corpse	Lochnagar	1987	VII	
Backdoor Route Var.	Lochnagar	1988	IV/V	
Eclipse	Lochnagar	1988	IV/V	
Sticil Face	Shelterstone	1957	V	V,6
Citadel, Winter Var 1	Shelterstone	1975	V	VI,8
Postern	Shelterstone	1980	VI	VI,6
Citadel	Shelterstone	1980	VI	VII,8
The Needle	Shelterstone	1985	VI	VIII,8
The Imposter	Shelterstone	1986	V/VI	
Sticil Face, Winter Var	Shelterstone	1986	V	
Consolation Groove	Shelterstone	1987	VI	
Citadel, Winter Var 2	Shelterstone	1987	V	
Citadel, Moonlight Finish	Shelterstone	1987	V	V,6
Postern Direct	Shelterstone	1988	VI	VII,8

Games of Chance	Shelterstone	1991	V	
Belhaven	Sneachda	1979	IV	V,6
Damnation	Sneachda	1985	V	
White Magic	Sneachda	1985	V/VI	VII,7
Lamp Direct	Sneachda	1986	IV/V	V,6
Dr Janis Direct	Sneachda	1987	IV/V	V,7
Pot of Gold	Sneachda	1988	IV/V	V,6
Salvation	Sneachda	1989	V	VI,7
Watch Out	Sneachda	1990	V	VI,8
Fingers Ridge Direct	Sneachda	1990	V	VI,7
Droidless	Sneachda	1990	IV/V	V,6
Wachacha	Sneachda	1990	V	V,6
No Blue Skies	Sneachda	1990	IV/V	V,7
The Paramedic	Sneachda	1991	V	VI,7
Burning and Looting	Sneachda	1991	IV/V	
Mariella	Sneachda	1991	V	V,7
Flying Doctors	Sneachda	1991	V	V,7
Pigrims Groove	Sputan Dearg	1981	V	V,7
Lucifer Route	Sputan Dearg	1983	V	VI,7
Grey Slab	Sputan Dearg	1984	V	VI,7
Snake Ridge	Sputan Dearg	1985	IV/V	V,5
Black Tower Summer	Sputan Dearg	1988	V	V,7
Amethyst Wall	Sputan Dearg	1988	V	VI,7
Ferlas Mor	Sputan Dearg	1990	V	VI,8
Plumblime	Sputan Dearg	1991	V	V,7
Spirit Voices	Stac an Fharaidh	1991	V	
Wigwag	Stag Rocks	1978	V	
Relay Climb	Stag Rocks	1981	IV/V	
Longbow Direct	Stag Rocks	1986	IV/V	V,7
Flock of Chickens	Stag Rocks	1986	V	VI,7
Amph Gully, RH Finish	Stag Rocks	1986	V	
The Windpiper	Stag Rocks	1988	V/VI	VII,7
Monarch of the Glen	Stag Rocks	1991	V	

CENTRAL HIGHLANDS

Kings Ransom	Aonach Beag	1987	V	VI,6
Blackout	Aonach Beag	1987	IV/V	IV,5
Royal Pardon	Aonach Beag	1987	V	VI,6
Aonach Wall	Aonach Beag	1988	V	V,6
Salmonella	Aonach Beag	1991	V	VII,8
Hurricane Arete	Aonach Mor	1988	V	V,7
Stirling Bridge	Aonach Mor	1989	V	
Riptide	Aonach Mor	1990	IV/V	
Tinsel Town	Aonach Mor	1991	IV/V	
Ice Maiden	Ben Alder	1987	V	V,5
Witchwhite	Ben Alder	1988	IV	V,5
Nightshift	Ben Alder	1988	V	V,4
Zybernaght	Ben Nevis		V	
Smith's Route Direct	Ben Nevis		V	V,5
Zero Gully	Ben Nevis	1957	V	V,4
Tower Face of Comb	Ben Nevis	1959	V	
Smith-Holt Route	Ben Nevis	1959	V	V,5
Minus 2 Gully	Ben Nevis	1959	V	V,5
Point Five Gully	Ben Nevis	1959	V	V,5
Smith's Route Original	Ben Nevis	1960	V	V,5
Orion Direct	Ben Nevis	1960	V	V/VI,5
Vanishing Gully	Ben Nevis	1961	IV/V	V,5
The Curtain	Ben Nevis	1965	IV/V	IV,4
Astronomy	Ben Nevis	1970	V	VI,5
Hadrian's Wall Direct	Ben Nevis	1971	IV	V,5
Minus 2 LH Route	Ben Nevis	1972	VI	VI,6

Route I	Ben Nevis	1972	V/VI	
Minus 2 RH Route	Ben Nevis	1972	VI	V,5
Slav Route	Ben Nevis	1974	V	VI,5
Vade Mecum	Ben Nevis	1974	IV/V	
Minus One Gully	Ben Nevis	1974	V/VI	VI,5
Left Edge, Observatory	Ben Nevis	1974	V	V,5
Indicator Wall	Ben Nevis	1975	IV	V,5
Left Edge, Gardylloo	Ben Nevis	1976	VI	
Astral Highway	Ben Nevis	1976	V	VI,5
Sickle	Ben Nevis	1977	V	V,5
Minus One Buttress	Ben Nevis	1977	VI	
Rubicon Wall	Ben Nevis	1977	V	V/VI,5
Lobby Dancer	Ben Nevis	1977	V	VI,6
Route II Direct	Ben Nevis	1978	VI	VI,5
Minus 2 Buttress	Ben Nevis	1978	V	
Pointless	Ben Nevis	1978	V	VII,6
Psychedelic Wall	Ben Nevis	1978	V	VI,5
Caledonia	Ben Nevis	1978	V	V,5
Albatross	Ben Nevis	1978	V	VII,6
Route II	Ben Nevis	1978	V/VI	V,5
Galactic Hitchhiker	Ben Nevis	1978	VI	VI,5
Great Glen	Ben Nevis	1978	VI	
Gemini	Ben Nevis	1979	V	VI,5
Minus 2 Central Route	Ben Nevis	1979	VI	VI,7
Last Day in Purgatory	Ben Nevis	1979	V	
Shield Direct	Ben Nevis	1979	VI	VII,6
The Shadow	Ben Nevis	1979	VI	VII,6
Alchemist	Ben Nevis	1979	V	
Gemini, Direct Start	Ben Nevis	1979	V	V,5
Kellett's Route	Ben Nevis	1980	VI	VI,6
Interstellar Overdrive	Ben Nevis	1980	V	VI,5
Journey into Space	Ben Nevis	1980	V	VI,5
Augean Alley	Ben Nevis	1981	V	V,5
Mega Route X	Ben Nevis	1982	V	V,6
Stormy Petrel	Ben Nevis	1982	V	
Venus	Ben Nevis	1982	IV/V	V,5
Shot in the Light	Ben Nevis	1983	IV/V	
Urban Spaceman	Ben Nevis	1983	V	
Fascist Groove	Ben Nevis	1983	V	VII,6
Pointblank	Ben Nevis	1984	VI	
Waterfall Gully True Finish	Ben Nevis	1984	V	VI,6
Diana	Ben Nevis	1985	V/VI	V,5
Mercury	Ben Nevis	1985	V	
Compression Crack	Ben Nevis	1985	IV/V	V,5
Clefhanger	Ben Nevis	1985	V	
Sod's Law	Ben Nevis	1985	V/VI	V,5
PM	Ben Nevis	1986	V	
Running Hot	Ben Nevis	1986	IV/V	
Riders on the Storm	Ben Nevis	1986	V	VI,5
Ring the Alarm	Ben Nevis	1986	V	
Black Hole	Ben Nevis	1986	V	VI,6
Bydand	Ben Nevis	1986	IV/V	
Centurion/Route 2	Ben Nevis	1986	VI	
Astronomy, Direct Finish	Ben Nevis	1986	V	VI,5
Matchpoint	Ben Nevis	1986	V	VII,6
Eastern Block	Ben Nevis	1987	VI	
Casino Royale	Ben Nevis	1988	V	
Cutlass	Ben Nevis	1989	V/VI	
Satanic Verses	Ben Nevis	1989	IV/V	IV,5
Kellets North Wall Route	Ben Nevis	1991	VI	
North West Face Route	Ben Nevis	1991	V	

Venom	Glencoe		IV/V	
Crowberry Ridge Direct	Glencoe	1938	V	
Raven's Gully	Glencoe	1953	V	V,6
Amphitheatre Scoop Direct	Glencoe	1966	IV/V	IV,5
Fingals Chimney	Glencoe	1969	V	
Mome Rath Route	Glencoe	1969	IV/V	V,5
The Wabe	Glencoe	1969	IV/V	V,5
Ravens Gully Direct	Glencoe	1970	V	
Midnight Cowboy	Glencoe	1973	V	
Blue Riband	Glencoe	1979	V	V,5
Elliot's Downfall	Glencoe	1979	V	VII,6
Mome Rath Direct	Glencoe	1980	IV/V	
Rainmaker	Glencoe	1980	V	
Tilt	Glencoe	1980	V	VI,7
Consolation	Glencoe	1980	V	
Central Buttress	Glencoe	1981	VI	
Dalness Chasm LH Branch	Glencoe	1982	V	VI,5
East Face Route	Glencoe	1982	V	V,6
Art of Zen	Glencoe	1982	VI	
Darwins Dihedral	Glencoe	1983	V	
Central Grooves	Glencoe	1983	VI	VI,8
Diamond Buttress Winter Route	Glencoe	1983	V	
Dalness Chasm Central Branch	Glencoe	1983	V	
Mr Softee	Glencoe	1983	V	V,6
Raven's Edge	Glencoe	1984	V	
Southern Death Cult	Glencoe	1984	V	
Snowstormer	Glencoe	1984	V	
Jabberwock	Glencoe	1984	IV/V	V,5
Guerdon Grooves	Glencoe	1984	VI	VIII,7
June Crack	Glencoe	1984	V	
Great Gully Buttress Direct	Glencoe	1984	IV/V	
Unicorn	Glencoe	1985	VI	VII,7
People's Friend	Glencoe	1985	V/VI	VI,7
May Crack	Glencoe	1985	IV/V	
Silent Running	Glencoe	1986	IV/V	
Lady Jane Smear	Glencoe	1986	IV/V	IV,5
Newsholme's Groove	Glencoe	1986	V	
Summit Buttress Variation	Glencoe	1986	V	
The Veil	Glencoe	1986	IV/V	
King Cobra	Glencoe	1986	V	
Diamond Combination	Glencoe	1986	V	
Neanderthal	Glencoe	1987	VI	VII,8
Barracuda	Glencoe	1988	V	V,7
Against All Odds	Glencoe	1988	VI	VII,8
Savage	Glencoe	1988	V	VI,8
Intruder	Glencoe	1988	V	V,7
Fall Out	Glencoe	1988	VI	VI,7
Para Andy	Glencoe	1988	V	VI,7
White Rhino	Glencoe	1988	IV/V	
Moonlighting	Glencoe	1988	V	V,7
Chimney and Face Route	Glencoe	1988	V	
Directosaur	Glencoe	1989	V	
Long Crack	Glencoe	1989	V	
Double Entendre	Glencoe	1989	IV	
Isis	Glencoe	1991	V	VI,8
Inclination	Glencoe	1991	VI	VI,8
North Post Direct	Meaghaidh		V	VI,5
Smith's Gully	Meaghaidh	1959	V	V,5
North Post	Meaghaidh	1960	V	V,5
Last Post	Meaghaidh	1962	IV/V	V,5
Centre Post Direct	Meaghaidh	1964	IV/V	V,5

Pumpkin	Meaghaidh	1968	IV/V	V,4
The Wand	Meaghaidh	1969	IV/V	IV,5
Vanishing Ledge	Meaghaidh	1976	IV/V	
1959 Face Route Direct	Meaghaidh	1981	IV/V	V,5
The Midge	Meaghaidh	1983	V	VI,6
Fly Direct	Meaghaidh	1983	V	VII,6
Pinnacle Buttress Direct	Meaghaidh	1984	V	
Deadline	Meaghaidh	1991	V	
Postman Pat	Meaghaidh	1991	VI	

NORTHERN HIGHLANDS

The Moonstone	Alligin	1986	IV/V	IV,5
Ice Gem	Alligin	1986	IV/V	IV,5
Crown Jewel	Alligin	1986	V	IV,5
Ravenshead	An Coileachan	1981	V	
Shadow and Light	An Coileachan	1986	V	
Venus Fly Trap	An Coileachan	1986	V	
Bottomless Gully	An Teallach	1988	IV/V	
Lord Berkley's Seat	An Teallach	1991	V	V,6
The Waterfall	Beinn a'Mhuinidh	1984	V	V,5
Mad Hatter's Gully	Beinn Bhan	1976	IV/V	V,5
Silver Tear	Beinn Bhan	1977	V	
Meanderthal	Beinn Bhan	1979	V	V,5
Y Gully	Beinn Bhan	1980	V	
Die Reisenwand	Beinn Bhan	1980	V	VII,6
The Cooler	Beinn Bhan	1983	V	
Gully of the Gods	Beinn Bhan	1983	V	V,6
Great Overhanging Gully	Beinn Bhan	1984	V/VI	VI,7
Acid Queen	Beinn Bhan	1984	IV/V	
Unnamed	Beinn Bhan	1986	V	
In X.S.	Beinn Bhan	1986	V	
Flesheater	Beinn Bhan	1989	V	IV,5
Die Reisenwand, Dir Finish	Beinn Bhan	1991	V	VII,6
Ice Bomb	Beinn Dearg	1988	V/VI	VI,7
Jewel in the Crown	Beinn Dearg	1991	V	VI,5
Spring Maiden	Beinn Dearg Mhor	1987	V	
Hamilton's Route	Beinn Eighe	1971	V	VI,6
Central Buttress	Beinn Eighe	1978	V	VI,7
West Buttress Directissima	Beinn Eighe	1986	VI	VII,8
Lang's Variation	Beinn Eighe	1986	V	
East Buttress Direct	Beinn Eighe	1986	V	V,7
Achilles	Beinn Eighe	1986	IV/V	
Fuselage Wall Direct	Beinn Eighe	1987	V	V,7
West Central Gully	Beinn Eighe	1987	VI	VII,8
Pelican	Beinn Eighe	1987	V	VI,7
Upper Girdle	Beinn Eighe	1987	V/VI	VI,7
Gnome Wall	Beinn Eighe	1988	V	V,7
Vishnu	Beinn Eighe	1988	VI	VII,7
Kami-kaze	Beinn Eighe	1988	V/VI	VI,7
Patey's Direct Route	Beinn Eighe	1988	V	V,7
East Wall	Beinn Eighe	1989	V	VI,7
Flight of the Condor	Beinn Eighe	1989	V/VI	VII,8
Glow Worm	Beinn Eighe	1990	IV/V	V,6
Independent Pineapple	Beinn Eighe	1991	IV/V	IV,6
Eastern Promise	Beinn Eighe	1991	V	VI,7
West Central Wall	Beinn Eighe	1991	VI	VII,8
Geddes' Gully	Chadha Dheirg	1986	V	
Captain Patience	Chadha Dheirg	1986	V	
Sellar's Buttress	Clach Geala	1972	V	
Skyscraper Buttress	Clach Geala	1978	V	
Cuilleag Corner	Clach Geala	1985	IV/V	V,5

Destitution Road	Clach Geala	1986	V	
Skyscraper RH Start	Clach Geala	1986	V	
Skyscraper Direct Start	Clach Geala	1986	V	
The Cul	Cul Mor	1991	V	V,5
The Nose	Fhìdhleir	1979	V	
Nose Direct	Fhìdlheir	1987	VI	VII,8
Sleuth	Fuar Tholl	1972	V	
Fuar Folly	Fuar Tholl	1978	V	
Tholl Gate	Fuar Tholl	1984	V/VI	VI,6
Pipped at the Post	Fuar Tholl	1986	V	V,5
Cold Hole	Fuar Tholl	1986	V	VI,6
Fuhrer	Fuar Tholl	1986	V	VI,5
Cold Sweat	Fuar Tholl	1986	V	V,6
Evasion Grooves	Fuar Tholl	1988	V	V,6
Reach for the Sky	Fuar Tholl	1989	VI	VII,6
Mainline Connection	Fuar Tholl	1989	V	
The Ayatollah	Fuar Tholl	1989	VI	VII,7
Investigator	Fuar Tholl	1991		VI,7
Tubular Bells	Fuar Tholl	1991		VI,7
Tir na Og	Ladhair Bheinn	1978	V	V,5
Poacher's Fall	Liathach	1978	V	V,5
Headless Gully	Liathach	1984	IV/V	IV,5
The Executioner	Liathach	1986	IV/V	IV,5
Snow Goose	Liathach	1986	V	V,5
The Snotter	Liathach	1986	V	VII,6
Salmon Leap	Liathach	1986	V	VI,6
The Deer-Hunter	Liathach	1986	V	V,6
Dru Couloir	Liathach	1986	IV/V	
Salvation	Liathach	1987	V/VI	VI,6
Brain Drain	Liathach	1987	IV/V	IV,5
Test Department	Liathach	1987	V	VI,7
White Tiger	Liathach	1987	V	V,5
Toll Dubh Chimney	Liathach	1987	V	
Left Chimney	Liathach	1987	IV/V	
Thumbscrew	Liathach	1989	IV/V	
The Boundary	Loch a'Mhadaidh	1983	IV/V	
Grand Illusion	Loch a'Mhadaidh	1991	V	
Ruadh Awakening	Sgorr Ruadh	1989	V	
Excitable Boy	Sgurr a'Chaorachain	1986	IV/V	
Voyager	Sgurr a'Chaorachain	1986	V	V,4
Jupiter	Sgurr a'Chaorachain	1991	IV/V	VI,6
The Resurrection	Sgurr Mor Fannich	1980	IV/V	V,4
Icicle Factory	Skye	1986	V	VI,6
Deep Gash Gully	Skye	1991	VI	VI,7

SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS

Beinn Nuis Chimney	Arran	1970	IV/V	
Once in a Lifetime	Arran	1986	V/VI	
Edge of Darkness	Beinn an Lochain	1987	V/VI	IV,6
Alchemists Wall	Beinn Chuirn	1986	IV/V	
Flakewalk	Ben Donich	1990	V	VI,8
Great Central Groove	Brack	1968	V	
North Wall Groove	Cobbler	1977	V	V,6
N'Gombi	Cobbler	1990	V	VI,8
Fold Direct	Cobbler	1990	V	V,7
Incubator	Cobbler	1990	V	V,7
Deadman's Groove	Cobbler	1990	V	VI,8
Gibber Crack	Cobbler	1991	V	
Glass Bead Game	Dorain	1987	V	V,5
Promised Land	Dorain	1987	V/VI	
Messiah	Dorain	1988	VI	

The Prophet	Dorain	1991	V	V,7
The Sting	Dorain	1991	V	V,6
Pas de Deux	Dothaidh	1986	V	
Menage a Trois	Dothaidh	1987	V	
Lucifer Rising	Dothaidh	1988	V	
Hircine Rib	Stob Gabhar	1989	V	VI,7
Terminator	Tharsuinn	1991	IV/V	
The Smirk	Udlaidh	1979	IV/V	
The Croc	Udlaidh	1979	IV/V	
Organ Pipe Wall	Udlaidh	1979	IV/V	IV,5
Cut-throat	Udlaidh	1980	IV/V	
Captain Hook	Udlaidh	1980	V	V,5
Peter Pan Direct	Udlaidh	1982	IV/V	

Notes:

1. Grading input from Rab Anderson, Chris Cartwright, Graeme Ettle, Roger Everett, Callum Fraser, Mick Fowler, Dave Heselden, Alan Kimber, John Lyall, Martin Moran, Andy Nisbet, Chris Rice, Simon Richardson, Roger Webb and Neil Wilson.
2. All known Grade V routes to end winter 1990/91 have been included. Some IV's have also been included that are known to be undergraded There are many more!
3. 'Suggested Grade' is an attempt to normalise individual grades to common level. By no means is this the final answer - further discussion and iteration is required!

OUTER ISLES

SHETLAND, Unst, The Nev Sea Cliffs (HP 665114)-Hannah's Route 25m VS 4b
S. Magee, D. Gilsenan. 10th July, 1990.

This exposed and varied route follows the obvious crack at Nev Point. Gain by abseil past a wide ledge to large blocks uncovered at low water. Traverse upwards and left to the bottom of the open corner. Climb this direct to the first bulge at 10m. Continue up on the right then the left to follow the crack as it trends left on to a large slabby ledge. Finish direct.

Mainland

J.A. Long has submitted a miniguide to Shetland Mainland including about 80 one pitch routes. The crags are The Grind of the Navir (HU 212804), Eshaness Lighthouse (HU 204784), The Warie Gill (HU 238833), Nibon (HU 299722), Pundsar (HU 365353), The Ninian Slabs (HU 374196) and The Corbie Geo (HU 357172). There is also a big route on Fair Isle.

Route descriptions will appear in Northern Highlands climbing guide, volume 2. Those wishing immediate information should contact Andy Long, Sletts Cottage, 1 South Road, Lerwick, Shetland ZE1 0RB.

ORKNEY, Hoy -The Needle

60m XS

M. Fowler, S. Sustad (alt), N. Dugan. 27th May, 1990.

The Needle is marked as such on OS maps and is the obvious stack at the southern end of the cliffs forming the westerly seaboard of Hoy. An excellent adventure.

A grassy promontory juts out from the main cliffs almost level with the top of the stack. The promontory forms the south side of a narrow chasm (geo) biting deeply into the cliffs. An abseil stake is in place at the end of this promontory. Remove clothes and abseil for 60m directly into the sea in the geo. Swim across to ledges on the far side and traverse round to opposite the stack. Swim across to ledges on the south side.

1. 15m. From the landward corner of the south side trend up leftwards and then back right above overhangs to a good ledge.
 2. 30m 5c. Climb through the band of overhangs above at the obvious place near the centre of the south face (crux) and trend rightwards to a shallow depression which leads left to another good ledge. Serious.
 3. 15m. Move round on to the seaward face and climb on to the summit.
- Jumar back up to the cliff top or swim off to the south.

Hoy, Rora Head

The following 3 routes lie on the spectacular red sandstone cliffs of Rora Head and are located on an 80m south facing wall some 70m north of the obvious high point of the headland. The rock is generally high quality sandstone although it is best to climb the routes after 2-3 days of dry weather as the rock becomes sandy and greasy after wet weather. Descent to all the routes is via a 60m abseil (peg in situ) in a small gully just south of the wall. Pegs are not required on these routes.

-Roaring Forties

80m E3

D. Turnbull, A. Donson. 20th May, 1991.

An excellent line based on the obvious towering arete and crack system just to its left. Start beneath the seaward arete.

1. 25m 5c. Climb the right hand corner crack to a small roof, continue up the crack until stepping up left and traversing to the arete. Continue up 3m to a good belay on a ledge.
2. 20m 5c. Make some bold moves up the left edge of the arete, step left and continue up the obvious crack to a belay ledge where the crack widens.
3. 35m 5b. Climb the wide crack to a ledge beneath a corner/roof. Swing left beneath the roof and continue to the top bearing left and finishing just right of a short corner.

-Mucklehouse Wall

100m E5

D. Turnbull, A. Donson. 25th May, 1991.

The first route to be climbed up the wall right of the arete. The wall overhangs some 15m and is therefore somewhat strenuous. Start as for Roaring Forties.

1. 30m 5c. Climb pitch 1 of Roaring Forties but continue up the arete, swing out on to the overhanging face and belay just below a small roof.
2. 35m 5c. A tremendous fist jamming pitch up the slanting crack in the centre of the face. From the belay hand traverse a break right to dubious flakes at the base of the crack. Climb the crack before moving left to the arete and up to belay on a large ledge.
3. 10m 5b. Traverse an obvious foot ledge right to belay beside a small stepped groove.
4. 25m 6a. Climb direct up the dark red streak and pull up into the Fairy Grotto cave. Slither out of this leftwards via a block to a crack/layback finish.

Alternative Start

20m E5 6a

A. Donson, D. Turnbull. 23rd May, 1990.

A bold and difficult start to Mucklehouse Wall. Scramble up easy ledges on the right of the face to a ledge right in the corner; this can also be gained from the abseil. Climb the obvious flake above, then traverse the red wall left on flat holds until moving up to a semi rest in a corner under a roof. Swing out left (6b for the short) and up to belay at the base of pitch 2 of Mucklehouse Wall.

Two Little Boys

85m E6

D. Turnbull, C. Rees. 14th June, 1991.

A stunning route taking the main challenge of the wall. Very sustained and strenuous. Start as for Roaring Forties.

1. 30m 6b. Climb Roaring Forties and move up to the overhanging twin cracks right of the arete. Fix good protection and climb the cracks on finger locks past an in situ 3 hex. Continue up the overhanging wall and belay just above the roof.
2. 35m 5c. As for pitch 2 Mucklehouse Wall. First crack to arete and ledge belay.
3. 20m 6a/b. A photogenic pitch finishing up the dark red headwall. Climb up the obvious right trending line of white flakes, then finish up the headwall.

South Ronaldsay -Clett of Crura

25m HVS 5a

S. Sustad, N. Dugan, M. Fowler. May, 1990.

The landward face of this stack (which had previously been climbed via the seaward face) offers a rather green route with the difficulty concentrated into a short section. Swim to the base.

From ledges on the landward side gain and climb ledges in a depression left of centre. At 20m a short overhanging crack has to be climbed to gain a few feet of easier climbing and the top.

WESTERN ISLES, Gometra

There is a small cliff on the west side of the island. The rock is sound and there are several possibilities for a restless yachtsperson. I. Davidson, P. Stewart and P. Heneghan visited the crag in May, 1988 and climbed several lines including the prominent groove in the centre of the cliff (Celtic Storm, 30m, VS 4c).

Pabbay

There are several Pabbays - this is the one immediately north of Mingulay. In May, 1989 I. Davidson and P. Heneghan stopped at the eastern anchorage and amused themselves on the crags to the south of the bay, including a prominent groove at the east end of the cliff, Windjammer, 30m, VS 4c.

They sailed down the Atlantic side of many of the local islands and noted possibilities both on Pabbay (a huge arch) and Mingulay (Barra Head - also big). Landings and access are probably exciting whereabouts.

Erraid (NM 2919)

Erraid lies just off the westmost tip of the Ross of Mull and is accessible by foot across the sands for approx. 2 hours either side of low water. For access it is best to leave a car close to Knockvologan Farm (discreet parking) and follow a farm track down to the sands.

The climbing is on the short but superb pink granite rocks located at the east side of the mouth of the popular yacht anchor called Traigh Geal at the south west corner of the island. The area around Traigh Geal is a perfect haven for the harassed family man and offers beautiful white beaches and some fine wild camping to amuse bored weans. There is no drinking water on the island.

The routes done to date are found on two tiers of granite. The lower tier comprises a small enclosed bowl at sea level reached by a narrow rock archway. The upper tier is set just above the lower tier and is much steeper with scope for some short hard routes. All the routes are 5-10m in height, mostly on beautiful rock. Climbed by combinations of C. Jones, S. Kennedy and D. Ritchie in July, 1990 and April, 1991.

Lower Tier

Routes described left and right of the rock archway. To the left of the archway is a prominent tower which contains the following.

-Sentinel

HVS 5a

Climbs the most prominent crackline splitting the seaward face. Climb cracks to a wide ledge before stepping back left to the main crackline.

-Sentinel Direct

E1 5b

Climb steep cracks just left of the start of the above route which is joined just above the ledge.

-Daylight Robbery

4b

The next crackline to the right of Sentinel.

-Mullman

4c

The next crackline to the right, starting up a short slab.

-Weeping Corner

5a

The obvious black corner a few feet right of the archway.

-Tarzan

5a

Climbs the wall and crack starting at the right end of the undercut section a few feet right of Weeping Corner.

-Jane

4c

The next crackline to the left, leading into a recess.

-Jungle Book

H. Severe

The obvious corner a few feet right of Jane.

-The Hole

4c

Climbs the crackline on the left wall of Jungle Book.

-Spiral Arete

5a

Follows generally the arete left of The Hole, starting up a short corner and slab to the right of the arete. Spiral back up and left to finish up a short corner.

-Prince of Thieves

E1 5b

The striking crackline on the wall just right of Spiral Arete. Sustained.

-Moody's Blues

E2 5b

The next crackline to the right. Climb a thin crack to a ledge and move back right to the deep crack.

The 2 short cracks around to the right are Mod. and Diff. respectively.

Upper Tier

Routes are described from the foot of an obvious heather ledge running diagonally up right near the right edge of the cliff.

-Fagan

4c

Climbs the wall and first obvious crackline close to the foot of the ledge.

-Oliver

4c

Climbs the next crackline to the left of the above route.

A short distance left of Oliver is an obvious square alcove near the top of the cliff. Two cracklines spring down from either side of the alcove.

-Stealth

E1 5c

Climbs the right hand crackline into the alcove. Hard start.

Walls without Balls

E1 5b

Climbs the obvious deep crackline on the wall just left of the alcove slanting slightly left. Awkward start.

Further short routes at about VS/HVS have been done around to the right of the above routes.

Jura, West Loch Tarbert

This is the loch surrounded by the remarkable raised beaches. The route mentioned below is on the north side of the loch beside a shallow bay. The stack was climbed by I. Davidson, P. Heneghan and P. Stewart in May, 1988. The line was excitingly loose and is mentioned more as a warning to other owners of rose tinted binoculars (Impact Stack, 25m, Severe).

Note: I. Davidson is keen to exchange information with other sailing climbers and encourages them to send notes/ descriptions.

MULL, Creach Beinn (SMCJ 1988 p43) -Sally

55m VS 4c

C. Moody, A. Petrie. 28th August, 1991.

The corner left of Dickie Davies Eyes, which trends rightwards.

Scoor (NM 406187) -White Thing

50m Severe

D. Brookes, J. Marshall, C. Moody. 5th October, 1991.

Takes the ramp line leading up right from the base of the biggest cliff. A belay was taken after the steep corner crack. The route is well used by birds so is probably only climbable in autumn and winter. Several shorter routes have been climbed in the area.

NOTE: An Garradh. Mincing Gay Bar Loiterer (SMCJ 1991). The last 2 pitches have fallen down, leaving the loose finishing flake in place.

SKYE**SGURR A' MHADAIDH, North West Face -Deep Gash Gully**

200m IV

M. Fowler, J. Lincoln. 2nd February, 1991.

This magnificent deep cut gully gives a superb winter climb. The first real obstacle, a 15m step, was protected by climbing up inside the overhang and threading a rope through a hole in the roof. The crux was the last difficult section, the 'two easier pitches' of the summer description.

NORTH EAST COAST -Twin Stacks of Goblach

15m Diff.

G. Muhlemann, S. Richardson. 8th June, 1991.

Approached by swimming at low tide. The south ridges of both stacks were climbed.

NOTE: S. Richardson and G. Muhlemann note an interesting development in the

recording of new climbs. On 8th June, 1991, on reaching the summit of Stac Bhuidhe on the NE Coast of Skye (25m, H. Severe by the N. Ridge) on what was expected to be a first ascent, the aforementioned were confronted with the hand and arm of a (female) shop window dummy and a stoppered glass bottle containing a pencil, paper, and the information that the climb had been completed the previous year by Messrs. Grindley, Williams and A.N. Other. The second ascensionists appended a message to the effect that 'they was robbed' and descended.

NEIST -Horny Corner

20m VS 4c

C. Moody, B. Taylor. 2nd June, 1991.

The corner beneath the fog horn that faces the rocky island.

Bay 4 -Fat Slob

30m VS 4c

C. Moody, A. Petrie. 7th September, 1991.

Right of Grooveless Bodily Harm is HVS. From this an easy shelf leads up right to a corner. Climb the corner, moving right to gain the top of a pillar. Go up leftwards to the top. The corner below the start is climbable but tidal.

KILT AREA -Entrevennes

28m E1 5b

C. Moody, B. Davison. 14th April, 1991.

South of Elishader Pinnacle are 3 corner lines. This follows the left hand corner which passes the pinnacle and finishes as a crack in the wall.

NOTE: Pinnacle Chimney (SMCJ 1991) was climbed in summer, 1990 and C. Moody does not expect his ascent to be the first.

The Pioneer and Received With Thanks seem to be the same route, the crack line left of the right hand roof.

Descent Gully, South Wall -Cak

10m VS 4b

A. Smith, B. Davison. 13th April, 1991.

The crack right of the Marmalada Pinnacle has a loose block at the top.

Kilt Rock -F.B.C.

45m HVS 5a

B. Davison, C. Moody, A. Smith. 13th April, 1991.

Start up Road To Ruin, step right and climb a chimney/gully.

NORTHERN HIGHLANDS

FAR NORTH EAST COAST

LYBSTER AREA, Mid Clyth

There are 4 areas of climbing at Mid Clyth. The Lighthouse, as its name suggests, refers to the large wall and surrounding area immediately beneath Mid Clyth Lighthouse. The Shelf is just south of the lighthouse. The Stack Area is just inside a set of drying reefs normally home to a large group of grey seals. The Overhanging Wall is a small but tough section further to the south.

The rock is a compact and solid sandstone unlike the majority of Caithness cliffs. A band of brittle slate is also usually evident. Fortunately, at the stack area, this comprises the first few feet of climbing and causes no problems. At other areas it can appear in the middle of some routes.

Access: Park at the north end of a long straight about 2 miles north of Lybster. The road down to Mid Clyth Lighthouse is a further 200m north around a bend. It is best to walk along the coastline from the lighthouse.

The Stack Area

The stack is barely separate from the coastline and is easily missed. A partially tidal ledge starts just south of the stack from which most of the following climbs start. There is no simple way down to the ledge, the easiest abseil being from a belay platform 2m below the cliff top. The climbs are listed from the north.

-Giant 15m VS 4c (J. Grove, 1990)

To the right of the north wall there are two obvious and impressive lines. Giant is the layback crack, started after a scramble over the slate band on to a ledge at 5m. The route takes its name from the size of gear needed to protect it.

-Maelstrom 15m HVS 4c (R. Christie, 1991)

To the left of Giant, this is the recessed crackline curving gently to the left. Strenuous but well protected.

-Raccoon Kicker 18m HVS (G. Milne, 1990)

Follows the first corner at the south end of the north wall. This is the start of a series of corners and aretes.

-Sprockletop 15m Severe (1990)

Climbs the corner finishing behind an obvious overhanging spike. The corner is bounded by two superb unprotectable aretes, great for top roping.

-Captain Sensible 15m HVS 4c
(J. Macintosh, 1991)

Left of Sprockletop is a corner line which moves right under a small roof (as yet unclimbed). 6m left of it is this ill defined route which reaches a small corner at 6m, then trends right to reach the top by a strenuous finish.

-Criticality 12m Severe (R. Gunn, 1990)

Follows a direct line to the belay platform via a crack to a ledge, then up a corner.

-Comedy of Thirst 12m E2 5b (S. Clark, 1991)

A large and obvious feature is the Very Large Block, the top of which forms a ledge at 6m. The route starts up the corner at the north end of the block to reach its flat top. At this point the overhanging nature of the crack becomes apparent. After two strenuous moves up the crack an exit is made on to a ledge on the right.

-John's Peel 15m Severe (J. Macintosh, 1991)

The corner on the south end of the Very Large Block and into a groove to the top.

-Shallow Chimney 15m VS (R. Christie, 1990)

The obvious shallow depression on an otherwise pretty blank section. A pleasant technical climb with the crux as the mantles shelf at the top.

-Silverfish 15m E1 5b (R. Christie, 1991)

Starting 3m to the right of the layback crack, this follows a thin crack to a ledge. The difficult move from the slate on to the sandstone is marked by a white calcite fish shape. Step off a block to the left of a large niche (deep pocket for large friend). Move right after 2m and follow a groove to the top.

-Layback Crack 15m VS 4c (R. Christie, 1991)

Another large feature is the corner which forms the layback crack. A chockstone at the top eases entry into the notch.

-Diagonal 15m Severe (J.M. Ross, 1990)

Starts 3m left of the layback crack below a strenuous direct line to the top. It trends right to a ledge, then merges with the layback crack.

South Bay

The bay requires low tide. It is a sheltered corner and its right side offers probably the easiest and least strenuous route to the top via Knuckle.

-Knuckle 15m V. Diff (D. Sinclair, 1990)

Meanders up the right side of the bay, not quite in the corner.

-Small N. European Mammal 10m Severe (G. Milne, 1991)

Starting on the ledge in the centre of the bay, move right via ledges to a niche, then exit left to an easier finish.

-Adagio 12m VS 4c (J. Macintosh, 1991)

This starts at the same ledge as the previous route and overcomes the small roof to finish on the same ledge as Oxter.

-Allegro 12m VS 4c (J. McIntosh, 1991)

Follows the crackline midway between Oxter and Adagio.

-Oxter 15m Severe (G. Milne, 1990)

Climbs the cleft on the left side of the bay to a platform. Step right at the top for the easiest finish.

-Velvet Scooter 15m Severe (J.M. Ross, 1991)

Traverse round the corner from Oxter to a corner at the back of which is a deep corner capped by a roof. This route starts immediately to the right of this, trends right and finishes with an awkward move on to a broad ledge.

-Mac-attacked 15m Severe 4b (J. Perry, 1991)

The big chimney. Move right from under the roof (loose block).

-Electric Aardvark 12m VS 4c (R. Gunn, 1991)

Find the holdless awkward mantleshef and you have found the start of the route.

-Crispy Aromatic Duck 10m V. Diff (R. Christie, 1991)

The easy angled line.

Overhanging Wall

From the Stack area, walk south for 100m around a small inlet. Scramble down a corner to reach a tidal ledge. The square set, south facing wall offers several strenuous lines and round the corner over the sea there are some quite technical problems.

-Slow Boat 10m V. Diff (J.M. Ross, 1991)

Climbs the obvious large corner on the tidal ledge.

-Indeanola Blues

10m Severe 4b (R. Christie, 1991)

Start 2m right of Slowboat, climb the left corner and finish right.

-Stilt 10m H. Severe 4b (J.M. Ross, 1991)

Traverse round the corner over water. At the corner where the ledge widens to 2ft is a crack. Climb to a ledge and finish with a hand jam move to the top.

-Stone Crazy 10m VS 4c (R. Christie, 1991)

Two paces right of Stilt a corner leads to a roof. Move right and up into a square corner. Follow to the top.

-Off The Lip 10m VS 4c (R. Christie, 1991)

Where the ledge finishes, climb the crackline to a tiny roof. Finish straight up.

-Bonxie 10m V. Diff (J.M. Ross, 1991)

Traverse over water for 2m from the ledge. Climb a large crack which trends left.

OCCUMSTER

Access: Travelling north on the A9, a road 1 mile north of Lybster branches off to the right. There is a row of council houses at the beginning of this road and a sign advertising sheep skins. Follow the coast to the north to a gully with a stream (about half a mile). On the far side of the gully is the main buttress. The rock is a brittle slate/sandstone which is amply sound. There is a good abseil point on the north face of the buttress to a ledge just above high tide.

-Motor Mouse

20m HVS 5a

J. Macintosh. 1991

The leftmost crackline on the north wall of the buttress. A vertical crack leads to an awkward overhanging bulge and then on to exit via a deep notch at the top of the cliff.

-Strawberry Slider

18m Severe

J. Mackenzie-Ross. 1991.

Climb the corner between the east face of the buttress and the adjoining wall to the south. Protection is good.

-Duck Soup

18m VS

R. Christie. 1991.

The corner (arete) to the east of the adjoining wall described above. Climb the corner to the overhang, turned on the right. Follow the vertical crack which goes horizontal just before the ledge, then vertical again.

-Occumster Stack

25m MXS 4c

M. Fowler, N. Dugan, P. Allison, J. Lincoln. 26th May, 1989.

About 1 mile north of Lybster harbour is a group of sea stacks. Occumster Stack is the most northerly and most impressive, a slender finger of rock. Starting from a ledge on the south east corner, the route follows a crack on the left hand side of the seaward face. The rock is very sharp edged horizontal striations and falling is not to be recommended. Simultaneous abseil descent (watching out for sharp rock).

LATHERONWHEEL

The climbing at Latheronwheel, while not as extensive or as high as at Mid Clyth, is nevertheless of excellent quality. The area is more sheltered and picturesque than the wave washed platform of Mid Clyth. The cliff is sheltered from south westerly winds and its position allows an unrestricted view up the broad sweep of the Caithness coastline.

The sandstone is similar to Mid Clyth and there is little sign of the more fractured slate. Lichen can be annoying at the top of some routes.

Access: Turn off the A9 into Latheronwheel village and follow the main street down to the harbour where there is ample parking. Follow the coast south for 500m (a dangerous gloop halfway). The climbing area most visited has the following identifiable features: The Big Flat Wall, The Little Flat Wall, The Stack and South Corner. The easiest descent is a scramble down the stepped chimney on the north side of the stack. This brings you to the foot of the Little Flat Wall. Access is then possible to all areas except the South Corner. The South Corner is reached by a scramble down the back corner of the bay.

To the north of the Big Flat Wall are 3 parallel corners. The left is Primary Corner, the central is Eye of the Storm and the right is yet unclimbed. On the frontal wall to the north are 2 prominent cracks, the left is vegetated and the crack several metres to the right is Freaker's Crack.

-Freaker's Crack 15m HVS 5a (K. Wallace, 1991)

Starts from an obvious narrow alcove. Chimney out of it to an airy position at the base of a crack. Follow the impending crack with difficulty and increasing exposure. Access at high tide is by abseil to a large platform at the base of the vegetated crack.

-Eye of the Storm 16m H. Severe (K. Wallace, 1991)

Gain and climb the corner direct. Well Protected.

-Primary Corner 15m Severe (K. Wallace, 1991)

Climb to a ledge and finish up an obvious crack. Access is by abseil except at low tide.

-The Other Landscape 20m VS 4c (S. Clarke, 1991)

There are two central cracks on the Big Flat Wall. This climbs the left. Start at a boulder beach at low tide, climb the right edge of a cave, then traverse left into the main crack. Well protected.

-Gervasutti's Wall 15m VS 4c (S. Clarke, 1991)

Climbs the most continuous thin crack to the right of the large niche at the left end of the wall. Start at the end of the large ledge (covered at high tide). Move right around the initial bulge and follow crack and final wall direct.

-Free Fall 12m VS 4c (J. Macintosh, 1991)

Starts in the large niche at the left end of the wall. Climb the right corner in the rear of the niche and exit on to the wall above (poorly protected).

-The Beast 14m (K. Wallace, 1991)

The black offwidth corner-crack line defining the left end of the Big Flat Wall. Not affected by tide.

Little Flat Wall -Two Bit Ram 14m Severe 4a (R. Gunn, 1990)

Climb the corner at the boundary of the north end of the wall.

-Pistachio 14m Severe 4b (R. Christie, 1990)

Climbs the crack above the triangular notch in the centre of the wall.

-*Walnut* 14m V. Diff (R. Christie, 1990)

Follow the crackline 2m left of Pistachio.

-*Stoneware* 14m Severe 4a (R. Christie, 1990)

Follows the leftmost crack on the wall.

The Stack -*Stepping Out* Severe 4b (R. Gunn, 1990)

Start immediately below a right angled corner. Climb 5m and traverse left on to a large ledge. From the ledge, step right into the corner, which continues to a large block belay at the top.

-*Laphroaig* 15m HVS 5a (G. Milne, 1990)

Start as for Stepping Out but do not climb on to the ledge. Climb directly over the overhang and to the top.

-*Coaster* 10m Severe 4b (R. Christie, 1991)

Climb out of the notch directly up.

-*Shocket* 10m Severe 4a (R. Christie, 1990)

Starts on balancy moves to the right of the arete. Traverse left to the arete and follow the large flake to the top. An alternative start takes the overhanging crack directly below the arete.

-*Guillemot Crack* 10m E1 5a (R. Christie, 1990)

The large deep crack to the south of the arete. Continuously overhanging.

-*Fallout* 8m HVS 5a (R. Gunn, 1991)

The corner 5m south of Guillemot Crack.

-*Freewheeler* 8m HVS 5a (J. Grove, 1990)

Starts from the same point as Fallout but trends left.

South Bay -*Thief's Fork* 8m Severe 4a (J. Perry, 1991)

The first chimney on the right after scrambling down the back of the bay. Climb the chimney and exit left.

-*Shearwater* 8m HVS 5a (R. Christie, 1991)

Traverse out of the bay to the south. There is an obvious slightly overhanging crack. Follow this strenuously to the top.

-*Therapy* 8m V. Diff (J.M. Ross, 1991)

The first chimney on the right after scrambling down the back of the bay. Climb the chimney and exit left.

There are three stacks 1 mile north of Dunbeath. The central one (Cleit Bheag) is the most appealing although Cleit Mhor is bigger.

-*Cleit Bheag* 35m XS

M. Fowler, C. Watts, N. Dugan. 2nd October, 1989.

The fine central stack was climbed via an obvious crack line in the seaward face. Much harder than it looks.

1. 25m 5b. Easily to overhangs at 12m. A difficult section then leads to a chimney and a stance on the right.
2. 10m 4c. Move left and up the wall to the top.

-Cleit Ruadh

16m HVS 5b

C. Watts, S. Sheridan, N. Dugan, M. Fowler. 2nd October, 1989.

The northerly stack was climbed up its seaward face. A short technical overhanging wall at 6m provides the crux.

Bodach an Uird

This fine 30m stack lies 1 mile south of Berriedale. Approach by boat. It had been climbed before (abseil sling on top).

-South Route

35m HVS

M. Fowler, C. Watts. 1st October, 1989.

A good route taking a series of grooves on the south side of the stack. Start at the left hand of two obvious grooves.

1. 8m 5a. Climb easily up into the chimney in the back of the groove. Traverse the left wall to a stance on the arete.
2. 17m 5a. Climb straight above the belay for 3m and move right to climb a groove to overhangs. Traverse left to the left arete of the groove (above the stance) and climb the wall above the overhang trending right to a good stance.
3. 10m 4c. Trend leftwards on rather dubious rock to gain a shallow groove leading to the top.

-Landward Face

30m VS 5a

G. Muhlemann, S. Richardson. 1st October, 1989.

From the landing site on the seaward face of the stack, follow ledges up and round the north side to reach a good stance in the centre of the landward face, about 10m above the sea. Climb the steep wall just right of a wide crack to reach a steep crackline that leads to a horizontal break. Continue up the wall above to the summit.

-North Arete

40m E1

S. Richardson, G. Muhlemann. 1st October, 1989.

The north edge of the stack is characterised by a large hanging flake at 25m. Start directly below the flake.

1. 15m 5a. Climb a steep corner making a detour left then right to reach a good stance on the landward side of the arete.
2. 10m 5b. Follow the corner crack in the hanging pillar above to the right to an overhang, then hand traverse left in a spectacular position and make a difficult exit on to a good ledge on top of the hanging flake.
3. 15m 4a. Continue up the stepped ridge to the top.

-Bird Poo Wall

35m VS

C. Watts, S. Richardson, G. Muhlemann (VL). 1st October, 1989.

The obvious line on the seaward face.

1. 20m 4c. Climb the left facing line of corners and cracks on the right side of the wall to reach a long overhung ledge.
2. 15m 4b. From the left end of the ledge follow the vague crackline up and right to the top.

Holborn Head, Clett Rock

The stack was first climbed at Severe, A2 standard in 1969. It provides a superb challenge combining exciting currents, usually rough seas and very steep climbing. The following route is the first free ascent of the stack. Approach by boat.

-North Route

45m XS

M. Fowler, J. Lincoln, J. Cuthbert, N. Dugan. 28th August, 1988.

Start on the seaward side near the centre of the wall where a large flat ledge is obvious just above the high tide level. This ledge is about 10m long and capped by large overhangs 25m up; it is about 12m west of an obvious deep chimney-corner on the face.

1. 25m 4c. From the right end of the ledge ascend an obvious right trending crack system until it is possible to stomach traverse right above overhangs to a ledge on an arete.

2. 20m 5c. Move up leftwards into the overhangs and make difficult moves up right on to a projecting ledge. Continue up right trending cracks to a ledge and finish by grooves above and to the right.

John O' Groats, Duncansby Head

There are several spectacular stacks here. The largest one (The Great Stack of Duncansby) is the most southerly (V. Diff). Just north of this is Witches Hat Stack, a 70m high wafer of rock, and 1 mile further north are two further stacks. The Knee is a very impressive 45m high obelisk which overhangs all the way round whilst Little Knee lies just to the north and is a rather squat affair. The Knee stacks are seriously affected by very strong tidal currents.

-The Knee

45m HVS

M. Fowler, P. Allison (Alt), N. Dugan, J. Lincoln. 27th May, 1989.

A fine challenging stack. Start from ledges on the northern end of the seaward face.

1. 30m 5a. From the highest ledge a short steep wall on the right gives access to another ledge. The steep corner on the left leads in 6m to a traverse line which is followed rightwards for 6m to a steep corner. Ascend this to the ledge system girdling the stack beneath the final overhanging section. The corner which leads to the ledge system is just left of a prominent chimney with a large precariously wedged block.

2. 15m 5a. Ascend the overhangs in the centre of the face pulling right on to a projecting ledge. Continue direct to the top.

Abseil descent down the seaward face.

-Little Knee

30m Severe

M. Fowler (solo). 27th May, 1989.

Start at the south east arete of the stack. Climb the arete to the ledge at 8m. Walk rightwards along the ledge on the seaward side of the stack to its right end from where an overhanging wall with good holds leads to the summit.

-Witches Hat Stack 70m HVS

M. Fowler, N. Dugan, P. Allison, J. Lincoln. 27th May, 1989.

1. 30m 4b. Start at the seaward end. Climb up on the south side to gain the seaward arete at a ledge. A short steep wall leads to a further ledge from where 10m of shallow cracks lead to a belay just below and right of the start of a prominent shallow groove.

2. 40m 4c. Move up and left into the groove and follow this (several dubious flakes) to gain the arete again just below the summit. Follow this to the top.

Abseil descent down the line of the route.

BEN HOPE -Bell's Ridge

III

I. Stewart, N. Wilson. 30th December, 1985.

A fine route following the summer line, somewhat escapable.

CAPE WRATH AREA, A' Chailleach

25m H. Severe

S. Richardson, G. Muhlemann, M. Fowler, N. Dugan, C. Watts. 17th June, 1989.

A spectacular stack on the west coast 1 mile south of Cape Wrath. Much easier than

appearances suggest. Swim the short gap to reach the stack and tyrolean.

Start on the side facing Am Bodach and climb up right to reach the arete facing the nearest point of the mainland. Follow this to the final overhanging wall which is avoided by a short traverse right.

-Am Bodach

40m Diff.

G. Muhlemann, S. MacIntyre, S. Richardson. 27th May, 1989.

The large broad stack next to A' Chailleach can be reached at low tide (calm sea only) by stepping over a narrow sea-washed channel. The south side of the stack was climbed by following the obvious line of steep cracks and good holds, followed by scrambling to the top.

Stack Clo Kearvair

A superb 40m stack standing at the western end of the Clo Mor cliffs - easily visible from the road to the Cape Wrath lighthouse. Calm seas are unusual and currents can be strong. Approach by boat. The stack has two summits of equal height; the gap between the two sports a prominent wedged boulder. Start from a large platform at the north east end of the stack.

-Seaward Stack

55m HVS

M. Fowler, C. Watts, G. Muhlemann, S. Richardson. 18th June, 1989.

1. 35m. Move round the corner on to the seaward face and trend right, then back left to eventually gain a short right-angled corner with a crack in the back. Climb this (3m) to a ledge next to the left arete (when viewed from the seaward side). This ledge is level with the highest of the wedged boulders between the summits.

2. 20m 5a. Move up rightwards to a ledge and follow a short but awkward right slanting open groove to easier ground leading to the top.

-Landward Stack

55m HVS

M. Fowler, C. Watts, S. Richardson, G. Muhlemann. 18th June, 1989.

1. 35m. As for the Seaward Stack to the ledge next to the arete

2. 15m 5a. Traverse horizontally across the wall to reach the highest of the huge wedged boulders. Cross this to reach the landward stack and climb a right-angled corner to a corner ledge.

3. 5m 4c. Climb the corner to the top.

CLO MOR

The following is the first route on these superb cliffs. It climbs the prominent thin straight crackline facing Stack Clo Kearvair. Approach by boat.

-Clo Mor Crack

175m XS

M. Fowler, C. Watts. 18th June, 1989.

The bottom 10m of the crackline is very greasy and overhanging. Start 10m left at the foot of a subsidiary crack rising into a chimney which fades out into blank rock at 12m.

1. 35m 5b. Climb up into the bottom of the chimney and cross the wall on the right to reach a left slanting flake; hand traverse right on jams to the arete and continue right for 5m to join the crackline proper. Climb the offwidth crack (which forms the right hand side of a prominent flake at this point) for 6m to a ledge/belay.

2. 15m 5c. Follow the thin crack and flying layback flake to a ledge (1PR).

3. 40m 5b. Climb the shallow groove (PR) for 12m, the left wall for 15m and finally the groove again for 12m to reach a small ledge on the right.

4. 20m 5b The thin steep crack leads to a good ledge.

5. 35m 5b Move 3m right and climb a corner and prominent right trending off width crack.

6. 30m. Easier ground to the top.

-Clo Mor Stack

35m V. Diff/A1

S. Richardson, G. Muhlemann, C. Watts, M. Fowler. 19th June, 1989.

This is the stack about half a mile east of Stack Clo Kearvair, with a prominent 8m finger of rock forming the highest point. V. Diff climbing leads to beneath the rock finger. Lassoo the top and prussick up the rope to gain the highest point. Probably free climbable in better conditions (it was misty and damp).

SUILVEN -*Western Approach Route*

140m II

A. Matthewson, J. Maclaurin. 15th March, 1992.

A winter ascent of the 1892 Pilkington/Walker route, just right of the main NW buttress. A fine prelude to the main ridge traverse.

The start of the turfy gully/ramp line can be reached by a long traverse from the right, but on this ascent a direct entry was made by a 20m ice pitch (grade III).

STAC POLLAIDH -*November Grooves*

IV

G. Thomas, N. Wilson. March, 1989.

Follow the summer route, passing the overhang on the second pitch by an awkward chimney on the left. Above this the rib of Jack the Ripper on the right was followed for a short distance, until a traverse back left into the main groove line was possible.

-The Cheshire Cat

40m Severe

A. Fraser, J. Thomson. 11th May, 1991.

This climbs the hidden triangular central buttress of The Keep, best approached by traversing in from the left. Start at the lowest point and move into and up a chimney/crack system on the left of the buttress. On reaching the buttress edge traverse right under a prominent tunnel and finish up the crack to the right.

-Bats in the Belfry

50m VS

A. Fraser, J. Thomson. 11th May, 1991.

Situated on the overhanging upper section of No 2 Buttress, which faces directly on to the upper part of the Great Wall.

1. 35m 4c. Climb easily to the concave slab at the right end of the buttress, then traverse to the right edge of the slab. Climb a thin crack up the slab, then on to a cave belay.
2. 15m 4a. Move out of the cave, then on to and up the slab on the right.

BEINN DEARG, Glen Sqaib -*Tower of Babel*

160m IV

S. Aisthorpe, J. Lyall. 22nd February, 1989.

A superb mixed route, following the summer line, with the final two walls giving the crux pitches.

-White Settler's Gully

180m III

S. Aisthorpe, J. Lyall. 18th February, 1989.

Climb the icefall 30m right of Bonus and the gully above. The gully ends in a barrier icefall which was climbed on the right and gave the crux.

RAVEN'S CRAG, GAIKLOCH (NG 714795)

Starting at the extreme left (west facing) end of the crag with the 'dark slab', which has superb rock. Routes are by D.F. Lang (solo) in 1991.

-Flakes

20m V. Diff

Ascend the corner to the right of the slab rib of Far Post, passing obvious flakes on the right, and continue to the terrace.

-Special K

20m Severe

Start 1m right of Flakes. Climb the slab in a left to right line, crossing Leac McCac at some point.

-Jutting Blocks

20m V. Diff

At the right side of the slab are prominent jutting blocks. Climb to and pass the blocks on the left and continue to the top.

-Two Guns

50m Severe

Start under the small rounded hood overhangs at the left end of the frontal face. Climb up to and over the overhangs, then up a whaleback to a large terrace with a birch tree. Climb the left slanting groove system in the steep upper wall (behind the tree and at the base of a shallow grass groove). The lower grade would indicate that this is not the same as Groove Climb (SMCJ 1987, p456).

-Mountain Ash

60m V. Diff

Start 10m right of Entasis and directly below the topmost rowan tree on the crag. Take a direct line to the top of the crag, passing over huge blocks at 15m. Continue up a shallow depression and finish up the last few feet of Thatch (right of rowan and holly trees).

LIATHACH, Coire Dubh Mor -Brain Strain

205m V

D. Wills, M. Fowler (alt). 17th February, 1991.

Starts as for Brain Drain but continues in line with the first pitch taking ice streaks between Brain Drain and Test Department. Good pitches but an escapable line.

1. 30m. As for Brain Drain (the shallow chimney/groove 15m right of Test Department).
2. 25m. Trend slightly rightwards to belay beneath a steep ice-smeared corner.
3. 35m. Climb the corner and continue up to beneath the next steep band.
4. 30m. Take the band via an ice line just left of Brain Drain
5. 40m. Continue direct to beneath a buttress forming the final step.
6. 45m. Pass the buttress via ice grooves on its left hand side.

BEINN EIGHE, Coire Mhic Fhearchair, West Central Wall*-Earth, Wind and Fire*

90m HVS

J. Llyall, A. Nisbet. 31st August, 1991.

Start on the same ledge as Mistral and Wall of the Winds but further left, beyond Twilight Zone and a big vegetated groove.

1. 30m 5b. Pull through an initial overhang and go right until close to the vegetated groove. Return leftwards under a smooth wall until a corner leads to a ledge below the Upper Girdle.
2. 25m 4c. Go up to the Upper Girdle and break through its capping overhangs at the only convenient place. Climb a big inset slab close to its left arete.
3. 35m 4c. Break out right to a ledge. Climb a shallow chimney, then right again to a blocky fault leading to easy ground at a big isolated block.

-Maelstrom

100m V/VI (VII,7)

A. Nisbet, S. Roberts. 29th March, 1992.

A left facing corner system in the left section of West-Central Wall, passing left of a big isolated roof near the top. The corner defines the left side of 'the big inset slab' of Earth, Wind and Fire. Very sustained but protected with a large rack, particularly rocks and thin pegs. Start in West-Central Gully at the point where it steepens (grade II to here). This is approx. the height of the Girdle Traverse. Follow the Girdle right for about 10m to an icy groove. Climb this and move right along the next ledge past a break to belay. Above the break is a chimney.

Pull up left and enter the slightly overhanging chimney. Climb it and the subsequent corner for about 20m until a descent leftwards (high runner in situ) leads to small ledges and belay. Climb up left into a parallel corner, often very icy and passing left of the big roof, which is followed to the top.

Eastern Ramparts -Shang High

V (VII.7)

B. Davison, A. Nisbet. 18th February, 1992.

Steep and strenuous but a good winter line. Below the Upper Girdle the summer line was approximately followed, finishing up a corner formed by the left side of the flat topped block (the best locating feature). From the Upper Girdle the chimney line was followed direct, climbing through the slotted roof before moving left into another chimney.

Far East Wall -Karaoke Crack

45m HVS

A. Fyffe, N. Ritchie. June, 1991.

Right of the pillar taken by Groovin' High is a gully, then a shorter wall which tapers off rightwards. This route takes the obvious line just right of the gully.

1. 20m 5a. Climb the crack which gradually increases in width to a ledge at its top.
2. 25m 4b. Continue in the same line up the groove above.

Coire Ruadh-staca -Spog aig Giomach

IV (IV.6)

J. Lyall, A. Nisbet. 21st December, 1991.

The summer line was followed except for the top of pitch 1 where a deviation left into a chimney followed by a traverse right across the initial corner led to the stance. The peg and trier on pitch 2 were not needed (pegs not used on route).

DIABAIG -Diabaig Corner

20m E1 5b

R. Lupton, C. Moody. 15th April, 1991.

The corner left of Diabaig Pillar which overlooks the village. An easy shelf leads right from just above the fence into the corner.

-Dire Straights

35m E1 5b

S. Jenkins, M. Moran. 31st May, 1991.

A parallel line up the wall about 5m right of The Pillar, via a bulging crack, easy ramp, then thin cracks in the upper wall to finish at an obvious V notch 5m right of The Pillar.

Note: The first few metres are as for Dire Wall before it traversed left across The Pillar.

-The Mynch

30m HVS 5b

G. Fry, M. Moran, P. Mynch. 24th October, 1990.

The obvious overhung cleft at the far west end of the crags directly overlooking the village and carpark.

Pitches 2 and 3 of the following route have been climbed at least once before but the combination is logical.

-The Grunter

70m VS

W. Hood, L. Skuodas. 26th March, 1991.

The lower left end of the wall has a heather recess. Start right of this at a flake.

1. 20m 4c. Climb the right side of the flake. Step left, then work back right and climb a crack. Continue to belay at a birch down and left from the holly tree belay of Gamhnachan's Crack.

2. 20m 4c. Climb the crack above and a slab to belay at a dead tree stump.
3. 30m 4c. Move up past the stump, then up right to a crack which runs up just right of the edge of the wall.

FUAR THOLL, South East Cliff -Tubular Bells

40m V

D. Wills, M. Fowler (alt). 16th February, 1991.

Takes the obvious wide hidden corner just right of Cold Hole. Short but noteworthy.

1. 25m. Battle up through overhanging Damoclean icicles to belay in a cave beneath the final overhangs.
2. 15m. Break left through the icicle fringe, round the overhang and gain easy slopes leading to the cornice.

Lower Nose (984491)

The cliffs around Fuar Tholl Lower Nose give a good selection of routes for short days or wild weather. They require a low snowfall and a couple of nights frost to come into condition. The cliffs are bounded on the right by a recessed easy gully. Going left from here there are two chimney/gullies. The right hand one has an obvious chockstone and was climbed by P. Potter with M. Garret and M. Sales in February, 1990 and is grade III. The left one is Olfactory, IV (SMCJ 1986).

The Nose -Lair Wall

145m IV

M. Moran, K. O' Neale, W. O' Neale. 13th March, 1992.

Takes the left slanting fault immediately right of the Nose.

1. 40m. Climb the fault to a good stance below steeper ground.
2. 45m. Continuously interesting climbing in the same line to a large terrace.
- 3,4. 60m. Easier ground to the top.

-Newton's Law

170m III/IV

M. Moran, J. Newton, J. Yates. 11th March, 1992.

The obvious chimney/groove immediately left of the Nose.

1. 40m. A wandering line on icy ground to a ledge and stance where the rock steepens.
2. 30m. Climb iced rock and turfey grooves direct to the base of the obvious hanging chimney.
3. 20m. Climb the chimney exiting right to a recess.
4. 45m. Follow the continuing fault line to open ground.
5. 35m. Easy climbing up the final steps.

-Luck of the Irish

175m III

M. Moran, C. O' Callaghan, C. Swift. 15th March, 1992.

Takes a steep groove line 7m left of Newton's Law.

1. 45m. Climb icy ground trending slightly left, then a steeper iced chimney to a small ledge.
2. 35m. Steep moves into the main groove line, which is followed to a small terrace.
3. 25m. Continue up the groove to a steep exit; belays on terrace above.
- 4,5. 70m. Climb a little chimney, then surmount easier steps and grooves to the top.

Note: 10m left of these routes is a big turfey ramp slanting slightly left which looks grade II, and terminates the Nose. Further more broken lines may be found to the left of this.

Mainrechan Buttress -Investigator

140m V

M. Fowler, D. Wills (alt). 16th February, 1991.

A winter ascent of the summer route. A spectacular outing.

SGURR A' CHAORACHAIN, SE Cliff -Hotline

70m HVS

J. Lyall, A. Nisbet. 5th July, 1991.

Scramble up to the ledge below the steepest section of wall. Start midway (10m) between Rig Veda belay one and the right end of the ledge. Here there is a small ledge at head height.

1. 30m 5a. Climb past the ledge and up to the central of three small left facing corners to a bulging section. Go through this trending right, then straight up to a short right facing corner which leads to a grass ledge 5m below the terrace (Rig Veda passes close to the left end of this).

2. 40m 4b. Move right and climb straight up.

-Sanctuary

80m E2

P. Potter, M. Welch. 1988.

Scramble up as for Hotline and start at the right end of the ledge. The route climbs a series of flake cracks up to the right hand side of an overhanging band at 25m before breaking left and following further cracklines to the crag top.

1. 40m 5b. Follow the left to right crackline with an early hard move landing one on a good ledge. Ignore the hollow flake on the left and follow the improbable crackline on surprisingly good holds before moving boldly right through the hanging band to the crest. Traverse left to gain the continuation crack which is followed with relative ease over several breaks to a good stance.

2. 40m. Easier climbing leads to the top.

Summit Buttress

This extensive two/three tiered "hanging garden" is located immediately below the radio mast and is best approached via the landrover track from the Bealach na Ba. A steep path 200m NE of the radio mast leads down to the crags with a deer trod running underneath.

-Synergy

80m HVS

P. Potter, M. Welch. 19th June, 1989.

Starts approx. a third of the way from the right side of the crag (descent slope) and takes the right facing corner to the first terrace.

1. 25m 4c. Climb the vegetated corner using the right wall for entry before a hollow flake gives access to a good belay ledge.

2. 25m 5a. The steep corner above is followed with a bulge providing the crux before a rightward excursion allows a wide terrace to be reached.

3. 30m 5a. An obvious crackline 5m to the left leads to a final overhang which was breached on the right by exciting moves (care needed with last moves to terrace). Belay well back.

FANNICHS, An Coileachan, Garbh Coire Mhor -Sideshow

70m IV

G. Cullen, J.R. Mackenzie. 17th November, 1991.

Follow Central Gully to a point beyond where the icefalls of Sage's Corner appear on the right. A steep narrow corner on the gully's left wall provides the line. A strenuous but well protected climb needing well frozen turf on the crux.

1. 15m. Climb the corner over a bulge to a saddle stance on the right below a big spike.

2. 20m. Gain the shelf above the belay, move left for 2m and attack the thin crack on the right (crux).

3. 35m. Climb mixed ground above to a short wall. Traverse right below this to a hanging ramp. Climb the ramp to the top.

SGURR A' MHUILLIN (Strathconon), Creag Ghlas, Eastern Buttress

235m HVS

-Whoops

G. Cullen, J.R. Mackenzie. 25th August, 1991.

Takes a central line up the buttress, right of Oh Dear, aiming for a rounded buttress below the headwalls. The first and last pitches are good. As expected on this buttress, many easier variations exist but the line chosen gives reasonably continuous climbing.

1. 40m 5a. Climb the crack in the middle of the slab tongue right of the edge of the cliff.
2. 35m -. Continue up right on short slabs and ledges to a ledge below a cracked slabby wall.
3. 45m -. Climb the slabby walls, trending right to more walls.
4. 30m -. Up the wall left of the belay to a ledge and flake belay below central rounded buttress.
5. 50m -. Climb the buttress above centrally on good holds, then trend right up a wall to a thread belay on a wide ledge at a leaning flake.
6. 35m 5a. Climb the steep crack immediately above the leaning flake to a slab. Climb this on the left to the top. Scrambling leads to the summit.

EASTER ROSS OUTCROPS, Aspen Crag (NH 375558)

This crag is quite different from any of the other local crags in that it is covered in generous ineut holds, particularly in its top half. Despite its steep bulging nature, the climbing is easier than first appearances would suggest, giving spectacular, often strenuous moves with protection in the horizontal cracks that lie between bulges. The crag appears much higher than it really is but the routes are rarely longer than 20m with the total length of the crag being 50m. Though it faces north, the nature of the crag and the surround of trees ensures much remains dry even in rain with finishes that are juggy enough not to be seriously affected by water.

Access: Take the minor road down Strathconon and park on the third layby on the right west of the Loch Meig dam. The crag is almost obscured by trees and is less than a ropelength from the layby. Allow one minute.

The climbs are described from left to right. Descents are either by abseil or from either end. The routes start from a shelf which lies above a scrappy lower tier.

-Tantalus Groove

18m E2 5c

M. Hind, J.R. Mackenzie. 3rd July, 1991.

This is the steep groove bounding the left of Ictarus. Climb the groove of Ictarus to just below the flat hold, then traverse left and climb the thin crack to an inset corner on the right, finishing by a tree. A bold climb with some quite delicate moves.

-Ictarus

20m E2 5c

R. Brown, J.R. Mackenzie. 28th June, 1991.

Takes the beetling buttress bordering the left of the crag which has a steep left bounding corner groove. This is an excellent climb, well sustained up the lower groove which is both strenuous and technical. Start at the foot of the groove which overhangs the base. Pull up to a tiny pine, then gain the groove with difficulty. Steep moves lead to a prominent flat hold on the edge of the buttress, and the 'dragon's teeth' above. Step right to a flake crack in the corner, then pull over the bulge on the left. Finish somewhat arborially at a large birch above.

-Shadow Grasper

20m E1 5b

J.R. Mackenzie, M. Hind. 3rd July, 1991.

A very good and somewhat intimidating climb, technically quite hard for the grade. Climb the bulges just right of Ictarus buttress. Start below a small tree and pull over the juggy roof to it. Climb up left to a flat foothold beneath the crux bulge and gain the slab above. Climb up pleasant rock to a short corner which leads to a cramped left traverse and finish at the same tree as Ictarus.

-Meridian

20m HVS

J.R. Mackenzie, G. Cullen. 23rd June, 1991.

An excellent introduction to the crag. Start at the base of the obvious ramp at a tree belay. Climb the crack behind the tree, then traverse up the ramp which gets gradually harder with height. Pull over the bulge in a fine position to gain a huge bucket hold on the right, then up the slab to finish.

-Underneath the Arches 15m E2 5b/c

M. Hind. 8th September, 1991.

Start about 2m left of Mac the Knife and pull right over the roof just left of Mac the Knife. Continue straight up to finish.

-Mac the Knife 15m E2 6a

M. Hind, J.R. Mackenzie. 17th August, 1991.

Eight metres left of Burlesque Crack is a steep bulging wall with a small sapling high up. Start below a shallow corner and climb up to and over the bulge on the left hand side with difficulty. Climb straight up to the sapling and overcome the top bulge which is easier than it looks. A fine strenuous climb of character.

-Jumping Jack Flash 15m E2 5c

M. Hind. 8th September, 1991.

Start right of Mac the Knife below the widest part of the roof. Pull straight over with long reaches and join the parent route to finish.

-Creeping Stealth 15m HVS 5a

J.R. Mackenzie, M. Hind. 17th July, 1991.

Five metres left of Burlesque Crack, the lower bulge is cut by a shallow Quartz groove. Climb up to the bulge and pull over on the left. Climb straight up to a little overhanging corner at the right end of the top bulge and climb this on the left on hidden holds.

-Chocks Away 14m HVS 5a

M. Hind. August, 1991.

The thinly protected and mossy wall left of Burlesque Crack is climbed via a slight scoop just right of Creeping Stealth. Step right and climb the bold wall direct to the top.

-Burlesque Crack 12m Severe

G. Cullen, J.R. Mackenzie. 23rd June, 1991.

Near the right end of the crag is a vertical crack, tree belay. Climb the crack with surprising ease to the top.

-The Aspen 12m HVS 5b

J.R. Mackenzie, G. Cullen. 23rd June, 1991.

Three metres to the right of The Aspen is a thin crack leading to an overhang with a tiny aspen beneath it. Climb the crack to the overhang; move left and pull over the overhang strenuously. Climb up and right much more easily. A fine lower half.

-Mid-Flight Crisis 12m VS 5a

J.R. Mackenzie, M. Hind. 17th July, 1991.

Five metres to the right of Burlesque Crack is a wall below the overhang. Climb the wall and surmount the overhang centrally and continue much more easily up the top slab, exiting as for The Aspen. Some good strenuous moves on excellent rock.

-Rock and Roll Suicide 10m HVS 5b

M. Hind. 8th September, 1991.

Starts well right of Mid-Flight Crisis below a bulge. Climb up to and through the thin bulge and finish easily up a slab.

-Uncertain Voyage

55m E2

J.R. Mackenzie, R. Brown. 21st July, 1991.

This is a left to right girdle traverse of the crag. By far the best route here with some spectacular and exciting climbing. A climb requiring a steady team.

Start left of the left edge of the Ictarus Buttress to belay in a tree a few metres up.

1. 10m 5b. Step on to a foothold and climb the arete to flakes. Traverse right to the corner and descend awkwardly to the flat hold on Ictarus. Go up right to belay on Ictarus.
2. 10m 5b. Cross the slab, then descend the overhang of Shadow Grasper to belay by the little tree below.
3. 20m 5b. Traverse right and climb the ramp of Meridian to a cramped position below the top overhang. Swing down right and take a hanging belay by the sapling on Mac the Knife.
4. 15m 5b. Traverse horizontally right towards Burlesque Crack but descend to handholds near the crack, step in to it and climb it to the top. It is easily possible but artificial to cross the break above the overhangs to the far end.

Meig Crag (NH 366557)

This provides a handy roadside crag about 1km west of the Loch Meig dam on the road up Strathconon and can be easily combined with Glenmarksie for a spot of contrast. The crag faces due north and has vegetated areas. It has a remarkable slab of brown rock at its left end and some very good crack and wall climbs at its right hand end. The biggest of the buttresses has a prominent corner, which lies well to the right of the crag.

At the left end of the crag is a brown slab which is often wet, Gabbro Slab. This excellent compact slab resembles gabbro in texture and has a prominent thin crack in its left side.

-Nicked in Time

18m E2 5b

M. Hind. 11th September, 1991.

Climb the left hand crack to the obvious break, continue up the slab above, then trend right up a groove to finish. A fine route on excellent rock.

To the right of Gabbro Slab lies a group of tall birch trees that hides a bay with a vertical corner which is normally very wet. To its left lies a two stepped corner and to its right lies a prominent jam crack.

-Lone Pine Groove

24m HVS 5a/b

G. Cullen, J.R. Mackenzie. 28th January, 1992.

Between Gabbro Slab and the bay is a prominent corner with a solitary pine at two thirds height. Climb the corner to the pine and then up the positive crux corner to a slab and the top. A very safe and pleasant climb with good jamming at the crux.

-Correction

20m MVS 4b

R. Brown, T.W. Brown. 1st September, 1991.

Climbs the two stepped corner left of the wet corner. Scramble up to a ledge with small trees. Climb the slabby corner past a small tree to a leaning tree. Climb up a crack to an overhang and move left to another crack, a tree and the top.

-Erection Crack

20m HVS 5b

J.R. Mackenzie, G. Cullen, M. Hind. 21st August, 1991.

Climb the dusty wall to the crack, then the overhanging crack to an awkward landing on to a large flake. Climb the corner to tree belays (13m, 5b). Finish up the short corner behind the belays to a heather top; belay well back (7m).

-Limited Liability

24m E3 5c

M. Hind, J.R. Mackenzie. 23rd May, 1991.

About 15m left of Meig Corner is a steep rightwards facing corner which has a vertical crack leading to its base. Either climb the overhung corner to the left of the vertical crack and traverse delicately right to the corner, often wet and 6a (as on first ascent) or, better, the crack which is easier and better protected, to the corner. Climb the corner, making use of the rib on the left at intervals. Belay in a fine cave.

-Meig Corner

30m MVS 4b

J.R. Mackenzie, D. McCallum. 30th June, 1979.

The fine corner with a tree at its base. Climb the corner to belays below a bulge (15m). The crux above is short and leads to easy ground (4b).

-The Birch

28m E2

J.R. Mackenzie, M. Hind (both led). 23rd May, 1991.

A superb first pitch, strenuous, sustained and excellently protected. Probably better to abseil off the tree after pitch 1 as the second does not compare.

1. 18m 5c. To the right of Meig Corner is a smooth gently overhanging wall split centrally by a striking crack. Climb the crack to a grass ledge.
2. 10m 5a. Climb the nose on the left and heather to finish.

-Angst Arete

15m E3 5c

J.R. Mackenzie, R. Brown, G. Cullen. 19th January, 1992.

Right of The Birch is an overhanging arete with a horizontal gash at three quarters height. Start left of the birch tree and climb flakes left and up to a big hold. Step up right and climb to a hole, then traverse left around the arete to a hidden hold below the bulge. Pull up on positive holds to finish on a glacié. An elegantly strenuous route packing in much interest. Small wires useful for protection.

-The Balance

30m VS 4c

J.R. Mackenzie, D. McCallum. 30th June, 1979.

Climb the rust coloured corner right of Meig Corner to a tree belay (4b). On the right is an arete which is followed over a huge balanced block. Finish up the crux slab above (4c).

-Shy Brides Crack

16m E1 5b

D. McCallum, J.R. Mackenzie. 30th June, 1979.

FFA, J.R. Mackenzie. 15th September, 1991.

To the right of The Balance lies a slab with a prominent crack above. Climb the slab to the crack, then up the crack which becomes progressively more difficult. An excellent jamming crack, well protected by friends.

Dam Crag (NH 375561)

Either approach along the Strathconon road to the dam at the east end of Loch Meig or along the road that leads from Loch Achilty and branches off on a private road near Little Scatwell. Limited parking at the dam.

The crag lies below the NE corner of the dam and is approached by traversing across scrub at the same level, then descending to it. A curious roll of silky smooth schist, punctuated by bore holes and occasional protruding steels, it gives limited but exciting friction climbing. Due to its smoothness the slab dries almost immediately after rain.

-Simple Delights

15m H. Severe 4b

G. Cullen, J.R. Mackenzie. 15th May, 1991.

Easier than it looks. Start a little right of the railings and climb straight up the slab via the bore holes and steels, pulling over the overlap right of the borehole thread.

-Battle of the Bulge

18m 6b (toproped)

J.R. Mackenzie, M. Hind. 17th May, 1991.

The daunting and flawless slab left of Simple Delights which sports a curved arched overlap. Climb straight up to the overlap and pull through centrally. Cranking the tinies above gives an immediate manicure. An excellent problem, seemingly protectionless.

-The Gulf Crisis

18m HVS 5b

M. Hind, J.R. Mackenzie (both led). 17th May, 1991.

Much easier than it looks. The slanting shallow corner left of the arched overlap. Traverse left from the railings to the foot of the groove. Climb the groove and pull on to the slab above via two drill steels. More easily over the next overlap to finish. The best route here.

Glenmarksie, Top Crag -Right Unprintable 8m E2 6a

J.R. Mackenzie, R. Brown. 14th April, 1991.

This is the rightmost of the two overhanging shallow corners which lie right of Pom. Despite its meagre height it packs some punch, being sustained with an athletic start and cruel finish. A fine test piece with excellent protection.

CAIRNGORMS**LOCHNAGAR, Cnapan Nathraichean -Venom**

105m E1

I. Davidson, P. Stewart. May, 1989.

Start 10m right of Green Mamba under an overlap.

1. 20m 5a. Climb the overlap and continue up the slab to a stance.
2. 20m 5b. Continue up the cracked slab.
3. 40m 5b. Climb up to the edge above Green Mamba and follow this past an awkward overlap.
4. 25m 5b. Finish up the wet slab passing the enormous moss overhang on the right.

CREAG AN DUBH LOCH, South East Buttress -Dogleg

V

G. Eittle, A. Nisbet. 3rd February, 1992.

By the summer route except that the first pitch was passed by turf on the right and on the third pitch, the groove right of the roof ("system of steep cracks") was gained directly from the blueberry ledge by stepping down right.

Central Slabs -The Golden Thread

300m IV

S. Richardson, J. Ashbridge (VL). 16th November, 1991.

A winter line based on Minotaur. Start 5m right of the summer start beneath a vegetated groove. Climb this to a stance in a recess (45m). Continue up the steep right facing corner above and move left at its top to gain the summer line (30m). Climb groove system on left (old peg) to reach terrace. Move left beyond summer chimney (taken by winter Nemesis) to left edge of upper buttress (50m). Above is a short steep gully in the wall to the right of the final corner of Centaur. This leads to easier ground after 30m and the top section of Central Buttress.

BRAERIACH, Coire of the Chokestone Gully -Flying Fox

140m IV

S. Richardson, R. Everett (AL). 15th February, 1992.

A good mixed route up the buttress to the left of Chokestone Gully. Start at the toe of the buttress and climb a series of awkward walls and short slabs, always trending right, to reach a left trending fault. This leads steeply to a good stance and ledge (30m). Continue along the fault line to reach a smooth groove. Step left below this, and climb steeply to reach the buttress crest. Slabby moves then lead to easier ground (30m). Continue up mixed ground on the crest merging with the upper section of The Shroud at the top (75m).

Coire Bhrochain -Fang Face

200m IV/V

G. Ettle, J. Lyall. 16th January, 1992.

A fine atmospheric route which climbs directly up the crest of the buttress to the left of Vanishing Point. Start left of Direct Route and climb a right facing corner, then move right to climb a shallow trough/groove system which lies about 7m left of the Vanishing Point corner system. When this runs out, follow cracks and grooves on the left side of the crest to easy ground below the Tower. Cross the gully on the left (Pioneers Recess Route) and climb The Fang by the cracked facing ridge. Descend the far side on large flakes to a narrow col, then the easy crest to a breach in the cornice (hopefully).

BEINN A' BHUIRD, The Dividing Buttress, Gable Wall

The short undercut north facing wall dropping into The Ramp. Access via The Ramp (Diff. from below or a scramble from the plateau). The main features of the wall are a pair of steep parallel cracks and a huge detached flake on the immediate right of the righthand crack. Right of the huge flake the wall presents a small slabby face.

-Sawfly

40m VS 4b

R.J. Archbold, S.N. Smith, G.S. Strange. 17th June, 1990.

Below and right of the huge flake is another large flake (grass topped). Start down right of this lower flake where good holds permit entry through the overhang. Pull up left and climb slab up and left to gain grass ledge on top of flake. Move left and climb straight up left of a vertical caterpillar to a square cut roof. Move right and up to a belay ledge below the headwall (25m). Move left, climb crack, then go up and right via slanting crack to gain a platform and easy ground.

-Weevil's Way

35m E1 5b

R. Ross, G.S. Strange. 4th August, 1991.

Start as for Sawfly. Move up left through overhang, then climb straight up slab to small bulge. Pull over this, move delicately left, then go up to flange just left of thin vertical crack. Climb crack and continue up slightly left to finish by steep crack in headwall.

-The Gnat

40m VS 4c

R.J. Archbold, S.N. Smith, G.S. Strange. 17th June, 1990.

At the right side of the slabby face, a pod-like ramp leads up left to a grass ledge below two prominent overhanging cracks. Start at right edge of slabby wall. Go up past detached flake, then move left and climb ramp. Exit by right hand crack to platform of Sawfly. Finish by optional crack on right.

Garbh Choire, Mitre Ridge, West Wall -Blue Deacon 100m IV

R.J. Archbold, B.S. Findlay, G.S. Strange. 24th March, 1991.

The short fault right of Primate. Climb North West Gully to first obvious break on left wall (approx. 40m from foot of Slochd Wall). Go up left to fault blocked by chokestone. Pass behind this and continue straight up to finish in depression just right of final pitch of Slochd Wall.

COIRE SPUTAN DEARG -Plumblin

105m V

S. Richardson, S. Helmore (VL). 20th April, 1991.

Late in the winter Slab Chimney banks out sufficiently to allow direct access to the route independent of Amethyst Wall. Start 10m above the ledge where the first slanting pitch of Amethyst Wall ends. Climb up easily right to belay below a steep groove that descends from the base of the Plumblin crack (10m). Climb the groove and belay on the left (10m). Make a hard move on to the wall above to enter the crack. Climb this to its top exiting steeply right. An excellent pitch (35m). Continue up the crest of the buttress to the top (50m).

-Aurora

170m IV

S. Richardson, R. Everett (AL). 9th November, 1991.

There is a well defined buttress between Ardath Chimney and Anchor Gully. Start from the bottom of Ardath Chimney and move right to the base of a right facing groove. Climb this to a roof, move right using a flake, and continue up the continuation groove to its top. Step right and up to a ledge (30m). Climb the wall above, moving left after 10m, to reach another groove system which leads to easier ground (45m). Two pitches lead to the top (95m).

CREAGAN A' CHOIRE ETCHACHAN -Pioneer Buttress Direct

215m V

R. Everett, S. Richardson (AL). 10th November, 1991.

A good winter line based on the summer route. Gain the vegetated groove left of the summer rib and climb this with interest to an alcove (35m). The summer line takes the impending corner above. Instead, climb up to the base of the corner, then make a difficult move on to a slab and up to a ledge level with the top of the corner. Move up and left across a steep wall and move round the arete (crux) to belay (30m). Continue directly up the buttress for 3 pitches to the top.

GLEANN EINICH, Sgoran Dubh Mor, No.1 Buttress**-Cram's Route B**

170m III/IV

J. Lyall, Miss H. Talbot. 25th February, 1989.

Followed close to the summer line, except that the through route at the chimney was avoided by a thinly vegetated crack up the slab on the right. Abseil from The Anvil.

SHELTER STONE CRAG -Rib Tickler

170m E2

J. Lyall, A. Nisbet. 20th August, 1991.

Climbs a groove and crack system between Consolation Groove and Threadbare to finish up Threadbare (free). Start at the same place as Threadbare, gained by scrambling easily up towards the Low Ledge until an unusual flake column is seen on the left below the shallow groove of Threadbare.

1. 20m 5a. Climb past the flake to a groove curving up left. Climb clean rock to the left of this vegetated groove. Break back right on to a short rib leading on to a grassy ledge.
2. 40m 5b. Climb straight up a blocky rib just left of the main groove system to a block. Move into the groove and follow it until below a short overhanging section well seen from below.
3. 25m 5b. Above the overhang the line curves left into Consolation Groove. Quit it before Consolation Groove and follow flake cracks rightwards to overlook Threadbare. Climb a groove in the crest to overlook Threadbare.
4. 15m 5b. Go up the easy corner to a ledge, then climb a blocky overhanging groove to belay below the roofed corner of Threadbare.
5. 25m 5c. Climb the roofed corner until forced right to a sensational belay.
6. 25m 4c. Go up big flake cracks to a ledge which spirals round to the top of the tower. Arguably best to descend left and abseil into Castlegates Gully.

HELL'S LUM CRAG, The Glasnost Slab

This is the clean area of slab on the left section of crag low down and left of Sic. It gave 3 one pitch routes on fine rock which could be lengthened by a scrappy pitch below and traversing right to finish near Styx. They were, however, climbed as single pitches using an abseil descent.

-Glasnost

35m VS 5a

S.G. Elishashvili, J. Lyall, A. Nisbet. 29th July, 1991.

Start from a ledge at the bottom left of the slab. Climb straight up to join and follow a left slanting crackline.

-Perestroika

35m E1 5c

S.G. Elishashvili, J. Lyall, A. Nisbet. 29th July, 1991.

Start as for above. From the left slanting crackline, climb straight up clean red rock to follow another left slanting crackline.

-Independence

40m E1 5b

S.G. Elishashvili, J. Lyall, A. Nisbet. 29th July, 1991.

Start down and right from the ledge. Climb up to a niche. Leave it by the crackline above and follow it curving leftwards to finish.

The Grey Buttress -Chariots of Fire

45m E3

J. Lyall, A. Nisbet, J. Preston. 4th August, 1991.

A sensational route with flaky rock adding to the excitement. Although overhanging all the way, the 6a section is short and well protected. The start, immediately above the big pitch of Hell's Lum, is best reached by abseil over the 'viewing block', a large flat rock from where one can lie and peer into The Lum.

1. 15m 5b. Climb out rightwards into a shallow corner, actually a big flake. Follow this briefly, then go rightwards again into another corner. Go up this to belay below a roof.
2. 15m 6a. Make a high traverse left on to the overhanging wall, then pul up to good holds (crux). Traverse left to a spike, then go up to a line of flakes leading leftwards to a small ledge.
3. 15m 5a. Continue up the flakes, then straight up over the bulge to the viewing block.

STAG ROCKS -Shotgun

200+m IV/V (V,7)

S. Allan, A. Nisbet. 4th April, 1992.

By the summer route. A thin first pitch and a strenuous third.

-The Sand-Pyper Direct, Blue Serge Variation

E1

I. Davidson, M. Sutherland, R. Cookson. 9th July, 1989.

After following the diagonal fault right to the point where the Direct leaves, move right to gain an awkward crack and follow this up to a poor stance (15m, 5a). Continue right across the slab, then up over the overlap to an awkward corner. Follow this to a good stance (5b). Follow cracks and grooves left then right to easier ground.

COIRE AN t-SNEACHDA, Fluted Buttress -Vortex

60m III/IV

G. Eittle, J. Lyall. 10th January, 1992.

Climbs the rib between the upper faults of Crotched and Spiral gullies (left of a direct finish to Spiral Gully). A good route. Follow the shallow fault line up the rib and turn the capping roof on the left. Easy crest to the top.

Fiacail Butress -Escapologist

55m IV

G. Eittle, J. Lyall. 10th March, 1992.

Start 8m left of Houdini. Slant up left before moving right over a slab to an obvious ledge. Climb up left to gain a large block belay (30m). Jump from the top of the block to reach turf (may ice and be easier) and continue up an icy corner and easier continuation to belay on the terrace (25m). Houdini was then followed for a pitch, finishing up the fault of Jailbreak.

-Trampled Underfoot

60m III/IV

G. Eittle, J. Lyall. 13th January, 1992.

Start 8m further up Fiacail Couloir than Rampant. Climb up steeply on vegetated ledges and move left to climb a short corner. Follow a ledge right and climb the large right slanting ramp to the ridge.

-The Hurting

35m E4 6a

R. Mansfield, S. Blagbrough, N. Ritchie. Aug, 1991.

Superb sustained climbing up the middle of the impressive wall right of The Seam. Start by an obvious detached flake.

Climb a poorly protected rightward facing groove line for 10m to a ledge and runners. Continue straight up some hollow flakes; move right and then up to the roof (3.5 & 4 Friends). Climb the left hand side of the roof and traverse right (crux) to gain a hidden flake crack. Go up to the top of this, move left then diagonally right and into a niche to finish easily.

-White Dwarf

40m IV/V

G. Eittle, J. Lyall. January, 1992.

A small buttress high and left of Fiacail Butress, containing one small route. Climb the obvious left facing crack on the right side into a series of hanging thin grooves, becoming gradually harder with height.

COIRE AN LOCHAN -Vent Rib Direct

90m IV (IV, 6)

A. Nisbet, G. Ollerhead. 21st March, 1992.

A short easy pitch led to a steepening, climbed by a vertical groove just right of the crest. The crest now becomes easy (Ventilator takes a groove on its right) until a level section leads naturally into a finish up The Vent. The grade should drop with a large build-up at the start.

-Empty Space

70m IV

G. Eittle, J. Lyall, J. Finlay. 23rd March, 1992.

Climbs the steep wall between Andromeda and Andromeda Strain to a short corner and ledge (45m). Go up the wall above, passing a large block and more easily to the top (25m).

-The Crack

20m V

R. Anderson, R. Milne. 12th January, 1992.

The obvious crack centrally splitting the square cut headwall above Central Crack Route (climbed at VS in August, 1959). The logical finish to Torque of the Devil and when combined will give a standard of grade VI. (See article, p.17.)

-The Inquisition

80m V/VI (VI,8)

R. Anderson, G. Eittle, R. Milne. January, 1992.

An eliminate line of difficulty left of The Couloir. Climb an obvious smooth corner for 20m and easy ground above to land on the ledge below the conspicuous square cut wall (containing The Crack).

Cracks on the right lead to the balcony below the right arete.

Climb an overhanging crack and flake to the plateau (1 rest).

-The Executioner

70m V (VI,7)

R. Anderson, G. Ettle. January, 1992.

A serious line of weakness to the right of Crows Nest Crack. Start as for Crows Nest Crack but move out right to a ledge with a large block. Ascend the block capped groove above with care, and into a wide crack on the right. A series of ledges lead to a final wall below the plateau. Climb a left trending line. Climbed in marginal conditions; the top pitch was bare.

-War and Peace

VI (VII,8)

B. Davison, A. Nisbet. 19th February, 1992.

The initial corner was climbed to a roof at 10m. Summer knowledge of runner placements just below and at the roof helped thin moves right to gain blocks on the arete. A belay was taken below an overhanging wall above, as for summer. The wall was climbed in a short strenuous pitch (the summer route takes a crack to the left). The bulging chimney and groove were as for summer, leading to a finish up Savage Slit (or one abseil down the Slit to the cliff base).

NOTE: Creag an Dubh Loch. R. Campbell and G. Latter note the second ascent of Fer De Lance, grade confirmed. The first peg was not in situ, giving a bolder start.

WESTERN HIGHLANDS**BEINN FHADA (Kintail), Ceum na h'-Aon-choise, Coire Gorm (upper part of Choire Ghairbh) -Fisherman's Blues**

180m III/IV

S. Kennedy, M. Macleod, D. Ritchie. 17th November, 1991.

A short distance to the east of the Hunter's Pass at the head of the coire are two prominent slabby buttresses separated by a narrow gully. This route lies on the larger left hand buttress and starts a short distance up the gully at the first obvious ramp line. Climb leftwards up the ramp over some steep steps to reach the crest of the buttress. Continue up the crest by a series of grooves to reach a large detached block on the right. A further series of grooves and steps leads to easier ground just below the top.

Note: The route Tropical Buttress (SMCJ 1986, p318) is situated on the right hand buttress referred to above.

SGURR NAN CONBHAIREAN, East Buttress

The eastern flanks of Sgurr nan Conbhairean and its neighbours are clearly seen from the A 887 road driving west through Glen Moriston.

-Ceannacroc Couloir

300m II

D. Broadhead, G. Drinkwater. 23rd February, 1992.

Cross a snow bay to reach a deep narrow gully right of centre of the East Buttress. From the top of the gully, trend left to gain the crest of the buttress which leads to a fine snow arete, finishing on the summit.

GARBH BHEINN (Ardgour), South Wall -Sala, Direct Start

E2 5c

I. Taylor, A. Caren. 21st May, 1990.

Gives a more independent but harder start to Sala. Start just left of Menghini and climb up to gain the right end of a diagonal crack which is followed leftwards to join Sala.

-Cesta Kurva

30m E1 5b

I. Taylor, J. Margolas. 12th June, 1990.

Climb Menghini over the first overhang, gain good holds over the second overhang, then traverse left 2m before climbing straight up the wall above.

MALLAIG CRAGS, Sgurr Bhuidhe, South Wall*-Going for the Jugular*

25m E5 6b

R. Campbell, G. Latter. 26th April, 1991.

A strenuous well protected pitch up the left side of the severely overhanging buttress bounding the left side of the crag. Start directly beneath the widest part of the large roof. Up short black wall past ledges to deep groove. Follow slim overhung groove with difficulty to good holds on lip of roof. Make further hard moves left into the crack and follow this on improving holds to finish by moving slightly left at the top.

BEN NEVIS**Indicator Wall -Fascist Groove**

165m V

C. Rice, R. Webb. 12th February, 1983.

This route has been described as a direct start to Albatross in two publications. As the originators claim that it is independent (apart perhaps from easy ground at the top), the following description has been sent (and a diagram).

Start between Riders on the Storm and Stormy Petrel in the bay right of the buttress taken by Riders on the Storm. In the back of the bay is a groove running up to a large roof.

1. 25m. Climb the groove in a short pitch to belay at the foot of a large hanging slab below the roof.
2. 40m. Cross the extremely steep and thinly iced slab to its top right corner, pull round into a narrow iced groove followed to below an impending rock wall. Traverse right, then move up steeply into a shallow bay to belay.
3. 35m. Exit the bay by climbing the slightly overhanging but iced right wall to reach easier ground. Cross this diagonally right to reach the foot of a short corner. Climb this to reach a good stance on a pedestal.
4. 65m. Move left off the belay and move up to an icefall on the right. Climb this to reach easier ground and continue to the plateau.

Carn Dearg Buttress -Red Rag

215m E2

S. Richardson, G. Muhlemann (AL). 7th July, 1991.

A good climb, although somewhat of an eliminate, which links the line of grooves and corners between Torro and Centurion. Sustained climbing but low in the grade. Climbed and cleaned on sight.

1. 15m 5b. Climb the cracked wall left of Centurion's first pitch to a platform.
2. 15m 5a. Continue up the V-groove directly behind the belay (old blade peg at foot) to stance by jammed spike in crevasse.
3. 25m 5b. Step left and follow Torro (pitch 2) into recess, trend up and left and pull on to slab at peg runner. From here Torro continues left, instead move horizontally right into a groove (perched loose block), pull over overhang, and make a difficult step down and right into a second groove and hanging stance.
4. 20m 5a. Climb groove and exit up wall on right through overlap to belay overlooking Centurion.
5. 25m 5a. Ascend right facing corner above, step left on to slab and follow cracks to foothold stance beneath the second great overlap at its widest point.
6. 10m 5c. Surmount the overlap on the right (friend 3 1/2 runner on lip), and pull on to the arete and move up on to slab. Easily up to ledge stance (Centurion emerges here from corner on right).
7. 30m 5a. Trend up and left to reach a crackline which is followed through an overhang to belay on ledges beneath a small broken overlap.
8. 25m 4a. Continue easily up to the traverse of Route 2.
- 9,10. As for Centurion pitches 6,7.

Note: It would be possible to combine pitches 1,2 and 3,4 (rope drag) and 5,6.

North Face of Castle Ridge -*Prodigal Boys*

150m HVS

T. McAuley, C. Higgins. 8th September, 1991.

The route starts just left of Plastic Max at a long groove which loses itself in roofs and overhangs at 40m, then goes directly through the square cut roofs which form a shallow diedre and are a dominant feature of the route.

1. 35m. Climb the groove, bypassing an overhang at 25m on the right.
2. 40m. Climb the crack above to a roof. Traverse left, up a crack, then by slab and crack to overhang. Surmount this and trend right to a large grass ledge.
3. 45m. Continue by parallel cracks, another overhang, then to a stance.
4. 30m. Gain Castle Ridge.

CENTRAL HIGHLANDS**BINNEIN SHUAS -*The Perils of Perseus***

75m E1 5b

I. Taylor, A. Caren, R. Turner. 27th May, 1990.

Climbs the arete right of Blaeberry Grooves. Start at the foot of Gorgon.

1. 30m 5b. Climb diagonally rightwards to gain a crack, which is just left of the arete. Climb the crack to a ledge, then go up and left to the grassy terrace.
2. 45m -. Climb the slab above, keeping left of Blaeberry Grooves.

-Soft Shoe Shuffle, variation

30m HVS 5a

I. Taylor, R. Turner, A. Caren. 27th May, 1990.

After the normal first pitch, continue up the crack directly above. At the end of the crack, trend up and right to belay at the end of the normal third pitch.

AONACH MOR, Coire an Lochain, East Face*-Solar Wind*

110m IV

S. Richardson, R. Everett. 8th March, 1992.

Start 5m left of Jet Stream hard under Force Ten Buttress. Climb ice, step left into a well defined chimney and follow this steeply to a snowpatch (45m). Above is a steep square-cut groove. Follow this, exiting left near the top to reach the continuation gully. Follow this to belay where Force Ten Buttress merges into the final snow slopes (40m). Continue easily to the cornice. Possibly climbed before.

-Golden Promise

100m V (VI,7)

B. Davison, S. Kennedy, S. Venables. 23rd February, 1992.

A technical mixed route which climbs the steep groove line situated at the top right hand side of the large bay 50m left of Grooved Arete (between Molar Canal and The Sleever). The lower part of the groove forms as a relatively straightforward gully which is climbed as one pitch to a large block belay out on the right just below the main difficulties (45m). Climb the steep groove above, pulling over a large bulge at 20m to reach a small cul-de-sac. Exit by a groove on the left and follow easier grooves above to belay just short of the easy upper gully of Molar Canal (45m). Follow the gully to the cornice (usually small).

-Prisoners of Conscience

150m III/IV

I. Dillon, N. Mamode. 10th December, 1990.

The route lies on the left flank of Central Buttress, approx. 30m up a huge bay. Follow a shallow but well-defined left facing corner to a bulge, followed by an awkward chimney on the left. Break right up the final snow slopes. Steeper and harder than it looks.

-Muddy Waters

90m III

C. Jones, S. Kennedy, D. Ritchie. 17th November, 1990.

About 10m to the right of the descent gully (Easy Gully) is an obvious chimney high on the buttress. Climb easy ground to the foot of the chimney which is followed trending right to the cornice. The lower section banks out completely from mid season onwards.

NOTE: On Aonach Mor, Coire an Lochain, East Face, Colgate Tripper (SMCJ, 1990, p508) has been claimed by R. Webb, C. Millar in January, 1990 and was named White Shark.

AONACH BEAG, West Face, Raw Egg Buttress*-Ruadh Eigge Chimney*

60m IV

R. Everett, S. Richardson, G. Muhlemann. 28th March, 1992.

The gully which defines the right edge of the Chandelle wall steepens into a deep narrow chimney capped by a bridge formed by three giant chokestones. Start up snow, surmount a short step and move up to belay at the base of the chimney (30m). Back and foot up the chimney until it is possible to step on to the bridge. Cross the bridge and climb ice on the left wall to reach the easier continuation gully above (30m). Short but good.

GLEN NEVIS, What Wee Wall

Left of the top of The Gorge Wall is a small rectangular wall, composed of some of the roughest rock to be found in the Glen. Approach up the open gully at the left side of The Gorge Wall.

-Carpe Diem

15m E5/6 6a

G. Latter, K. Howett, G. Ettle. 5th May, 1991.

Serious fingery climbing. Start on the right side of the crag, at a tiny ramp feature. Up this to a tiny overlap, where an assortment of protection can be arranged (2 skyhooks). Make a hard move to slightly better holds and up directly to clip twin pegs in horizontal. Descend a short way and move leftwards heading for a good hold at the top of the left hand ramp line. Easier on to ledge and up cracked slab to tree belay far back.

DALLENS ROCK (NM 930485), by Portnacraoish, Appin, Argyll.

A large west facing quartzite crag which overlooks the main Oban/Ballachulish road at Lettershuna, just north of Portnacraoish. About 20 minutes drive from Ballachulish and easily seen from the road.

The crag is characterised by a large roof at two-thirds height and a steep slabby wall below the roof on the right side of the crag (The Golden Slab). All the routes were precleaned by abseil and the rock, although good, should be treated with care in places, as with most quartzite crags. The crag dries quickly and receives the full benefit of any late afternoon and evening sun. A good alternative when the higher crags in Glencoe are wet. The routes are described from left to right.

-Skywalker

30m E1 5b *

S. Kennedy, D. Ritchie. 3rd September, 1991.

A wildly exposed route in its upper reaches which climbs leftwards across the entire crag before cutting back right above the main roof. Start 3m left of a tree towards the right hand side of the crag at an obvious ramp which runs up leftwards across the lower part of the crag. Climb easily along the ramp past a huge recess (slightly loose) to a ledge on the extreme left of the main face. Climb back up diagonally rightwards on to the hanging ramp above the main roof. Continue to the far right end of the ramp moving beneath a small nose midway. A final awkward move at the end of the ramp leads to a tree belay. Abseil descent.

-The Golden Slab

30m E1 5b **

S. Kennedy, C. Grindley. 6th May, 1991.

A fine route which utilises the maximum height of the crag. Climbs the striking slabby wall mentioned above. Start just left of the tree as for Skywalker and climb the ramp for 2m before pulling out rightwards on to the slabby wall. Climb the centre of the wall in the general line of an obvious brown streak (runners in horizontal breaks). Move out right just below the roof to the right arete and a small ledge. Climb the steep wall above (2PR) for 5m (crux), then pull out left below a bulge. Continue up to reach a ledge which is followed out right before moving back up and left to a tree belay. Abseil descent.

-Power of the West

28m E1 5b *

S. Kennedy, C. Grindley. 12th May, 1991.

Climbs the vague corner line directly behind the tree near the right side of the crag and just right of The Golden Slab. Climb the steep corner for 10m to the last of three small rocky beaks which bound the right edge of the slabby wall. Pull out left at the third beak on to the right edge of the slabby wall just below the roof (joining The Golden Slab). Finish up the final crux wall of The Golden Slab.

Note: The obvious central line through the roof awaits a bold leader.

GLENCOE**BUACHAILLE ETIVE MOR, Great Gully Buttress -*Augly Crack***

50m HVS

I. Taylor, W. Hood, B. Williamson. 22nd July, 1990.

Follows a curving crack in the wall right of June Crack.

1. 10m. Climb June Crack to the grass ledge.

2. 40m 5a. From the middle of the ledge climb straight up to join Direct Route. Follow this until a leftwards traverse above an overhang gains the base of the crack, which is then followed to the top.

Creag a' Bhancair -*Up with the Sun*

100m E6/7

G. Farquhar, G. Latter. 29th July, 1991.

A direct uncompromising route, filling the obvious gap cutting through The Risk Business. Start 6m down and left from the tree on TRB, at a prominent triangular foothold.

1. 50m 6b. Go leftwards and up on cleaned edges to a thin crack. Make difficult moves through bulge rightwards to better holds, and up rightwards to the peg on TRB. Along this to just before the belay, and up shallow groove in arete past overlaps to pull on to capping wall with difficulty. Continue directly to join belay below Carnivore Direct Finish.

2. 20m 6b. Move out leftwards above belay to prominent undercling and directly with difficulty to gain mysterious old in situ thread. Step left and directly to roof and protection. Traverse diagonally leftwards to share belay at top of third pitch of TRB.

3. 30m 4b. Easily to top.

NOTE: The first pitch was top roped, then led using three ropes. The second pitch was led on sight.

BIDEAN NAM BIAN, Lost Valley Buttress*-The Primordial Soup Kitchen*

V

B. Davison, A. Nisbet. 21st February, 1992.

The first pitch was as for summer, pitch 2 was the small corner itself belaying below the left side of the monolith, pitch 3 climbed the left side of the monolith (friend 3 1/2 useful) and the wall above and pitch 4 was finishing as for Savage.

AONACH DUBH, East Face, Far Eastern Buttress*-Eastern Slant*

120m III/IV

R. Anderson, C. Anderson, R. Milne. 16th February, 1992.

This may correspond in part to the summer climb Left Edge. Start at the base of the obvious groove just left of the cleanest and highest section of the cliff. This is just right of Orient Express.

1. 40m. Climb the groove or rocks on its left to belay as for Orient Express.
2. 40m. Traverse left beneath the icefall of Orient Express. Go up around the edge, then up and leftwards across a slab to a short corner. Pull out left and belay.
3. 40m. Continue the left bias, up and across a faultline to climb a groove leading to a finish up a short chimney.

NOTE: The Tunnel Variation of Crypt Route is reported as blocked by rockfall during summer, 1991.

BEINN CHAORACH

The following routes are on the same slabs as Xenolith.

-Xenolith Right Hand Start

60m VS

W. Hood, I. Taylor. 10th June, 1990.

Right of the start of Xenolith is a slab, bounded on the left by a corner and topped with an overlap.

1. 40m 4b. Climb the slab to belay below the overlap.
2. 20m 4c. Gain the rib on the left, then trend left to join Xenolith at the triangular recess.

-Prey

120m VS

W. Hood, I. Taylor. 10th June, 1990.

Probably the best route on these slabs. Left of Eazay Edge is a large square slab with a bird-like overlap top left.

1. 20m 4c. Follow a diagonal crack in the slab to belay short of the overlap.
2. 40m 5a. Pull over the overlap at its right hand end, traverse left a few metres, then climb a short wall to gain the slab above. Climb rightwards up the slab to belay below a short wall.
- 3,4. 60m. 2 easy pitches lead to the top.

-The Glutton

120m VS

I. Taylor, W. Hood, A. Caren, J. Ferry. 10th June, 1990.

Some way left of Prey is a large cracked block. Start just right of this.

1. 20m 4c. Climb up to a scoop, turn an overhang on the left, then continue up and right to belay.
2. 40m 4b. Traverse left to an edge overlooking a corner, then climb the edge to a ledge. From the right edge of the ledge follow a slabby rib to grass ledges.
- 3,4. 2 easy pitches to the top.

SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS**BEINN DORAIN, Creag an Socach -Antichrist**

120m V

R. Everett, S. Richardson (AL). 15th March, 1992.

A good mixed route taking the groove system and wall between Promised Land and Second Coming. Start 20m left of Second Coming and climb easily up to the rake (15m).

Climb the awkward wall 5m right of the flakes of Promised Land and enter the groove. Follow this to a good stance (25m). Continue up the fault line trending left to an overhang. Climb this, then traverse right on to the lip of the overhanging wall on the right. Move up in a spectacularly exposed position to reach the terrace 5m up and right of the ice chimney of Promised Land (40m). The route continues up the impending wall above. Start on the right arete, then move left to reach a hairline crack. A series of steep moves on widely spaced tufts (not visible from below) lead to a ledge (20m). Continue up the final ice groove of Second Coming to the top (20m).

THE COBBLER, South Peak -Horus

40m E6 6b

G. Latter. 20th July, 1991.

A direct sustained line, with only marginal protection, up the wall right of Osiris. Start at the same point as Osiris. Up to the first peg runner, and cross the roof slightly rightwards with difficulty (tied off peg runner above -difficult to clip; also 1 Walnut placement just to its left) to good quartz holds and runner placement (hand placed peg in pocket out to left). Move slightly right above small overlap on small quartz holds past a further hand placed peg in pocket, to a good hanging flake and better holds. Directly past a good no hands rest to gain the base of a diagonal crack and move slightly leftwards (crux) to prominent sidepull (RP 3 in triangular niche). Then up on improving holds, pulling out rightwards to easier ground. Belay on ledge further back.

-Soul Groove

II/III

A. Fraser, J. Thomson, J. Blyth. 6th January, 1991.

Situated at the right end of the face right of Great Gully. Start at a groove about 10m right of Heart Buttress, just left of some large boulders. Climb the groove, then rightwards up a further groove to belay. Climb a short wall, then up easy ground ahead then left. Move up to and climb the rocks to the right of the final chimney of Heart Buttress.

BINNEIN AN FHIDHLEIR, Creag Coire an Creagach -Uhuru

50m VS 4b

K.V. Crocket, B. Dullea, D. Gardner. Summer 1991.

Start about 4m right of Heart of Darkness. Climb wall through small overlap to ledge and belay (20m). Climb wall right of Two-Step and belay well back (30m).

-Africanus

35m VS 4b

K.V. Crocket, B. Dullea, D. Gardner. Summer 1991.

Climbs the undercut arete left of Amin's Can-Can. Follow slabby wall to ledge and block, continue straight up to finish.

GLEN CROE, Great Slab -Rock Sculpture

30m E3 5c

The route lies at the right end of the slab. Start at a heather flake crack and climb up to gain a horizontal crack left of an overhang. Climb up on small holds (RP3 in thin diagonal crack), then trend right to gain a foot ledge. Continue more easily to a peg belay.

NOTES: Beinn an Dothaidh, North East Coire. G. Muhlemann and R. Everett noted an ascent of a direct version of Slow March in SMCJ 1991. The line was climbed by C.S. Bonington and G. Little (SMCJ 1989) and named Splitting the Difference.

Loch Sloy Crags. Stonefingers (SMCJ 1989, p300) is E1 5b.

Beinn Udlaidh. The route claimed as Antique's Roadshow was climbed by G. Allan, I. Taylor in January, 1986.

CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN SCOTLAND OUTCROPS

DALMAHOY HILL -*Midgey Gem*

16m VS 4c

J.D. Inglis, A. McCleish, J.C. Eilbeck. 22nd August, 1991.

Start at the left end of short slabs, 3m right of Resurrection, below an obvious triangular overlap at 3m. Go up the slab left, past a triangle, to overlaps at 7m. Traverse right 2m and follow leftwards slanting grooves and ribs to the top. Sustained.

-Elation

16m HVS 5a

J.D. Inglis, G.A. Jones, J.C. Eilbeck. 14th August, 1991.

Start at a left facing corner/groove about 3m right of Midgey Gem, directly below a small, loose looking block. Go up the corner/groove until moves right and back left allow a break in the overlap to be gained. Follow the groove above until forced right on to a rib and groove to the top. Poorly protected.

-Transcription

18m MVS 4b

J.C. Eilbeck, J.D. Inglis. 21st August, 1991.

Start up an easy groove 4m right of Elation and to the right of short slabs. At an obvious diamond overlap (4m), move left and up until forced right by overlaps. Follow a pleasant exposed slab/groove to the top. Harder direct finish possible.

-Cleaned Sweep

18m VS 4c

J.D. Inglis, J.C. Eilbeck. 31st August, 1991.

Follows a prominent left facing hanging corner/groove near the centre of the crag. Follow a scrappy groove 4m right of Transcription to an overlap, move up and right into the corner and follow it to the top with the choice of hard or easy exits.

DUNBAR CRAG

NE facing sandstone crag on coast just north of old harbour. Also several top-rope or solo (unprotectable) routes on left hand side of crag. Grades up to E2, courtesy of M. Smith.

-Celebration Day

12m F7b

G. Latter. 7th May, 1991.

Right and line of bolts, with crux to reach good incut fingerpocket above lip of initial roof. Lower from top bolt. Redpointed.

ROSS POINT QUARRY (Loch Lomond) -*Son of Cog*

E4 5c

I. Taylor, J. Nairn. May, 1991.

Opposite the other routes is a large boulder. Climb the right arete. No protection with the crux at the top.

MEIKLE ROSS -*Ancient Mariner*

60m E2

R. McAllister, A. Fraser. 25th August, 1991.

Excellent and varied climbing with a serious top section. It finds a way up the steep pillar to the left of Pigeon Chimney. Start about 7m left of Pigeon Chimney.

1. 20m 4b. Climb the grey wall to a prominent twin niche, which is exited on the left. Follow easy ground right to belay in a large overhung niche.

2. 40m 5b. Move right to twin overhung corners and climb the left corner to a ledge. Climb rightwards up to and follow a thin undercut slab (crux). Continue rightwards up slabs to exit at a small pinnacle.

-Manic Nirvana

25m HVS 5a

R. McAllister, A. Fraser. 21st August, 1991.

Takes the steep groove line 3m left of Dry Zawn. Climb up to an overhang, traverse right and up the right hand groove. Follow this back left and climb a short crack to a large ledge and easier ground. Recommended.

The following routes are on the same slab as Grapeshot (SMCJ 1989, p303). Access is best by abseil. Both routes by A. Caren, I. Taylor, 1st April, 1990.

-Odd Zawn

12m HVS 4c

Start below right hand end of overlap and follow thin cracks diagonally leftwards to gain left end of overlap. Belay on abseil rope.

-Evans

10m VS 4c

Left again are two thin cracks. Follow the left one.

BURROW HEAD, Fortress Wall

The following 2 routes are situated on the grey tidal wall situated within the grounds of the campsite and in the bay to the east of the Fin. Access is by abseil from spikes at the left end of the cliff to ledges at the foot.

-The Goblin's Eyes

22m HVS 5a

A. Fraser, A. McAllister. 14th August, 1991.

A fine steep route, easy in the grade. Start about 8m left of the prominent leftward trending crack in the centre of the cliff, at the lowest point of the belay platform and underneath two niches. Climb up to and through the niches, then directly above, finishing just left of the lefthand crack.

-Killer on the Loose

22m MVS 4b

R. McAllister, A. Fraser. 14th August, 1991.

Start at the foot of the leftward trending crack and climb the thin cracklines and walls above and slightly to the right.

CLINTS OF DROMORE *-Spanish Inquisition*

60m MVS

A. Fraser, A. McAllister. 25th August, 1991.

Climbs the rightward sloping black slab which is the right wing of the largest continuous buttress situated at the left end of the crag. Start at the left edge of the slab.

1. 30m 4b. Climb to an overlap at 15m. Step right over this and climb rightward up the slab to belay at the foot of a conspicuous curving right trending overlap.

2. 30m 4b. Follow the line of the overlap up and right, crossing it near the top, then go directly to a large ledge at the top of the main slab. Move right and follow an easier subsidiary slab to the top.

CRAIGBRANEOCH RIG (Glen Afton)See SMCJ 1988, p113. *Stayamrie -The Crack of Doon*

30m HVS 5a

S. Lampard, A. Fraser. 31st July, 1991.

The main and lower wall has a prominent curving crack at its left side. This route is the obvious vertical crack leading up to and joining the top of the curving crack, followed by an easier wall above. Superb.

PORTOBELLO (SMCJ 1989, 1991)**Cracked Block Cove -The Cruel Seaside**

20m E2 5c

R. McAllister. July, 1991.

Immediately in front of the cracked block is an island with a south facing, undercut tidal wall. About 5m from the right edge of the wall is a steep undercut crackline.

In the middle of the cove is a south facing wall which gives the next 2 routes.

-Parallel Lines

12m MVS 4b

A. Fraser, S. Lampard. 21st October, 1990.

The parallel cracks or shallow chimney in the middle of the face.

-Return of the Limpet

10m Severe

S. Lampard, A. Fraser. 21st October, 1990.

The buttress about 4m right of Parallel Lines, with an overhang at half height.

The U-Boat Pen

This is the narrow inlet in between Shark Fin Bay and Cracked Block Cove. It has one existing route, Riverboat Gambler. The cliff has two buttresses, the left one being tidal.

-Feeling the Pinch

22m MVS 4b

R. McAllister, A. Fraser. 17th July, 1990.

Takes the leftward trending brown streak in the top part of the right buttress, reached by a crack.

-The Water Margin

22m E1 5b

A. Fraser, R. McAllister. 3rd July, 1991.

Start 2m left of Feeling the Pinch and follow pockets up the smooth slab, then climb the upper wall via twin cracks to the right of its left edge. Excellent.

-The Ducking Stool

28m VS 4c

A. Fraser, J. Thomson. 7th August, 1991.

An obvious wide crack slopes leftwards across the left hand buttress. Follow this till it finishes, then climb directly to the top.

-The Zombie

20m Severe

A. Fraser, R. McAllister. 17th July, 1990.

Just left of the start of The Ducking Stool is a coffin shaped recess. Approach by abseil. Climb out of this, then leftwards up the wall above, crossing an overhang near the top.

Shark Fin Bay -Aqua Vitae

20m Severe

R. McAllister, A. Fraser. 31st July, 1990.

Start as for Sanity Clause but after 3m branch out left up the slabby corner.

-Mussel Bound

24m HVS 5a

A. Fraser, R. McAllister. 31st July, 1990.

The steep wall at the right side of the promontary has a prominent overhang at one third height with a triangular niche underneath (Cutty Shark goes through this niche). This route

takes the thin crackline left of the niche, over the roof, then directly above, climbing a feature shaped like a W on its side. Steep and excellent.

Main Cliff: Some easier routes done here; details not supplied.

LAGGANTULLACH HEAD (SMCJ 1989, p303), Hoodlums Bay

About 200m north of the long low island and about 200m south of the pinnacle, at the entrance to Foam Zawn, is a black overhanging wall.

-The Oyster Thief 22m HVS 5a

J. Blyth, D. McGimpsey. 20th September, 1991.

Start at the left end of the black overhanging wall and follow a curving crack up and left of the overhanging wall to finish up the right corner above.

-The Clam Catcher 22m VS 4c

J. Blyth, D. McGimpsey. 20th September, 1991.

Start 3m left of The Oyster Thief. Climb a white streaked wall and crack leading to a small tower 1m left of the finish of Oyster Thief. Pull round and over this to finish.

Foam Zawn -*Spongonema* 26m E1 5b

J. Blyth, R. McAllister, C. Stenhouse, A. Fraser.

20th September, 1991.

This is the obvious hanging chimney line to the north of and round the corner from Pillar, being conspicuous from Simons Bay. Approach by traverse from Simons Bay (M. Severe). Climb easily to the foot of the chimney and up it (technical and sustained).

Dragons Cave

This greywacke cliff is situated about 500m north of Laggantullach Head past a small burn. Its main face consists of two slabs facing south. Worthwhile for the different style of climbing from the granite crags, as well as the atmospheric setting provided by the long roaring sea cave beneath the cliff. Access by abseil.

-Heart of Darkness 35m HVS 5a

R. McAllister, A. Fraser. 8th September, 1991.

A superb and atmospheric route on the larger right hand slab. Start at the right edge of the slab and follow a line of holds up and leftwards to a conspicuous spike on the left edge of the slab. Move slightly rightwards, then directly to the top.

-Darwin's Waiting Room 35m MVS 4b

A. Fraser, R. McAllister. 8th September, 1991.

Takes the right corner of the left slab until at 16m it eases, then climbs steep cracks on the right wall of the corner.

-The Origin of Species VS 4c

A. Fraser, C. Stenhouse. 20th September, 1991.

Climbs the steep seaward face of the left slab, starting at the left end of a small platform, reached by traversing from the foot of the left slab. Move steeply up and left into a groove leading to a large ledge. Slightly left is a hidden slab which is climbed to the upper arete of the left slab and so to the top.

WEST TARBET (NX 140308)

These cliffs at the Mull of Galloway are very loose, although better next to West Tarbet Bay. The following two routes are on the first inlet south of West Tarbet Bay, about 100m from the mouth of the bay.

-Bible Class

16m V. Diff.

C. Stenhouse, A. Fraser. 1st September, 1991.

The slabby black wall at the left end of the southern wall of the inlet.

-Sundae School

10m H. Severe

A. Fraser, C. Stenhouse. 1st September, 1991.

Climbs the thin buttress 1m left (north) of the landward end of the inlet, via a steep crack with a niche at 7m.

CRAIGENCALLIE (NX 500738)

See Scottish New Routes, p187.

The main wall is situated in the upper right hand area of the crag.

-Alligator

36m V. Diff

A. Fraser, R. McAllister. 16th April, 1991.

About 50m down and left of the Main Wall is a long slabby buttress, steepest at the bottom. Start near the left edge of the buttress. Climb up to the left edge of the steeper section, then traverse right for 3m and continue directly to the top.

-Decaffinator

12m VS

R. McAllister. 16th April, 1991.

About 30m down and left of Alligator is a steep buttress with trees at the top (at the top of the wide grass slope leading into the centre of the crag). Near the righthand side of this buttress is a rightward trending slab. Climb the crack in its right outer edge.

ARRAN**GOATFELL, Rosa Slabs -Gwynserthni**

70m E2

V. Ross, I. Roberts (alt). 7th July, 1991.

The route follows a line approx. 8m left of Extraction.

1. 30m 5b. Climb up the obvious white water streak, passing a horizontal crack at 5m, to a scoop at 15m. Now up the groove just right of the streak to a ledge.

2. 40m 5b. Up the slab to a scoop about 3m right of the gully. continue up on cusps and pockets to climb the double overlaps via the obvious large pocket and then just left of the 'pebble' on the second overlap. Now up to a ledge and poor spike belay just below the terrace.

TORR NEAD AN EOIN -Accipiter

65m VS

N. Keibel, G. McArthur. 29th July, 1991.

Climbs a line between Schist Buttress and Aquila. Climb straight up an open crack, bypassing a large fragile flake on the left. Belay at the far right end of a terrace (10m). Climb a short steep wall above, then veer left and climb to the right of a shallow ramp. Straight to the top on small rounded holds, finishing left of Aquila.

NOTES: Cioch na h'Oighe, The Bastion. A free ascent of Digitalis (original line on top pitch) by G. Latter, A. Ramsay on 25th May, 1991. E2 5c,5a,5b,5c. Also an on sight attempt on the pillar midway between Klepht and Armadillo, abandoned due to poor rock in upper section (G. Latter, G. Szuca).

Cioch na h'Oighe. On Slipway, pitch 2 can be started more directly by climbing past the peg at the left end of the belay ledge (5b). This frees the original aid move.

Beinn Tarsuinn, Meadow face. Bogle, a variation. G. Szuca and A. Wren avoided the 'contortionate through route' through the slimy cave. They stomach traversed an 18 inch deep wet and sloping shelf left for 12m!

Coire na Ceum. A hold has been pulled off the crux of Ulysses, making it possibly 6a. One star was considered adequate praise.

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

BEN FESKINETH - a lost Munro.

PETER WARBURTON attempts to pin down some moving goalposts.

It will be recalled, or not, as the case may be, that Mr J.C. Donaldson's research (SMCJ XXXII, 1981) established that this hill flourished in the period 1861-1874, also that Mr Peter Hodgkiss (SMCJ XXXIII, 1987) reported an 1875 sighting by a party of distinguished military gentlemen and, thirdly, that the unromantic have glibly identified it with Ben Hearnish. I can add a year to Ben Feskineth's confirmed life span by reference to the 1876 (21st) edition of Black's Guide, where its height remains 3530 ft, the House of Black here displaying a healthy disregard for the arbitrary removal of 48 ft by the Major-General.

Recently I parted with £3.25 for a battered copy of Johnston's 10 miles to the inch map of Scotland, an impulsive decision much influenced by the clear delineation of various detached portions of Cromarty, Elgin, Banff, Nairn and Inverness-shire beguilingly scattered across the Highlands. Keith Johnston's Royal Atlas first appeared in 1859 but the Scottish sheets were regularly revised and republished separately from the Atlas. In the best (?) traditions of Edinburgh map publishing copies were not dated but, since mine shows the completed Callandar to Oban line (1880), but not the Killin branch (1886) it can safely be attributed to the early 1880s, a crucial period in the life of Ben Feskineth. Disappointingly, no spot height is given. Interestingly, the plate shows signs of alteration, the name being given as Ben heskernich, the only example on the map of the use of a lower case initial letter. The spelling has all the air of compromise. Could Keith Johnston FRSE have been a trimmer, a middle of the road man, half convinced by the advancing Ordnance Survey teams. In search of corroboration I looked further north to see what he had done about Mealfourounie, a hill that suffered most grievously at the hands of the Survey. Black's in 1876 were measuring it at 3060 ft with a small map of the immediate district to prove the point. Baddiley (1884 edition) had marked it down to 2284 ft. And Johnston - 2700 ft. Q.E.D.

A Posthumous Completion

As noted in my recent article about Munro (SMCJ,XXXIV,219), Sir Hugh died with three Tops to go; Carn an Fhithleir (Feshie), Carn Cloich-Mhuilinn and the Inaccessible Pinnacle, the first two Tops being Munros in the 1891 list. When carrying out the research for this article I formed the opinion that something should be done about this regrettable state of affairs. Light-hearted and tasteless discussions with friends explored the possibilities and eventually arrived at the goal of constructing an effigy of Munro and transporting the object to the three missing Tops. I believe it was Paul Brian who made this ingenious proposal, but he may well wish to deny this now.

Last year I found myself in the position of having to address the great gathering of baggers on November 23rd with little to say, so I resolved to set the effigy project in motion. It was late October before I managed to acquire a kilt (Hunting Fraser) and Glengarry bonnet at affordable (Oxfam) prices. The Munro tartan is a red and yellow abomination which would put the most somnolent deer to startled flight. I cannot imagine that Sir Hugh would have worn it on the hill; surely he would have preferred the douce and furtive hues of the Hunting Fraser. Once these essential items had been obtained, construction of the effigy could proceed with some confidence that it would be completed. However, I took the precaution of paying a visit to the grave at Lindertis - to seek permission, as it were. No ominous event occurred, so I thought it safe to proceed. I fashioned a mask for the head, using gauze strips loaded with plaster over a clay mould of Sir Hugh's face, and painted it with tempera-based colours. Latex hands were found in a joke shop: rival manufacturers of these curious products obligingly offered different hands. Ears were fashioned from Fimo clay. Limbs and head were made

from stuffed tubular bandages, fixed to a trunk of supernumerary pillows and reinforced with coathanger wire. A visit to the barber provided hair for wig and whiskers, and amusement for the staff. The effigy, when finally assembled in early November, weighed 30 lbs., stood about 5ft. tall and had cost about £100. If I say so myself, it bore a tolerable resemblance to Munro and was sufficiently lifelike - or deathlike - to frighten visitors to my house severely. It was too bulky to fit in a rucksack but, protected by plastic bags and folded in Z, it could be strapped to a packframe. We were ready.

On Sunday 10th November we left Forest Lodge in Glen Tilt, accompanied by my colleague Dr Helen Ross, in darkness and steady rain, at 7.30 a.m. The approach to Carn an Fhidhleir involves climbing over a shoulder of Carn a'Chlamain to the Tarf Bothy, which we reached around 10 o'clock. The weather meantime worsened considerably, the rain turning to sleet and a lively westerly beginning to blow. Dr Ross gave it up about a mile beyond the bothy and Munro and I proceeded alone. On the final ascent to the summit the winds were so strong that at times, furnished as I was with a kind of sail, I dared not move for fear of being whisked away. Much snow had fallen and this became a whirling mass of icy spindrift in the fiercest gusts. We reached the cairn about 1 o'clock. Since there was plainly to be no photo-opportunity, Sir Hugh declined to leave his cocoon, and so we immediately began to descend in the teeth of the gale. When we reached the Allt a'Chaoruinn the winds eased and it began to snow heavily. I have a dodgy left knee which acts up worse than usual in heavy winds and it was now providing me with a good deal of discomfort. We collected Dr Ross at the Bothy and left for the final leg around 3.30 p.m. Our progress was slow and painful, so much so that we were engulfed by darkness at the top of the pass. By the time we reached the edge of Glen Tilt our torches were more or less done for: the descent path could not be found and we slid down to the Tilt for the most part on our backs. Parts of poor Munro extruded through the plastic bags in protest. As I limped towards Forest Lodge I fancied I heard him murmur 'Even worse than 1908', recalling his previous attempt to climb this troublesome mountain, which had foundered in thick darkness and torrential rain.

Although I had originally planned posthumous ascents of all three Tops, this unexpected onset of winter ruled out the Inaccessible Pinnacle, so we had to be content with an ascent of Carn Cloich-Mhuilinn on the following Sunday. This was uneventful and, although the mountain was snow-bound and conditions at the cairn were far from ideal, Munro dismounted and I was able to take a number of photographs. Due to an oversight we were obliged to celebrate his posthumous completion of the Munros with coffee: I remarked that since his earliest recorded Munro had been Ben Lawers in 1879, his completion time of 112 years would take some beating. Since he was now qualified to attend his own Dinner I smuggled him into the Roxburghe Hotel on the following Saturday. He occupied a table on his own and remained modestly shrouded by a dustcloth until I exposed him to the assembled baggers at the conclusion of my speech. Despite the atrocious bad taste of this outlandish stunt, it received a generous reception from the gathering. It was perhaps fortunate that no member of the Munro family had attended....

Sir Hugh remains intact and patiently awaits his visit to the Inaccessible Pinnacle, to be celebrated in early June, this time with champagne. In the meantime I have not neglected his spiritual welfare: I offer him readings from the early Journals, usually taken from his own work, and an occasional verse of the Club Song. I trust that members will realise that although this posthumous completion served less worthy purposes at the Roxburghe Hotel, my motive in bringing it about has been to delight the Shade of Munro and to honour his memory.

Two puzzles about Sgurr nan Gillean

The small diagram of Sgurr nan Gillean shown below first appeared in SMCI, II, 214, where it served to illustrate J.H. Gibson's account of the Club's Easter Meet at Sligachan Inn and Glenbrittle House in 1892. Readers will readily recognise the 4th Pinnacle - Knight's Peak - to the right of the main peak. But how high is Knight's Peak? That is the first puzzle. Few readers, however, will recognise the shapely pinnacle jutting out from the base of the West Ridge into Lota Corrie. It has no name. It has neither been described in any book dealing with Skye nor has it been climbed upon, to my knowledge, despite its promising appearance. So what is it and why has no one noticed it? That is the other puzzle.

The height of Knight's Peak

Determination of the heights of Cuillin peaks has always been a difficult business, aggravated in recent times by the Ordnance Survey's abandonment of Imperial measure. Knight's Peak is a particularly interesting case, for several reasons. In the first place, it is plainly around 3,000 ft. high, one of our significant thresholds. The nearest thing to a full ground survey height is probably that obtained by Collie (SMCJ, II, 170), who listed it as 3,000 ft. Secondly, and adding to the difficulties of non-climbing surveyors, Knight's Peak is actually two peaks, or horns. As Naismith noted (SMCJ, II, 287) 'Knight's Pinnacle has two tops, both of them delightfully acute, the northern being rather the higher (3,000 feet)'. On a visit in 1990, Bill Brooker and I estimated the height difference as 5 or 6 feet in favour of the northerly horn. So if a height is offered for the peak we need to know whether it is being offered for the appropriate horn! In the most recent base map (1963) the height is given as 2994 ft. The 1:25000 Leisure Map of 1987 gives an airheight of 910 m. So the Ordnance Survey heights have been consistently lower than Collie's height, repeated in Club publications over many years. However, if Knight's Peak is judged to be 3,000 ft., then there should be no question about its status as a peak worthy of inclusion in Munro's Tables. It is considerably bulkier than the other pinnacles and is well separated from Sgurr nan Gilleann itself. Indeed, it is surprising that Munro did not include it in the Tables, since the Skye Section was based on Collie's heights. After all, the Basteir Tooth has always been included as a Top, despite its equally debatable height and much weaker claim to the title of mountain. As a new Top, Knight's Peak would greatly embellish the Tables, providing the Salvationist bagger with a *bête* every bit as *noire* as the Inaccessible Pinnacle, and additional employment for the guides on Skye. I suggest that the matter should be investigated by the Master of the Tables and, if there is room to doubt the O.S. heights recently offered, that Knight's Peak should be given the benefit of that doubt and included as a new Top.

'Knight's Peak' is a poor name and is not in consistent use: 'the 4th Pinnacle' is more commonly used, which is an even poorer name. Club practice has always been to adopt Gaelic names where possible. Professor Knight's first name was William, so 'Sgurr Uilleum' would be a suitable name, continuing the practice of naming overlooked Cuillin peaks after pioneers. By a happy coincidence, William was also the first name of our founder Naismith, whose claims as a Cuillin pioneer rank alongside those of the other commemorated pioneers: Collie, MacKenzie, Pilkington and Nicolson.

The peak with no name

The peak shows to good advantage from Lota Corrie or from anywhere between Sgurr Beag and Sgurr na h-Uamha. But these parts of the Cuillin are seldom visited and no doubt weather and visibility are apt to be as bad there as anywhere else. So it is perhaps not surprising that no one has commented on this prominent peak. From the main ridge, walking east from Am Basteir, it makes no great impression, being more or less lost against the chaotic south west face of Sgurr nan Gilleann. Moreover, parties proceeding to Sgurr nan Gilleann turn north at the Bealach to approach the various easy chimneys giving access to the West Ridge and are therefore apt to overlook it. I investigated the peak from Bealach a' Bhasteir in 1991. A short branch ridge leads to the summit from the nose at the lower end of the West ridge with a dip of only 10 feet or so. I found no cairn, so proceeded to build one. Although modest, I see no reason why this peak should not be recognised. If it requires a name, then 'Sgurr Coire an Lobhta' would be appropriate.

Robin N. Campbell.

Glasgow University Mountaineering Club 50th Anniversary held on the 27th April 1991, at Kingshouse Hotel, Glencoe.

PROBABLY one of the first well known mountaineers in Glasgow University was Professor Ramsay. He was one of the founder members of the Scottish Mountaineering Club and became the first president in 1889. One of his students was another famed mountaineer, William Naismith. Just over 50 years later, the university club was beginning to take root. Why did Prof. Ramsay not help constitute the University club 100 years ago? There were

probably not enough mountaineers at Glasgow University to make this worthwhile. As a member of the Alpine Club his intentions were, with other mountaineers, to form a national mountaineering club.

I suppose that the Glasgow University Mountaineering Club could not have been formed in the days of the 1890s. Things were on a different scale of knowledge, Scottish mountains were Mountains in those days! Most students probably didn't have enough money or time to explore the mountains. They left the climbing to other pioneers. Transportation systems for the Highlands were also a problem. But during the 1930s mountaineering was becoming a more popular pastime, gaining a wider circle of interest. Climbing by many new mountaineers was effected during this period. By the end of this decade, some of the university students who were interested in the outdoor life realised their potential of forming a mountaineering club; by 1941 the club was officially formed. The SMC Journal of 1942 has a short article about the formation of the GUM Club. In that article it is pointed out that with the formation of other Glasgow Clubs it seems curious to have taken so long to infiltrate the University. Yet since its formation, the membership quality has rarely dwindled. The club is still going strong today.

During 1991 there has been an air of nostalgia created by the members of the past. The 50th anniversary on the 27th April was a success. This anniversary would probably never have taken place had not Stewart Orr approached the GUM Club one night in the Partick Tavern, near the end of 1989. Stewart was a member of the club in the early 1950s, a time when the club was very popular with high membership, just like today.

Stewart Orr's enthusiasm, time and knowledge of whereabouts of past members, converted the possibility of a 50th anniversary to a firm reality. He holds a vast chunk of ex-club contacts. Our thanks go also to Lesley Falconer, her organisation and hard work made that week-end such a success. All I had to do in my nineteen years of age was, with Stewart and Lesley, make sure that all things concerning the 50th Anniversary were to run smoothly.

In 1990 Stewart gave me copies of 6 GUM Club journals from the 1950s and 1960s. Ken Crockett (former member, now of SMC) also gave me copies of the two remaining journals of the early 1970s. Something had to be done about this. We decided to compile an anthology of these 8 journals, combined with articles from present members to form a 50th anniversary publication. This was a successful project, the publication of which coincided with the 50th anniversary meet. Thanks also to Mark Sanderson who had powerful computing facilities which made production of the publication a less tedious job.

The attendance at the 50th anniversary buffet was about 130, with a large number from the 1950s era. The Kingshouse Hotel was full to overflowing; the atmosphere was animated, verging on the frenetic, as more and more old friends met. Many of the attenders had over the years met through the club and later married. Even over the last year or two there have been four successful marriages.

Scott and Mollie Johnstone (founder Members) gave us a speech about the early days. Later in the evening David Hamilton gave us a short slide show of his recent expeditions. At 11 p.m. the bonfire outside was lit by fireraiser David Ramsay, this burned well and was well attended. At the same time about a dozen of us attempted a moonlight hill ascent behind the hotel. We all reached the shieling but only two of us proceeded to the summit of Meall Bhalach.

It didn't get dark that night. As the moon set behind the shadow of Buachaille Etive Mor, the sun rose in the eastern horizon of Rannoch Moor. The setting was awesome, the scene unforgettable. We could not have asked for better weather at the Kingshouse that weekend.

A prominent event during the weekend was our effort to ascend 50 Munros around the Glencoe area. This was a fundraising event brought about by Simon Boa. The goal was achieved; 51 Munros were in fact climbed. Due to this success we later presented a sum of £250 to Glencoe Mountain Rescue Team.

The remaining £450 went to hut improvements at our club hut, Clashgour of Inveroran. The hut now has a new woodburning stove, nicknamed Olivia Neutron Bomb. Other things purchased included folding chairs, pots and pans and cutlery. Previous members of GUM will find it hard to believe that the club hut is now in a better state than ever. The overnight charge is still less than a pint.

Probably the most interesting artefact in the GUM Club is not the club hut but the original club minute book. This is a fascinating piece of club history. The original Constitution of the

club would not be recognised now. Things have changed in an unbelievable way, over this 50 years of internal club politics. These days things are taken for granted; it's as simple as jumping into a minibus to the Coe. Whereas in times gone by, a GUM Club meet was an epic as far as getting there was concerned.

As has always been the case, new members are made most welcome. The walking/climbing experience of our many members is good, and we still manage to produce one or two top grade climbers, or vice versa! We should be delighted to see former members too at our weekly meeting in the Partick Tavern, Dumbarton Road, Glasgow (Tuesdays, after 9.00 p.m.).

Let us hope that the club can celebrate its 100th anniversary in 2041. Who knows, many of us will still be around then to say:- 'We met the members who founded the club 100 years ago'. As I sit and work in Gilbert Scott's Gothic palace I think of the famous mountaineers and other people that once worked here, or were taught within its walls.

Brian Dougan.

Scottish Mountaineering Trust (A brief description by Stan Pearson, who is currently a Trustee).

The Scottish Mountaineering Trust (SMT) is a charitable body established to further and assist the appreciation of the mountains in Scotland. Although the Trust often works alongside other groups with similar interests, such as the Mountaineering Council of Scotland, the Scottish Mountaineering Club, and the National Trust for Scotland, the SMT is an independent organisation.

The most public aspect of the Trust's activities is the publication of guidebooks to the Scottish hills. Occasionally the SMT is involved as the publisher of these publications, but more often it relies on manuscripts presented to it by the Scottish Mountaineering Club. Significant cross-subsidy between publications ensures that a broad range of information is available to the hill-going population, which might otherwise be restricted if constrained by purely commercial considerations. These activities enable the Trust to support a variety of projects.

Normally the Trust tries to target areas where no public finance is available, or where its involvement would kick start further support. In the past the Trust has assisted an employee of the Mountaineering Council of Scotland, new climbing walls, the John Muir Trust, Scottish mountaineering expeditions, and the repair of bridges and parks. Currently the Trust's main emphasis is on path maintenance. One pound from the sale of each copy of 'The Munros,' 'The Corbetts,' and 'The Northwest Highlands' will go towards path maintenance and improvement. Paths at the Lairig Ghru, the Allt a' Mhuilinn and Lochnagar have benefited this year.

The SMT also administers two grant funds; the Snart Bequest, which is to assist mountain safety, and the Sang award, which offers assistance to expeditions (usually those with a Scottish element).

Further information about the SMT and its activities can be obtained from:

John Fowler
Secretary of the Scottish Mountaineering Trust
4 Doune Terrace
Edinburgh EH3 6DY.

MUNRO MATTERS

by W D Brooker (Clerk of the List)

That List.— With 165 new names the tally of New Compleaters makes a bigger increment than ever before (perhaps because it refers to the centenary year of the first publication of the Tables) but the Editor has graciously yielded space for its entry in full. Cognoscenti will not fail to notice the significance of the last four surnames of the first millenium of the List. The List has now passed the thousand mark and inevitably there is speculation about its future and whether it should be continued. The Clerk is certainly prepared to keep on clerking for the time being but is inclined to the view that numbers have reached the point where the simple listing of the name and year of finishing the first round, with or without Tops, might be adequate, without the continual updating required by the addition of further rounds, Tops and Furths. This would mean, of course, that multi-Compleations and the rest would be unrecorded and the achievements would be entirely for their own sake. This is theoretically the current position, anyway.

AMENDMENTS to the existing List are as follows:-

(107) Nisbet Andrew	1972 1991 1991	(623) Watson Maurice	1988 1991
(352) Havard John	1984 1991 1991	(634) Miller Bill	1987 1991
(354) Borland George	1984 1984 1989	(662) Barker John	1989 1991
(361) Deas Kenneth	1984 1991	(663) Barker Ruth	1989 1991
(451) Caldwell Craig	1984 1985	(729) Lackenby Bill	1989 1991
(455) Rudkin Lawrence	1986 1991 1989	(732)*Maden BEH	1990 1991
(483) Ilieve Peter	1986 1991 1991	(763) Curle Brian	1990 1991 1991
(514) Purser David	1986 1987 1991	(764) Templeton Andrew	1990 1991
(518) Wyllie John	1980 1991	(780) Sutherland Eddie	1990 1991
(592) Geddes David	1988 1989 1991	(781) Sutherland Norma	1990 1991
(602) Cushnie Irvine J	1988 1988 1991	(806) Thompson Ben	1989 1989 1991

ADDITIONS TO THE LIST received during the last year to 1st April:-

855 Patrick Alan W	1990	877 Yates Robert W	1991 1991
856 Young Ivan	1983 1989 1989	878 Eady Ms Pat	1991
857 Hughill Peter Norman		879 Parnham Ken	1991
	1990 1989	880 Rhodes David	1991 1990
858 Gilbert Iain M	1991	881 Carter Geoffrey D	1991
859 Smith Ivan McA G	1991 1991	882 Cook Irene	1991 1991
860 Sellers Peter	1991 1991 1981	883 Telfer Ken G	1991
861 Sellers Sylvia	1991 1991 1981	884 Wrightham Mark	1991
862 Anderson Tom	1991 1991	885 McGeachie Gibson	1991
863 Shepherd Iain D	1991	886 McGeachie Lynne	1991
864 Fraser Kenneth	1984	887 Ferguson George D	1991
865 Fraser Tibbie	1984	888 Hetherington John	1985
866 Kydd David A	1991	889 Simcock Adrienne	1991
867 Gott Alan	1989 1991	890 Simcock Peter	1991
868 Grant Alastair	1991 1991	891 Youngs Lynn M	1990
869 Hagan Stephen J	1991	892 Stone Jamie F	1991
870 Wainwright John	1991	893 Horner Patricia A	1991
871 Buchan Robert Gordon	1991	894 Marr Douglas	1991
872 Knowles William	1991	895 Sanford Anthony J	1991
873 Gruellich Wolf	1991	896 Moxey-Sanford Linda M	
874 Huddart J S	1991		1991
875 *Sinclair Mark	1991	897 Blackburn Derek	1991
876 Yates Elsa	1991 1991	898 Escritt Jack	1991 1991

899	Nelson John	1991	960	Dunn Stephen	1991
990	Landers Ann	1991	961	Henderson Ron A	1991
991	Landers Pedro	1991	962	Connell Bob	1991 1991
992	Dempsey Robin W	1991	963	Sowerby Howard A	1991 1991
993	Huntley Christopher M	1991	964	Cull Thomas	1991
904	Lowe Martin J B	1991	965	Cumming Ian	1991
905	Wood Richard P	1991 1991	966	Anderson J R	1991
906	Futty Mike	1991	967	Sarjeant Andy	1991
907	Thomas Alun Gwyn	1991	968	Finlay Derek	1991
908	Thomas Elizabeth M	1991	969	Harrison Jack	1991
909	Mitchell Ian R	1991	970	Alexander Robert	1991
910	Drew Eric	1991	971	Gardiner Brian	1991
911	Snowdon Derek R	1991	972	Redford William	1991
912	Chow Alan	1991	973	Entwistle James	1991
913	McNeish Cameron	1991	974	Binnie G A C	1986
914	Buchanan William F	1991	975	Munro Alan R	1991 1991
915	Elmes Marian P	1991	976	Johnson Denis E O'N	1989
916	Neave John	1991	977	Myles Dave	1986
917	Baxter John	1991	978	Stewart Stan	1986
918	Lockett Peter	1991	979	Armstrong Alan D	1991
919	Gairey Michael	1991	980	MacDonald Brian J	1991
920	Simpson Colin A	1991	981	Dargie Ian	1991
921	Keir Gordon	1991	982	Stark John A	1991
922	Clark Irene I	1991	983	Inglis John	1988
923	Jack Peter	1989	984	Craig Andrew McD	1990
924	Fyfe J Alan	1991	985	Pownall John	1991
925	Newley Peter	1991	986	Heath Elizabeth S	1990
926	**King Heather	1991	987	Watson William	1991
927	Spencer Dorothy	1991 1991	988	Henry Alan M	1991
928	Gaine Graham J	1991	989	Simpson W A	1988
929	Cantley Goff	1984	990	Gardiner Brian	1991
930	Cantley Judy	1984	991	Bootle R Keith	1991
931	Benson James G	1991	992	Leahy Patrick M	1991 1991
932	Orchard Gerald	1990 1991 1991	993	Ingham Stuart F	1991
933	Rodger Alan J L	1990	994	Irvine Stuart	1991
934	Collin Peter	1991	995	Howie Graham H	1988
935	Crawford Dave	1990	996	McCallum Donald C	1991
936	Sharp Bob	1991	997	Munro Lindsay D	1991
937	Jones Peter N	1991	998	Munro Roderick C	1991
938	Thomson John Whyte	1991	999	Robertson Robert B	1988 1991
939	Morris Frank	1984	1000	Robertson Angus K	1989
940	Harper Pamela	1987	1001	Bramley R	1991
941	Clarke Wal	1990	1002	Harman Derrick	1991
942	Heath Tony	1991	1003	Ramsay Charlie	1991
943	Hassell Bruce	1989 1989 1990	1004	Lingard Teresa	1990
944	Starbuck John	1991 1991	1005	Millar Tom M	1991
945	Boulter Jennie	1990	1006	Bantick Allan	1991
946	Boulter Peter	1990	1007	Cassell Paul	1989
947	Robson Anne R	1991	1008	Orr Nigel	1991
948	Bate Ben	1984	1009	Harben Cedric Y	1991
949	Allan Doug	1984	1010	Lowther David	1991
950	White Cliff	1984	1011	McIlroy Mary	1991
951	Harrison Andy	1991	1012	Barrowman John	1990
952	Smith Iain	1991	1013	Aitken A G F	1992
953	Gothard David N	1991	1014	Wragg Anthony	1991
954	Gunn Robert B	1991 1991	1015	Borthwick W D	1991
955	Stephens Joyce C	1991 1991	1016	Simpson Clifford	1992
956	Heaton Neil	1991	1017	Hartley Janet	1991
957	Herraghty George	1991	1018	Hill-Cottingham Roger	1991
958	Foy Dave	1991	1019	Tees James I R	1992
959	Dixon Mike	1991			

As usual, behind the simple list of names and numbers lies a rich tapestry of experience, woven with the threads of suffering and joy, despair and exultation. Fragments are contained in the many letters sent in with reports of Completions, from which a few points have been extracted from a wealth of interesting material.

Meaningful Relationships.- At least 12 cases of *M. matrimonialis* are to be found in this year's roll, including the (860/1)Sellers, (864/5)Fraser, (876/7)Yates, (885/6)McGeachies, (889/90)Simcocks, (895/6)Sanfords, (990/1)Landers, (907/8)Thomases, (929/30)Cantleys, (945/6)Boulters, and (1018/9)Hartley/Hill-Cottingham. Of these, the first five couples seem to be cases of *totalis*, having done all their Munros in marital company. The (878/879)Eady/Parham combination tied the marital knot a mere two days prior to Completion, thus ensuring that they finished as honest man and woman in proper matrimonial style.

Pace and Style.- As always the range is wide, with many taking over 20 years, quite a few 30 or more, and (976)Denis Johnson and (910)Eric Drew determinedly leisurely at 44 and 45 years respectively. There is no shortage of rapid Completers of less than 10 years, while (870)John Wainwright of the Yorkshire Mountaineering Club took 11 years but was still only 14 years old when he finished. In spite of his youth John has accumulated a good deal of experience having done some major alpine peaks and leading on gritstone up to VS. (883)Ken Telfer had a solo round except for the Inaccessible Pinnacle and conformed to Dow's Rules, with no camping, bivouacking or bothying and going in and out in a day using only leg power. (514)David Purser did his second round inadvertently while ticking off the Corbetts but redeemed himself by Completing in *M. elegans* style reversing the seasons of all the ascents on his previous round or taking interesting variants such as Tower Ridge, Curved Ridge, and Snake Ridge on Macdui. Others have done the Corbetts and even the Donalds. The former bring their own rewards and in spite of the navigational merit attached to successfully locating some of the summits of the latter, this Clerk has resolutely declined to start any more Lists!

Trust not number.- (483)Peter Ilieve was about to have 484 branded on his forehead when, like a few others, he found that he had been promoted in the latest edition of the Tables. (534)Peter Warburton is not the only one to be upset by the omission of the Tops column in the List in this edition, and makes an eloquent case to the Master of the Tables for its restoration in some form. Newspaper reports are even more undependable, as (863) Iain Shepherd discovered when he was credited in the Dundee "Courier" as having made 831,000 feet (277x3000) of ascent in doing his Munros.

-nor weather.- (939)Peter Duncan met 90mph winds on Toll Creagach and was blown over the headwall of an avalanche which fortunately for him had already discharged itself. (638)Frank Garforth had a unique and rather costly encounter with high winds which forced him to a crawl among boulders on Ben Hee — 'When I turned into the full force of the wind to get back, it took my breath away and with it my top denture, which had disappeared before I could turn.' *(875)Mark Sinclair finished on Beinn Tarsuinn in the worst June weather he had ever experienced - rain, hail, two inches of lying snow and nil visibility. However on the final summit the clouds parted and he was treated to a Brocken Spectre within two rainbows - a double glory!

-nor rock.- (944)John Starbuck did a solo round except for Blaven. When on the Inaccessible with a back rope and down-climbing to recover a runner a hand hold came completely away to leave him dangling on the rope a second later! It was an ascent of this same Pinnacle, very unusual for an initial Munro, which led to (934)Peter Collin being infected with a dose of Munros which was only cured after dragging himself all over the Highlands for six years with a final alcoholic group therapy session on the summit of Beinn Alligin. It would be a shame to tell him that such cures are only temporary!

-nor man.- As (931)James Benson discovered when, having been motivated to do the Munros for a £5 bet that he would never make it, he found that when he Completed, the gentleman who made the bet had gone to ground. He clearly could not have been a typically generous Aberdonian, who would have regarded a rate of 1.8 pence per summit as a modest price to pay to save one's reputation! (Ed. comment:- not an Aberdonian would have worked out the rate per summit.)

-nor anything.- To celebrate on their last summit Messrs (980) Brian MacDonald and (981) Ian Dargie had brought up a can of T*****t's Lager, only to find that another eight people had arrived to congratulate them and share it! Despite this, Brian was in joyful mood until he found that in his euphoria he had trampled on his spectacles!

Efforts and Rewards.- Many letters tell of sacrifices made and even more of the rich returns which justify the investment many times over. Pedro and Ann Landers made 33 trips to Scotland from bases in Buckingham and Devon, usually a round of well over 1000 miles. During his five year round, (960) Stephen Dunn who had never intended to Compleat because of a fear of heights, found this gradually disappearing until he came to enjoy the views down narrow Cuillin aretes. Wild life encounters are often vivid memories. (871) Robert Buchan tells of watching a fox standing on its hind legs to fight off a dozen ravens, of seeing a huge eagle being forced to the ground by two ravens and of reaching a rock on the summit ridge of Garbh Chioch Mhor only to find it was a badger which stayed just ahead of him all the way to Sgurr na Ciche. Some relive experiences in the pages of log books. (962) Bob Connell writes in his of 'A Walk round Glen Affric - Rivers and streams came down the mountains any old how; ten or fifteen pencil-straight gills foamed into Coire Crom; the Sputan Ban was mad, pouring in a wide, frozen rage of foam into its own spray shooting up from the depth of the fall; the featureless hump of Lapaich bled white with streams, like a tight bladder of milk pricked all over. The Allt Garbh ran in wild, naughty loops, where it pleased; and streams could not be forced with any style or dignity..... In the afternoon successive changes of light illuminated the high walls of Mam Sodhail, in an unforgettable leaden subtlety. All was beauty and awe: the wildest of weather; autumn vividness against black, ill-lit skies, roseate ranges of snow; an empty fairy lodge, bridges off its seeming island to nowhere but the bottom of the black loch; and everywhere the glaucous blue of native pines....' Such are memories in which we can all share as they evoke our own.

Arachnids Ahoy! - Isobel Baldwin of the National Museums of Scotland is studying the distribution of high altitude spiders which are Ice Age relic species and live under stones above 3000ft. Assistance in collecting these is sought from Munroists and any others who frequent the high tops. Whether or not you like spiders is unimportant.

If you would like to help, contact her at The Department of Natural History, N.M.S. Chambers Street, Edinburgh, EH1 1JF.

The Centenary Affair.-The following account is for those Munroists who failed to attend the Centenary celebration for various reasons, which included being in the dark that it was planned, unable to afford it, or downright disapproval of the whole idea.

The Dinner was held in the Roxburghe Hotel in Edinburgh on 23rd November. Space was limited so advertising was restricted to these Notes in the Journal and a notice sent out to new Compleaters when they registered. As it turned out this was enough to reach the capacity to which the Roxburghe were persuaded to expand, taking 223, consisting of 155 Listed Munroists, 65 long suffering partners and 3 guests. The evening was organised by The Master of the Tables (259) Derek Bearhop who attended to printing and menus, Clerk of the List Bill Brooker who acted as M.C., and Keeper of the Regalia (450) Gordon McAndrew who did most of the organisation in Edinburgh, enrolled participants and kept the Purse. Guest speakers were (62) Hamish Brown our maxi-poly-Munroist, SMC historical expert Robin Campbell, and SMC President Iain Smart.

Firstly, participants, who had come from all over The British Isles, had a chance to mix and meet each other. They comprised all kinds and conditions of Munroist and included (493) David Kale the youngest Compleater on record, as well as (17) Harry Hampton one of the most senior. After a welcome and introductions by the M.C. Gordon McAndrew read a message from the grandson of H.T.M. himself. (see letter below). Hamish Brown followed with a talk on Munros and what mountains can mean to some people, illustrated with some superb slides.

Dinner and associated libations were then enjoyed by the increasingly relaxed company.

The after dinner toasts began with Robin Campbell celebrating the memory of Hugh Munro with an illustrated delivery using some slides suited to the vintage of his theme, offset by an outstanding talk about Munro and his almost Completion. He capped it all with the unveiling of his personal version of the Great Man seated at the small table beside him, opposite the empty place set for (277) The Unknown Munroist (see the article this issue). This was a hard act to follow but Iain Smart toasted The Mountains of Scotland in a style both witty

and philosophical and yet maintained perspective. Some concluding remarks by the M.C. and a final toast of 'Happy to Meet, Sorry to Part....' led into the last phase of the evening with farewells and handclaps between old and new friends. It had been a great and unique occasion.

A Sombre Reminder.- (145)Rae Graham writes to say she was with quadruple Munroist (76)Matthew Moulton in May last year when the latter slipped and fell on Stob Dubh and was fatally injured. In her view the fact that Matthew was wearing a cagoule with little friction contributed to a simple slip on a slope of wet grass becoming an uncontrollable slide. Modern wet weather gear has attractive qualities but it is important to remember that it can be a source of danger in certain situations, especially if overtrousers are being worn.

A. T. MUNRO

River Ridge, Box 940, Waitsfield, Vermont 05673

11 Nov 1991

Mr. President, Honoured Guests,
Ladies & Gentlemen:

It is with great pride and pleasure that I respond to Dr McAndrew's invitation to send a message to all of you on the occasion of the celebratory Dinner in honour of the Centenary of Munro's Tables, 1891-1991.

I wish that I could be present with you tonight, not only as Sir Hugh Munro's grandson, but as a Munroist. Alas, my ventures onto Scotland's Munro's do not qualify me to sit in your company!

In my annual visits to Scotland, it never ceases to amaze me, given the relatively primitive transport of the day, how my Grandfather managed to get himself from one end of Scotland to the other; not just once, but many times. Perhaps more remarkable is the fact that I understand very few of his measurements needed any corrections, even checked with today's accurate instrumentation. It is sad, however, to think that he died in France in 1919, with still "two to go".

I hope that your Centenary Dinner at The Roxburge is a resounding success. I also would like to express the wish that the second hundred years of Munro climbing provides as much enjoyment to mountaineers as has the first. With all good wishes for the evening and continued successful climbs,

Yours Aye,



Sir Alasdair T. Munro,
6th Baronet of Lindertis

SCOTTISH MOUNTAIN ACCIDENTS 1990

The following incidents were notified too late for inclusion:—

NORTHERN HIGHLANDS 1990

JANUARY 3rd—Christopher Draper (47) solo walking on Ben Klibreck lost his footing and slid 70 feet. He had no ice-axe, but wearing crampons, of which one caught and twisted his ankle breaking it. Crawled downhill till he was spotted by a passer-by who alerted Police. RAF Sea King. 13.

MAY 8th—Having walked from Cape Wrath to Sandwood Loch with 2 companions, Dennis Chapman (40) was ill with gastro-enteritis. Airlifted to Stornoway by HMCG helicopter. Aux. Coastguard Kinlochbervie. 16.

AUGUST 31st—Coastal search for Catherine Brooks (25) and Gregory Brooks (4) at Ceann na Beinne Bay, Rispond, Durness. Assynt MRT, HM Coastguard, RAF Sea King. 84.

WESTERN HIGHLANDS 1990

APRIL 13th—Walking from Loch Hourn to Loch Nevis, Brenda Slavin (57) slipped on wet grass at the steep descent from stalkers' path into the head of Carnoch Glen. Broken ankle. Airlift by RAF Sea King. 9.

APRIL 21st—Ridge walking on Toll Creagach (Glens Cannich/Affric) Alexander Greener (55) collapsed and died. Inverness Air Ambulance. Police. 9.

MAY 7th—Alison Kenny (27) injured by a slip on scree. Sgurr na Carnach, Five Sisters. Kintail MRT. 53.

JULY 21st to 22nd—Extensive searches of Knoydart by Police, Lochaber MRT, Royal Marine Army Corps? and RAF Sea King for Janet MacAdam (60) who separated from her party in good weather on Ladhar Bheinn. She was found at Loch an Dubh-Lochain next afternoon, very well after her night out.

BEN NEVIS 1990

FEBRUARY 3rd—3 male climbers overdue on Tower Ridge. Traced by 0800.

SEPTEMBER 23rd to 24th—3 women and 1 man (all 30s) benighted when making a video of climbing Tower Ridge. Lochaber MRT.

OCTOBER 25th—False alarm. Lochaber MRT called out for reported man in difficulty on Ben Path.

NOVEMBER 3rd—Climbing solo after separations, Timothy Walker (20) left Tower Ridge by Echo Traverse, then got cragfast on 'Rolling Stones.' Lochaber MRT walked him down to airlift by RAF Sea King. 24.

OTHER CENTRAL HIGHLANDS 1990

FEBRUARY 3rd—Ski touring on A'Chailleach (Monadhliath) David Buchanan (41) injured an ankle. Companions dragged him to the Red Bothy on a bivvy bag. Airlifted by RAF helicopter. 8.

JUNE ?—2 people (36, 25) overdue walking Corrour to Fersit. Arrived safe.

CAIRNGORMS 1990

JANUARY 19th—John Cole (25) injured ankle falling at top of Jacob's Ladder, Coire an-t' Sneachda, Cairngorm.

FEBRUARY 18th—False alarm that a body had been found in a snowhole in Coire an Lochain, Cairngorm, but it was just gear to be collected later.

MARCH 8th—Off-piste ski-ing in Coire an-t'Sneachda, Cairngorm, Sonia Wright (13) dislocated her knee. Glenmore Lodge MRT and RAF Sea King. 5.

- JUNE 17th—RAF Sea King lifted Lisa Miller (19) from Coire Raibeirt, Cairngorm to Glenmore Lodge. Sprained ankle. 12.
- JULY 7th to 8th Chris Smith and Neil Wilson were overdue walking from Derry Lodge to Glenmore via Bynack More. They turned up safe.
- JULY 31st—Exhausted man aged 49, weight 28 stone, was lifted by RAF Sea King from Loch Avon to Glenmore Lodge. He had planned to walk with his son and grand daughter aged 4 from Ptarmigan Restaurant, via Coire Raibeirt, Loch Avon, Strath Nethy and Ryvoan Pass to Glenmore, but only reached Loch Avon. Son and grand-daughter went back to Coire Cas to get help. 10.
- AUGUST 21st—Gillian Webber (25) slipped on scree in Coire Raibeirt and sprained her arm. Airlift by RAF Sea King. Police. 6.
- AUGUST 23rd—William Brown (62) lost on Cairngorm Plateau in mist—no compass. Found by RAF Sea King at Sinclair Hut. Cairngorm MRT. 210.
- AUGUST 31st to SEPTEMBER 1st—David Japp found at Cairngorm Carpark unable to drive because of loss of spectacles and arm injury caused by a fall returning from Braeriach summit.
- SEPTEMBER 29th to 30th—5 walkers overdue from round of 4 main Cairngorm summits. Safe.
- DECEMBER 10th to 11th—Overdue because of deep snow in Lairig Ghru, Hamish Reid (26) snow-holed near Sinclair Hut. Airlift by RAF Sea King. Cairngorm MRT. 32.
- DECEMBER 16th—Paul Henniker (16) slipped ski-ing down Coire Cas Headwall. He fell into rocks at foot of crag with head and pelvic injuries. RAF Sea King. 7.

SKYE 1990

- MAY 2nd to 3rd—Overdue walker (Male 50) returned safe to Sligachan after night out.
- AUGUST 2nd to 3rd—Walker (Male 41) overdue between Glenbrittle and Loch Coruisk.
- AUGUST 21st to 22nd—Amanda Arnold (17) suffered exhaustion/hypothermia walking the ridge of Quiraing with 5 others on award scheme. Skye MRT. 64.
- SEPTEMBER 22nd to 23rd—James MacCrachan (59) got lost halfway between Kinloch Lodge (Loch na Dal) and Kyle Rhea. Skye MRT. Found by HMCG boat and airlifted by HMCG helicopter. 76.
- OCTOBER 22nd to 23rd—Stuart Bevy (25) and Tracy Parker (17) benighted climbing Baly's Route, S. Buttress, Sgurr Dearg. Found by RAF Sea King when walking down next day. Skye MRT. 21.

ISLANDS OTHER THAN SKYE 1990

- APRIL 23rd—Search by HMCG helo for Kenneth MacIver (34) of coast and moorland around Bayble Hill, Eye Peninsula, Stornoway, Lewis. Not found.

SOUTHERN UPLANDS 1990

- AUGUST 11th—SARDA callout for elderly walker missing on Carsphairn.
- AUGUST 15th—SARDA search for 4 missing children. Kirkcudbright.
- SEPTEMBER 10th—Missing elderly walker in Glentool. SARDA callout.
- OCTOBER 25th—SARDA search for missing elderly woman at Bridge of Weir.
- NOVEMBER 26th—SARDA search for 2 children missing in Mabie Forest, Dumfries.
- DECEMBER 16th—SARDA callout for 2 men (20s) overdue in Glentool Hills, Newton Stewart.
- DECEMBER 24th—SARDA standby for missing elderly female, Kirkcudbright.

NON-MOUNTAINEERING INCIDENTS 1990

- JANUARY 18th to 22nd—SARDA search of riverside for boy, aged two and a half, missing since January 18th. Denny.

SEPTEMBER 10th---SARDA dog found person with a suspected overdose at Stranraer.

Revised number Winter Injuries	Add	5	
Revised number Summer Injuries	Add	5	
Revised number Summer Exhaustion etc.	Add	2	
Revised number Summer Illness	Add	2	(1) (fatal)
Revised Total Casualties Winter Conditions (27%)		48	(7)
Revised Total Casualties Summer Conditions (73%)		133	(23)
REVISED TOTAL CASUALTIES ALL REGIONS 1990		181	(30)

INCIDENTS

ACTUAL RESCUES

Incidents with casualties	Add	14	161
Cragfast	Add	1	20

OTHER CALLOUTS

Separated	Add	1	15
Lost	Add	2	16
Overdue or Benighted	Add	17	56
False Alarms	Add	2	23
REVISED TOTAL INCIDENTS ALL REGIONS 1990			191

Revised non-mountaineering incidents	Add	2	20
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MOUNTAIN RESCUE COMMITTEE OF SCOTLAND

MOUNTAIN ACCIDENTS 1991

Compiled by John Hinde

INCIDENTS have not been tabulated for this year since some reports have not yet been received. Rather than print amendments, as I have had to do this year, I hope to print complete tables with 1992 incidents.

NORTHERN HIGHLANDS

JANUARY 8th to 10th—Frank Parr (70) Birdwatcher found dead by Assynt MRT below cliffs at Dunnet Head, Caithness. Evacuated by Thurso Lifeboat, HM Coastguard helicopter, HMCg and volunteers. 150.

FEBRUARY 3rd Coire of Seana Bhragh. Six members of the Assynt Mountain Rescue Team on a training exercise were traversing steep neve to the start of the gullies in the west of the coire. As Philip Jones (48), the leader of the team, crossed a small patch of windslab, the surface broke above him. A small avalanche carried him down and he was killed on rocks. RAF Sea King. 60.

FEBRUARY 11th—Edward Thomson (31) tried to traverse An Teallach N to S in mist and soft avalanche prone snow. He could not get down the Bad Step on Corrag Bhuidhe, returned to Sgurr Fiona and tried to get down what was probably Lady's Gully but it was too steep. He bivvied 200 feet below S. Fiona summit on west side and was found by observation search in daylight after initial night searches. Wonched by RAF Sea King. Dundonnell, Kinloss MRTs, SARDA. 260.

FEBRUARY 16th—Coire Dubh Mor, Liathach. RAF Kinloss MRT on training exercise. Corporal Kenworthy was leading 5th pitch of Poacher's Fall, Grade 5. His axe pulled through the ice and he fell 60 feet breaking an ankle but he was held on his second's multi-belay. Both men climbed the final ice-wall aided by a top rope lowered to them by a rescuer. An RAF Sea King wonched Kenworthy off just before dark, and all other rescuers descended on foot. 120.

FEBRUARY 23rd—Fiona Christie (27) slipped wearing crampons when descending a neve gully on the NE side of Maol Chean Dearg. Unable to brake with her ice-axe she fell 250 feet sustaining head and pelvic injuries. Evacuation at night in appalling conditions by RAF Sea King. Torridon MRT. 30.

FEBRUARY 25th Roderick Fab (28) and Chris Morton (Male 25) overdue. Torridon MRT. 2.

APRIL 4th Making a scrambling descent into a river gorge on Sgurr Dubh, Torridon, David Wilson (28) dislodged rocks and fell on to quartzite blocks. Serious injuries. Torridon MRT, RAF Sea King. 46.

APRIL 8th—Crystal Kraus (57) slipped on a path 3 miles SSE of Shildaig, Loch Gairloch, injuring an ankle. She was carried out by her party. Dundonnell MRT. 3.

APRIL 18th to 19th Coast walking from Lonbain to Sand, Stephen Conway (36) and Linda Lewis (32) had their way barred by a cliff, 5 miles N. of Applecross. Trying to get past they were knocked into the sea by a large wave. They scrambled on to a ledge and then further up, but they got cragfast and benighted. Found at night by HM Coastguard helicopter using heat-seeking gear. Unhurt. Torridon MRT. 43.

MAY 15th—Descending wet moorland which had been recently burned, Marion Farquhar (68) slipped and broke an ankle. South slopes of Beinn Alligin. Stretched down by Torridon MRT. 24.

JUNE 5th to 6th Separation incident. Jill Stevenson (25) spent the night at Shenavall Bothy and was found walking out. Dundonnell MRT and RAF Sea King. 29.

- JUNE 13th When descending from Ruadh Stac Mor South to the bealach to Beinn Tarsuinn, Archie Mitchell (60) died of a stroke on Stac a' Chaorruinn of A'Mhaighdean. Because of remoteness, the incident was not reported till 6 hours later. Victim was found by Dundonnell MRT using binoculars and stretched down for airlift by RAF Sea King. 80.
- JULY 6th—Corrag Bhuidhe Buttress of An Teallach. Phillip Laplace (Male 24) slipped descending and fell 70 feet sustaining head injuries. Winched off by RAF Sea King. Dundonnell MRT. 40.
- JULY 9th Woman (c40) got lost in mist on Beinn Dearg of Inverlael. Overdue, she walked out unaided. Dundonnell MRT. 5.
- JULY 22nd—HM Coastguard and Scrabster Lifeboat rescued Leonard Copeland (14) from 40 feet sea cliffs at Thurso. Walking on top, his cap blew off and he climbed down for it. He fell from half height to land on rocks above water line with minor leg injuries.
- AUGUST 11th to 12th Loch of Yarrows, Wick. Angler, James Anderson (70) overdue. He had waited for darkness to lift and he was OK. Assynt MRT and helicopter.
- AUGUST 24th—Robert Sutherland (38) fractured T12 vertebra from a 6 foot fall when his rope-lock failed at Mound Rock, Golspie. HMCG and RAF helicopter. 22+.
- AUGUST 28th to 29th Leaving Polbain at 1500 to walk the Achiltibuie to Blugasary, rocky, coastal path (normal time 8 hours) Allan Liggit (48) got benighted without a torch. He was found by Dundonnell MRT not far from the E. end of the path. 20.
- SEPTEMBER 14th—Carol Shearer (43) slipped on sea cliffs and was killed. Dunnet Head, Caithness. Found by Assynt MRT. Evacuated by Coast Guard, HMCG helicopter, RAF Sea King, SARDA. 88.
- circa SEPTEMBER 16th Man slipped on grass on Victoria Walk Path, Thurso and was killed by a 40 foot fall down a sea cliff. Recovered by Thurso Lifeboat.
- OCTOBER 7th—Thomas Joures (65) became separated from 2 others on Ben Dearg. Without map and compass he went wrong and was found by Dundonnell MRT walking on a road to Alltguish. 35.
- OCTOBER 18th—HMCG helicopter lifted Gillian Pattinson (50) from Kishorn to Broadford Hospital suffering leg injuries when an ATV rolled. Deerstalking a mile from Ceann-Loch-Damph. Torridon MRT. 17.
- NOVEMBER 30th—Visiting Eas-coul-Aulinn, Loch Glencoul (one of Britain's highest waterfalls) Caroline Walker (30) fell behind her party and got lost in mist, only 1 mile from a road but with no map, compass, torch or food. She stayed put till walked out by Assynt MRT. 35.

WESTERN HIGHLANDS

- JANUARY 6th to 7th—Alone on Beinn Fhada, Joe Quinn (45) Kintail MRT leader, had to abandon 2 descent routes due to fierce winds and avalanche risk, eventually descending with the wind and surviving in a snowhole. Found by Kinloss MRT walking down Glen Lichd. Kinloss, Kintail, Skye MRTs, SARDA, 2 RAF Sea Kings. 476.
- JANUARY 9th—Abandoned tent in forest near A82, 6 miles S. of Drumnadrochit.
- FEBRUARY 3rd—Joe Quinn (45), Damon Powell (32) and Jonathan Appleby (29) changed route due to bad weather and descended from South Cluanie Ridge by a safer route. Result—a longer walk. Kintail MRT. 6.
- FEBRUARY 14th to 15th—Jennifer Nichols (31) slipped on snow and got separated from her companion on Beinn Sgritheall, 100m below summit, suffering minor leg injuries. Glenelg, Kintail MRTs, RAF Sea King. 183.
- FEBRUARY 16th to 17th—Aaron Longbottom (22), James Cairns (22) and John Dodds (19) got cragfast descending Creag nan Damh (South Cluanie Ridge) into Glen Shiel. They got stuck halfway down the NW Spur of Sgurr a'Chuilinn at 8 pm. Although they had a rope they did not retreat and try and find an easier way down. Extricated and led off by Kintail MRT. Alerted by flashing six times repeatedly. 40.
- MARCH 28th—RAF Sea King airlifted Harold MacCaffrey (34) with broken leg to Raigmore Hospital from Spidean Mialach, Loch Quoich. He slipped on rock, slid 250 feet down snow into rocks. Alone, he had attracted a party of 3 by whistle blasts. Lochaber MRT. 12.

APRIL 21st to 22nd - Kintail MRT called out by the sister of Nicholas Hunter (25). She had set out with him on Sgurr a' Chaochain, Glen Carron, but decided to give up due to bad weather. He continued but turned up 15 hours overdue. RAF helo called out but did not lift off. 8.

APRIL 29th - As one of her dogs was lame, and she miscalculated the distance of her walk, Felicity Richardson (37) went to the wrong boat pick up. She was found at night by RN Sea King, uninjured on shore 1 mile from Ardnish Point, Lochailort. Lochaber MRT. 66.

MAY 5th - Eric Woodall (63) and Donald Woodall (61) separated from another pair near top of Sgurr na Ciste Dubhe, because of a knee injury slowing them. The knee spasm subsided and they continued to walk on a different route, and so were overdue, but safe. Kintail MRT. 10.

MAY 5th - Kintail MRT spotted a torch shone by an overdue couple descending from the 5 Sisters into Glen Lichd. Andrew Anderson (41) and Sarah Baran (40) walked off but were given a lift down the glen in a 4WD vehicle. 15.

MAY 10th - George Hill (68) became separated from his son between summit of Creach Bheinn and Maol Odhar (W. of Loch Linnhe). His son, who returned to Kingairloch, had the pack with all the food and gear. George went 180 degrees out and finished up at the head of Loch Sunart. Lochaber MRT alerted. 3.

MAY 20th - Florrie MacPhail (63) was at 2,000 feet on Sgurr a'Choire Ghlais, Strathfarrar with a broken ankle, caused by a slip descending wet rock and hypothermia. Her companion went for help but RAF Sea King could not reach her because of turbulence. Winchman was dropped to care for her. Helo returned to Kinloss and came back with 7 KMRT and landed 3km below her in darkness. She was stretchered down then airlifted to Raigmore. 140.

MAY 25th Mark Ninhan (22) descended from Luinne Bheinn, Knoydart, towards Upper Gleann Carnach with 2 friends. He slipped on wet scree going down a sloping waterfall and fell 50 feet cutting his elbow badly. All walked to Loch Nevis and 'phoned from Camusorry. Rescue by 3 am. Mallaig Lifeboat, HM Coastguard and Police. 19.
NB Camusorry radiophone is private and there is now no rescue post. Before radiophones were installed at Camusorry, Barrisdale and Glendessarry, Upper Carnach was one of the places most remote from 'phones in Britain. JH.

MAY 28th - 2 women, ill equipped, lost on Mullach Fraoch Choire, reached Morvich, about 13 miles from rendezvous at Cluanie. Kintail MRT.

JUNE 3rd - About 1km from main road in Ariundle Nature Reserve, Strontian, Eirene Chilton (59) stumbled on rough ground and sprained her ankle. Stretchered off by Police and local volunteers. 5.

JUNE 23rd Searches in Loch Lochy Hills for further clues after the discovery of a body. It may have been that of Bruce Pearce (47). (See 2/6/90).

JULY 13th Ascending steeply north out of Coire Chraoibhe on to Beinn Bhan (above Caledonian Canal near Gairloch), Paul Connolly (18) caught his foot between two stones and badly sprained his ankle. Airlifted by RAF Sea King. Lochaber MRT. 10.

JULY 24th to 29th German tourist separated from his friend at Upper Lennie, 2 miles SW of Urquhart Castle, Loch Ness. RAF Wessex, Kinloss, Police and dogs searched on July 27. HM Coastguard helicopter, Police and Kinloss searched on July 29. Not found. 442.

JULY 28th - Dave Rollings (48) stumbled attempting descent from summit, aggravating an old knee injury when paragliding on Sgurr an t-Searraich. Airlifted by Army Air Corps Gazelle Ambulance. Kintail MRT. 23.

AUGUST 11th to 12th Patricia McCulloch (39) lost and benighted in Inchnacardoch Forest W. of Fort Augustus. Found in early morning by a forester. Kinloss, Kintail, Leuchars, Lochaber MRTs. 200.

OCTOBER 27th to 28th RAF Sea King flew Kinloss MRT towards Glen Mullardoch for John Martin (39) benighted on Sgurr na Lapaich. Whilst they were airborne he turned up safe. 13.

OCTOBER or NOVEMBER - All terrain vehicle with 3 on board overturned in Movern area. 1 killed, 1 injured. Air Ambulance, Inverness.

NOVEMBER 16th—J.T. Nicol was with 3 others, travelling quite fast on a winter familiarisation rescue exercise. Beinn Fhionnlaidh (1,005m) a particularly remote peak above Loch Mullardoch, was on the intended route. He collapsed suddenly without the usual signs of exhaustion/hypothermia on the NW Ridge of Carn Eighe. Losing consciousness he was put in a sleeping bag and bivvy bag, with a further s/bag and b/bag underneath insulating him from the snow. There was no shelter on the exposed ridge. Fortunately, Rescue 137, an RAF Sea King, happened to be in transit through the area and was contacted by radio. The weather was clear and cold. He was winched aboard and at Raigmore found to have exhaustion, dehydration and mild hypothermia. Kinloss MRT. 15.

BEN NEVIS

- JANUARY 19th to 20th—Steven Coneys (37), John Keska (40) were delayed and benighted by deep snow and poor weather on Italian Climb. Both abseiled off. Lochaber MRT and RAF Sea King. 53.
- FEBRUARY 3rd to 4th—Delayed by poor snow on Observatory Ridge, Lawson Milne (36) and George Ferns (27) were benighted and bivouacked. They eventually reached plateau, got down and 'phoned in. Lochaber MRT deployed. RAF Wessex. 38.
- FEBRUARY 5th—Jerry Wiekzorek (33) fell 60 feet Douglas Gap, Tower Ridge. Broken ankle. Lochaber MRT lowered him to CIC hut from where he was winched by RAF Wessex to Belford Hospital. 85.
- FEBRUARY 22nd to 24th—Martin James Begg (23) missing from a walk up the Tourist Track with an ice-axe, but no crampons and no compass. He was found dead by RAF Sea King in the deep and narrow Surgeons Gully. Lochaber and RAF Leuchars MRTs, SARDA. 192.
- MARCH 2nd—Con Higgins (51) suffered head and pelvic injuries when blown over descending ramp from 1st Platform, NE Buttress after climbing Minus 2 Gully. Walked with aid of companion to CIC, then stretchered by Lochaber MRT. 43.
- MARCH 3rd—Neil Wilson (25) got leg injuries in a windslab avalanche at the top of Orion Direct. Held on rope. Lochaber MRT. RAF Sea King. 276.
- MARCH 4th—Richard Novak (50) had climbed and descended, with a companion, a route in the area of Slingsby's Chimney. On the snowslope at the foot of the climb, winds were about 100mph. Novak was lifted off his feet by the wind and slid 300 feet to the bottom. Aided by his friend he got to CIC with abrasions and bruising to face and spine, and 2 broken metacarpals. Airlifted from CIC by RAF Wessex on 5th. 18.
- APRIL 27th—Somewhere near the Eastern Traverse of Tower Ridge, Derek Branford (48), leading, was about 50 feet above his 2nd—Miss Paraskevi Terzoudi (27)—when he fell and pulled out 4 runners. He was bruised about the body and arms. She held him on the rope till other climbers arrived and Branford was PULLED UP to the ledge. An RAF Sea King lifted Lochaber MRT to the top of Tower Ridge, whence they climbed down to the casualty, put him on a stretcher and pulled him up to the plateau for airlift. 110.
- MAY 24th—Walking up the Ben with his son and 6 friends, John Rhodes (49) died of coronary heart disease 300 metres beyond 2nd Aluminium Bridge. Lochaber MRT and RAF Wessex. 48.
- MAY 31st—His 2nd stopped his 30 foot fall when Peter Evans (38) slipped on grassy rock leading Minus 1 Direct on the Orion Face, but Evans collided with the rock face and sustained a broken left ankle. Helped by 2 other climbers to CIC Hut, then winched by RAF Wessex. Lochaber MRT. 3.
- JUNE 1st—Leading a rope of 2 up Observatory Ridge, Marijke Tucker (Female 25) was struck on her left side by a rock dislodged by a climber above. Airlifted with bruising by RAF Sea King. Kinloss MRT. 8.
- JUNE 13th—Walking up after a night at CIC Hut, John Greene (46) died of coronary artery disease at the toe of the NE Buttress. Stretchered below rolling cloud by Lochaber MRT for airlift by RAF Wessex. 20.
- JUNE 20th—Descending from Ben Nevis summit, and not far below it, by the path, Norma Moore (44) went over on an ankle and sprained it. She descended slowly helped by her husband till she was met by Lochaber MRT and stretchered off by Lochaber MRT. 22.

- JULY 4th—Patrick Haggerty (50). Heart attack victim on Tourist Path just above Red Burn. Dead on arrival of RAF Wessex. Airlifted to Fort William. Lochaber MRT. 41.
- JULY 6th—Waiting at the foot of Carn Dearg Buttress to do a climb, Alan Rodger (32) was hit by a rock falling which broke his femur. Airlifted by RAF Wessex. Lochaber MRT. 60.
- JULY 6th—Jeremy Wyke (16) went over on his ankle and sprained it, descending Tourist Track at 2nd Hairpin above Halfway House. Stretcher carry by Lochaber MRT. 14.
- JULY 12th—Rei Watanabe (84) was 1 of 21 Japanese going up the Ben. She got tired at 10.30 and descended alone. She tripped and fell near 1st Aluminium Bridge with cuts to her head and severe bruising of the hip. Stretchered off by Lochaber MRT. 14.
- JULY 17th—Descending Tourist Path, Rita Perov (50) slipped and broke an ankle. Stretchered by Lochaber MRT to airlift by RN Sea King. 32.
- JULY 20th—Veronica Anderson (35) was leading Slingsby's Chimney, NE Buttress. 70 feet from the top she slipped and fell 60 feet fracturing 6 ribs. She was held by her 2nd—Anna Lawton (23)—who was uninjured but shocked. Both were winched from the climb by RAF Wessex. Lochaber and Kinloss MRTs. 95.
- JULY 24th—Richard Hunn (42) tripped and tore a knee ligament 1,000 feet from Ben summit on the path. He continued to top but could only get halfway down. Stretchered by Lochaber MRT. 24.
- JULY 25th—Lochaber MRT stretchered Jaroslaw Sawiak (68) off Ben Path. Ankle injury caused by slip descending. 29.
- JULY 25th—Salt tablets for cramp, administered by Lochaber MRT to John Edmunds (52) helped him to continue down Ben Path unaided. 19.
- JULY 27th—David Podd and Gary Bennett, both wheelchair patients, attempted to climb Ben Nevis on all fours, or by sitting down and propelling themselves upwards with their arms. They got close to the Halfway Lochan. Arrangement had been made to airlift them but bad weather and failure of a 4WD vehicle caused them to be stretchered off.
- JULY 31st to AUGUST 1st—Frances Craig (19) descending from the Arete into Coire Giubhsachan with 2 companions, slipped on wet rock and fractured her ankle. They managed to descend 300 feet to a flat area of upper corrie and bivvied for the night. One left at 06.30 for help. Rescue by Inverness Air Ambulance. 4.
- AUGUST 2nd—Norma Aitkin (63) wearing trainers, slipped descending Tourist Path, with fracture dislocation of ankle. Lochaber MRT. 14.
- AUGUST 4th—2 climbers spotted Michael Quinn (23) lying below Echo Wall. Lochaber MRT dep. ldr. was lowered into Observatory Gully by RAF Wessex, climbed to casualty and found him dead, so both were winched into helicopter. It seemed that he was soloing Tower Ridge and slipped or tripped. 38.
- AUGUST 13th—Descending Coire Eoghainn Waterslide with a companion, and trying to get round a wet rock slab, Newton Astbury (Male 23) caught the top of the slab and fell 15 feet injuring a leg. Lochaber MRT. 13.
- AUGUST 22nd—June Banard (51) got so exhausted and dehydrated descending from summit of Nevis that she was unable to complete the last 500 yards to Youth Hostel. Carried down by Police and Lochaber MRT. 5.
- AUGUST 30th—Running down the Tourist path, David Lowe (21) was in danger of going over the edge of Five Finger Gully so he threw himself to the ground and severely bruised and cut a leg. Lochaber MRT, RAF helicopter. 10.
- SEPTEMBER 7th—Collapsed runner Ben Race. Tourist Path airlift by RAF Wessex.
- SEPTEMBER 7th—Male (29) separated from party walked in safe. RAF Wessex. RAF Kinloss searched in Five Finger Gully. 6.
- OCTOBER 15th—White flare spotted near Carn Mor Dearg Arete. Nothing found. Lochaber MRT, RAF helicopter. 20.
- OCTOBER 26th—Barbara Jennings (47) fell near Halfway Lochan on the Ben Track breaking tibia and fibula. Stretchered down. Lochaber and Leuchars MRTs. 39.
- NOVEMBER 20th to 21st—Keith Wilson (31) found by Leuchars MRT in Glen Nevis. He had been lost on Nevis summit, survived an awful night of driving rain with minimal equipment, and fallen several times down Coire Giubhsachan with minor head and rib injuries. No ice-axe, crampons or torch. Night searches by Kinloss and Lochaber MRTs and RAF Wessex. 641.

GLENCOE

(including Buachaille Etive Mor)

- JANUARY 12th – Piers Strudwick (19) wearing crampons, fell 50 feet down a neve slope on the north side of An-t-Sron, injuring his knee and shoulder blade. Glencoe MRT. 23.
- JANUARY 30th to 31st – NW Gully, Stob Coire nam Beith. Alan Thompson (51) was leading when his axes pulled out of cruddy ice in the hard left fork. He fell and broke both legs. Calum MacLennan got a touch of hypothermia and frostbite. Glencoe MRT and RAF Sea King. 104.
- FEBRUARY 3rd – Ascending a N. facing open slope from Coire nan Lochan towards Gearn Aonach, John Caughie (46) triggered a small windslab avalanche. His crampons caught in hard neve and he injured an ankle. Glencoe and Leuchars MRTs. Wonched by RN Sea King. 40.
- FEBRUARY 3rd – 2 members of a party of 8 walking on Beinn Fhada were carried by a small slab avalanche down an easy descent gully on the Lost Valley side. One was uninjured, the other killed. The softslab was triggered by some of the party on an open slope (fan) at the top of the gully. Mark Thompson (37) went down the fan with the slab, which was then channelled into a narrower gully before debouching on to another open slope. He was swept about 250 metres before going down into a shallow bergschrund of old neve where he was then covered by debris to a depth of 2 metres, about 50 metres above the snout of the avalanche. His still-helmetted body was discovered nearly 3 hours afterwards by random probing, even though the prober had to probe through the hard neve of the lower lip of the schrund. Avalanche risk was 3 for February 3rd. RN Sea King found search dangerous in steep sided gully with many MRT about so body was stretchered by Glencoe and RAF MRTs. 110.
- FEBRUARY 9th – A group of 10, descending the open slope west from the bealach between Stob Coire nan Lochan and Bidean nam Bian, triggered a fairly big slab avalanche and were all swept 300 feet. Jonathon Kohler (30) got a shoulder injury. He stayed on the surface and was the only one injured. Wonched by RAF Wessex. Avalanche Risk 3. 48.
- FEBRUARY 11th – John Hamilton (35) sustained hip and arm injuries, while Michael Higgins (30) and Simon Mouncey (26) got injured arms, when all three were swept down 600 feet by a soft-slab, open-slope avalanche in the west branch of Coire nam Beith near Hidden Gully. They went over 2 cliffs, one of 70 feet. All wonched out by RAF Wessex. Avalanche Risk 3. 66.
- FEBRUARY 11th to 12th – David Alexander (49) and John Fitzgerald (46) were reported overdue on Aonach Eagach. A morning search by Glencoe MRT found them descending safely, after benighted and bivouac just below the ridge crest (Stob Coire Leith). 14.
- FEBRUARY 11th to 12th – Glencoe MRT searched for 2 men overdue, Jackson (28) and Haig (25) on Great Gully, Buachaille Etive Mor. They walked off safely. 14.
- FEBRUARY 12th – At 02.15 flashing lights were seen at Glencoe YH from a party of 5 teachers cragfast between Clachaig Gully and Clachaig Gully West. On their way up to rescue them, Glencoe MRT found 2 climbers who declined help, benighted in Clachaig Gully. The 5 teachers were guided down. 60.
- FEBRUARY 16th – One of a party under instruction, David Hall (40) was cutting steps up a snow slope, unroped and without helmet or crampons. He slipped, failed to brake with his axe, and was killed by a fall into 'The Chasm.' Glencoe MRT and RAF Wessex. 31.
- FEBRUARY 17th – After climbing, roped, a frozen waterfall on the E. Face Aonach Dubh, Ian Gallagher (27) untied and was walking off but fell 70 feet into a bergschrund injuring himself severely. Glencoe MRT and RAF Wessex winchman gave first aid while the helicopter went off to the next listed incident, returning to hoist Gallagher. 55.
- FEBRUARY 17th – Coire nam Beith. Catriona Appleby (29) caught a crampon in a snow rut and fell down a slope, damaging an ankle. Glencoe MRT and RAF Wessex. 12.

- MARCH 2nd—When glissading at the head of the Lost Valley, William Halton (19) caught a crampon in neve under the powder snow and broke his ankle. He walked with help to Lost Valley Boulder whence he was airlifted by RAF Wessex. Glencoe MRT. 43.
- MARCH 18th to 19th—5 people and a dog became cragfast descending from Sgor nam Fiannaigh to Loch Achtriochtan. Roped down by part of Glencoe MRT in wind and very heavy rain. 32.
- MARCH 21st—Summit Gully. Stob Coire nam Beith. John Makin (41) attempted the climb with 3 companions. They did not like the conditions and retreated unroped. With his helmet inside his rucksack Makin slipped 90 feet down a moderate snow slope then fell 15 feet down a crevasse and suffered severe head injuries. Glencoe MRT and RAF Wessex. 41.
- MAY 11th to 12th—William Wilson (41) and Robert Neilson (27) were benighted climbing Clachaig Gully. They finished the route next morning and walked down west side Sgor nam Fiannaigh while Glencoe MRT were searching the gully. 20.
- MAY 14th—After failing to descend the North Nose of Gairr Aonach, Derek Cowans (53) retraced to Sron Coire Sgreamach and went down the normal route. Found walking down by Glencoe MRT. 36.
- MAY 23rd—On the way up the coire above Meeting of the Three Waters, intending to do the Aonach Eagach, Callum Anderson (20) stopped to urinate, walking to the edge of an 80 foot cliff. He fell on wet rock and vegetation, very seriously injuring his head and spine. Glencoe MRT. RN Sea King recalled. 27.
- JUNE 8th—Descending wet scree on the NW Face of Aonach Dubh a'Ghlinne (Sgor na h-Ulaidh) Margaret Moss (52) fell forwards, rolling over 3 or 4 times, badly gashing her temple but without unconsciousness. Carried 250 feet up to an RAF Wessex on fairly flat ground on ridge by Glencoe MRT. 42.
- JUNE 8th to 9th—Irigan Shearman (32) separated from his companions who climbed Ossian's Cave, Aonach Dubh. He was seen to go up the steep, damp, vegetative ramp to the right. He was found by RAF Wessex next day with very severe head injuries and hypothermia. Glencoe and Leuchars MRTs, SARDA. 300.
- JUNE 9th—2 of Shearman's friends, searching for him, were escorted down from difficult terrain by RAF Leuchars MRT.
- JUNE 22nd—Walking at the edge of the deep gorge at the entrance to the Lost Valley, Patricia McNaughton (37) slipped on wet rock and tumbled 60 feet. Despite head and scapula injuries and 10 broken ribs she swam down the river as far as a 30 foot waterfall. 2 companions climbed down to her then BOTH went for help. Winched out of the deep gorge by RAF Wessex. Glencoe MRT. 48.
- JUNE 28th—South Face of Sgorr nam Fiannaigh at 138578. Helen Larglays (22) was walking down near the dangerous Allt an t-Sidheim when she slipped on wet rock and injured a leg. Glencoe MRT and RAF Wessex. 38.
- JUNE 29th—Caroline Docherty (31) was walking in Lairig Gartain when she fell 60 feet off the path into a gorge, sustaining spinal injuries. When Glencoe MRT reached her she was lying in water with 2 female companions also lying in water trying to keep her warm. Very careful handling and a vacuum mattress were used. Winched by RAF Wessex. 30.
- JULY 17th—Stumbling on dry moorland Jean Tarrant (44) broke her ankle, on Sgurr na Ciche (Pap of Glencoe). Glencoe MRT and RAF Wessex. 20.
- JULY 25th—Michael Bon (39) and Simon Bon (16) climbing Trapeze on Aonach Dubh overdue. Delay was caused by dropping a rucksack. Glencoe MRT. 5.
- AUGUST 1st—Edward Whale (16) leading No. 3 Buttress (V. Diff.) Stob Coire nam Beith, became cragfast 50 feet up the first pitch. Glencoe MRT walked up to the crag, climbed above him and lowered him off. All airlifted out by RAF Wessex. 38.
- SEPTEMBER 5th—Girvan Malcolm was very badly injured (chest, pelvis, shoulder and leg) when he fell leading the 1st Pitch of 'The Chasm,' Buachaille Etive Mor. He was above a tree runner when he fell but the rope did not tighten. He WAS wearing a helmet. When Glencoe MRT arrived he was lying on the rope but it was not tied to him. It has not been established why the rope was untied. The 2nd did not untie it and the casualty was too badly injured to have done so. Stretchered a short distance then airlifted by RN Sea King. 40.

SEPTEMBER 6th – Traversing Aonach Eagach E. to W., Andrew Hutchison (34) and Judith Robertson (20) tried to descend from Stob Coire Leith into Glencoe. The girl, in trainers, got cragfast. The man in boots slipped on scree, trying to get further down, and got head and arm abrasions and bruises. Airlifted in darkness by RAF Sea King. Glencoe MRT. 70.

SEPTEMBER 15th – Gerard McKeown (34) and Stuart Whitelaw (26) descending east down ridge from Bidean nam Bian. In darkness they failed to find the turn north to get down into Lost Valley. Carried on over Stob Coire Sgreamach and went down dangerous east face, safely, into Lairig Eilde. Glencoe MRT. 7.

SEPTEMBER 24th – Wearing light canvas shoes, Oliver Schmeer (20) slipped on the edge of the Lost Valley Gorge. He fell a long way, suffering cuts and bruises, then was cragfast in the deep ravine. Glencoe MRT sent an abseiler down and the patient was hauled up by manpower, given dry clothes and rewarming for hypothermia, then helped down. 36.

OCTOBER 26th – Pair descending Stob Coire nam Beith strayed into Summit Gully. They roped to descend part of gully, then unroped. With his helmet in his sack, Mark Bullpit (21) stepped on a foothold which gave way. He knocked off Scott Campbell (18) who was 30 feet below and both fell 50 feet. Campbell uninjured: Bullpit injured head, spine, arm and chest. Gully was in summer condition – wet rock and misty. Lowered down rest of gully by Glencoe MRT. Airlift from corrie floor by RAF Sea King. Leuchars MRT. 148.

OCTOBER 30th to 31st – Father (50) and son (22) were trying to get down to Loch Achtriochtan in a gale at 22.30 from an E. to W. traverse of Aonach Eagach. 750 feet above the loch they flashed torches for help. Glencoe MRT replied by loudhailer. Pair thought help would come from top of Clachaig Gully, so, as rescuers tried to reach them, they walked back up nearly to top of Sgor nam Fiannaich. Not pleased the team caught them moving down the west flank, very slowly due to poor footwear and the cold. Base reached at 02.00. 79.

NOVEMBER 3rd to 4th – Joanne Santangeli (19) tore thigh ligaments on Sgor nam Fiannaich, 1 of 10 doing Aonach Eagach E.–W. She and 2 men winched by RAF Sea King after midnight. Glencoe MRT. 54.

NOVEMBER 10th – P & J report only. Glencoe MRT on standby for unnamed man who suffered a shoulder injury from a snow avalanche in Coire nam Beith. Walked off aided by a companion and was driven to Belford Hospital for treatment.

NOVEMBER 30th – E.–W. Traverse Aonach Eagach. Party of 4 (Male 16–24) overdue. Glencoe MRT stand-by.

OTHER CENTRAL HIGHLANDS

JANUARY 2nd to 3rd – False alarm. Search for a walker reported missing in Glen Duror. RN Sea King. Glencoe MRT. 75.

JANUARY 10th to 11th – Andrew Ravenhill (29) skied over a cornice on Meall Garbh (3,197 foot Loch Treig) in poor visibility, closely followed by Martin Crean (30). Despite minor injuries, Ravenhill walked out to Corrour Shooting Lodge from which he was airlifted by RAF Wessex on 11th. Crean fell on top of Ravenhill and died immediately: his body being recovered by Lochaber MRT on 11th. 50.

JANUARY 19th – Avalanche in Easy Gully, Creag Meagaidh. Andrew Lazenby (26) with slight injuries walked off before RAF Wessex arrived. Lochaber MRT. 13.

JANUARY 27th to 29th – Una Mary Erskine Campbell (82) walking alone in the foothills of the Monadhliath, as she was accustomed, died of a heart attack on a spur of Torr Garbh, Allt Mor, Newtonmore. She was found by a Police dog handler during a search by 121 people. Cairngorm MRT, SARDA, civilian volunteers, RAF Sea King. 818.

FEBRUARY 3rd – Alexander Tysen (35) and Ian Jeffrey (35) both died on South Post of Creag Meagaidh. Eye witness reports that Tysen led to the plateau, then passed 2 axes down to Jeffrey. As Jeffrey released his belay to set off up the top pitch, he lost his balance and fell sideways. The leader was either not belayed, or poorly belayed, because he was pulled off immediately and both fell 600 feet. RAF Sea King (returned). Evacuation by stretchers and then tracked vehicle. Lochaber MRT. 145.

- FEBRUARY 6th – From a party of 2, Ian Brook (37), without crampons, fell from the SW Shoulder of Aonach Mor and was killed. RN Sea King flew Lochaber MRT up Glen Nevis, but could not turn due to wind conditions. Aircraft climbed to safe altitude and recovered to Fort William for refuel and shutdown. Body stretchered down Coire Giubhsachan. 184.
- FEBRUARY 8th to 9th – Night and morning searches of Beinn a' Bheithir (Ballachulish Horseshoe) by Glencoe and Kinloss MRTs, SARDA and RAF Sea King were stopped when John Drummond (34) was seen walking down safely. 150.
- FEBRUARY 9th – Peter Baker injured climbing on Beinn Udlaidh, Tyndrum. Stretcher winched into RN Sea King able to land at site. 15.
- FEBRUARY 10th to 11th – Janet Fabian (60) separated from 3 others in the Geal-charn area of Ardverikie Forest. Overdue and benighted she 'bedded down' at the head of Lochan-nan-Earba, she was found safe by RAF Sea King near Moy, Loch Laggan. Cairngorm and Kinloss MRTs. 232.
- FEBRUARY 21st – Easy Gully, Creag Meagaidh. Stephen Christian (26) had a broken femur and opposite ankle. John Turner (19) killed. They had just started to descend when they triggered an avalanche which swept both down 1,000 feet. RUC and Lochaber MRTs. RAF Sea King. 67.
- FEBRUARY 21st – Leading Smith's Gully, Creag Meagaidh, Tim Snaith (28) injured a knee and broke both wrists when he slipped and fell 300 feet. His second held him on the rope and was uninjured. RUC and Lochaber MRTs, RAF Sea King. 80.
- MARCH 2nd to 17th – Glen Holme (36) drowned in Blackwater Reservoir on the last day of hillwalking holiday. He may have fallen off the dam wall, or fallen through thin ice. He was found by RAF Wessex. His car had been parked in Kinlochleven for about 2 weeks. Glencoe and Kinloss MRTs, SARDA. 326.
- MARCH 3rd – 2 men completed a climb on Creag Meagaidh, got lost and walked down wrong side. Retraced and descended correct side. Lochaber alerted.
- MARCH 4th to 5th – A man blown off the Carn Mor Dearg Arete and fell 500 metres before self-arresting, uninjured, in Coire Giubhsachan. He initiated a call-out for Lochaber MRT because his companion was left on the arete in a white-out with no map, compass, spare clothing and food. The one blown over had fallen with all the gear. However, the deserted one walked out to Allt a' Mhuilinn Dam before searching started. 11.
- MARCH 4th to 5th – A man of 41, the navigator of a party of 3, fell through a cornice on Stob a' Choire Mheadhoin (Loch Treig) and was uninjured. However he went to the valley and initiated a call-out for his 2 companions. After he had disappeared in a white-out they could not navigate and dug in for the night. Found wet but well by RAF Wessex. Lochaber MRT.
- MARCH 9th – 3 children with an instructor went on to the 'Etive Glades' Run, Cam Ghleann. They got lost in thick mist. Sandra Campbell (14) took a long fall and fractured her pelvis. Instructor walked to Kinghouse for help. Another girl fell but was not badly injured. MRT called out, but Ski Rescue Team found the children and stretchered Sandra off. In former years 2 men have been killed ski-ing Cam Ghleann. 9.
- MARCH 13th to 14th – 4 men benighted in very low mist walking from Glen Nevis to Luib Eilt. Heading for Kinlochleven they were found back in Glen Nevis. Glencoe MRT, RAF Sea King. 85.
- MARCH 21st – Joyce Kelly (27) was ski-ing from the summit of Meall a' Bhuiridh to the 'East Ridge' Run. She fell down a cliff at the edge of 'Flypaper' and sustained serious head, back and arm injuries. First aid by White Corries Ski Rescue Team and RAF Wessex winchman. Hoisted by Wessex later. Glencoe MRT. 28.
- MARCH 28th to 29th – Poorly equipped and without ice-axes or crampons, Paul Hyatt (37) and Melville Walker glissaded the N. Face of Ben Alder. Paul went into a meltwater hole and carried on down a cliff under the snow following the line of a waterfall. He suffered a double fracture of right femur, fracture left fibula and severe hypothermia. It is quite likely that the severe cold in the waterfall saved his life as there was severe blood loss and shock which did not become apparent till he was stabilised in hospital. Extraction by Cairngorm MRT from 20.00 to 08.00 was extremely awkward due to the steepness of the slope, instability of the snow, narrowness of space around Paul, and the continual waterfall on the rescuers. It was like working in a pothole. Melville also had hypothermia. RAF Sea King. 176.

- MARCH 29th – In a group of 4 descending N. Face Sgorr Dhonuill, Ballachulish, Martin Jones (30) started to glissade. A small outcrop appeared; he was losing control and tried to brake. His crampons bit in and he went head first over the outcrop, striking his un-helmetted skull on a rock. Fatal. Stretcher lower of 300 feet by Glencoe MRT to a hoist by RAF Wessex. 47.
- MARCH 29th – Marcus Brown (30) fell 800 feet down Easy Gully, Creag Meagaidh and was found buried in a drift with minor injuries. Shocked, he was airlifted by RAF Sea King. Lochaber MRT. 17.
- MARCH 31st to APRIL 1st – Unable to use a compass, and without a map (although he had Bennet's book on the Munros), a man of 27 split up from 3 companions on Carn Sgulain (Monadh Liath). They returned to Newtonmore and he went on to do the other Munros, following the march fence in mist. He went the wrong way and ended at Loch Ness, even then failing to inform police or his companions that he was safe. Cairngorm MRT and SARDA.
- MARCH 31st to APRIL 1st – Party of 4 men (36, 34, 33, 26) traversing An Gearanach, Mamores. 1 was ill so they went down to Steall Hut where they all spent the night as they were exhausted. Glencoe and Lochaber MRTs. 116.
- APRIL 8th – Ski-ing down Lemming Ridge (Aonach an Nid of Aonach Mor) after runs had been closed because of icy condition, David Hardie (40) fell and slid through a boulder field with serious injuries. Rescued by Ski Patrol. Lochaber MRT and RAF Sea King not needed. 18.
- APRIL 14th – Gordon Sellers (58) exhausted near top of Sgurr Choinnich Mor, Grey Corries. Assisted by 2 companions to west bealach, then airlifted by RAF Sea King. Lochaber MRT. 27.
- APRIL 15th – Search Creag Meagaidh. Lochaber MRT.
- APRIL 16th – Descending a ribbon of rock-hard snow from Carn Mor Dearg Arete to CIC, without crampons or ice-axe, Kai Tarapolevara (26) fell and fractured a collar bone. RAF Sea King lifted him from near hut. Lochaber MRT. 17.
- APRIL 24th – At the bottom bend of Steall Gorge, Glen Nevis, Margaret Scott (42) stumbled on a stone and broke her ankle. Lochaber MRT stretcher carry. Belford and Raigmore Hospitals. 9.
- MAY 5th – Tony Duggins (42) got cragfast on a small crag near White Corries Ski Complex. His predicament was spotted and reported by a paraglider. Hoisted on a rope by Glencoe MRT. 30.
- MAY 12th to 13th – Deliberate separation at col due east of Aonach Beag (Ben Alder). Man (34) failed to rendezvous at Ben Alder Cottage. Cairngorm MRT and SARDA, Police dogs. 114.
- MAY 17th – Allan Adams (42) fell 60 feet climbing alone above Lochan Uaine, Creag Meagaidh, and fractured his skull with shoulder bruises and hand cuts. He bivvied and did a self-rescue to the road. However, he was too ill to drive his car beyond Spean Bridge, where police and ambulance were alerted. Air ambulance from Fort William to Glasgow. 4.
- MAY 19th or 20th – Mary Pendreigh (47) had severe pain in her knee on the last stage of the West Highland Way between Blar a' Chaorainn and Glen Nevis. Lochaber MRT. 15.
- MAY 23rd – Una Cowan (21) broke her leg on scree descending from Ben Alder north towards Bealach Dubh. 3rd rescue on Ben Alder this year. Cairngorm MRT. RAF Sea King. 20.
- MAY 23rd – A very experienced mountaineer, Matthew Moulam (80) died on the SW Ridge of Stob Dubh, above Glenceitlin, Glen Etive. Descending, he fell when he stopped to clean his spectacles in light rain. He took 2 quick paces forward and a sod of heather broke from under his boots, so he rolled down a steep face. His elderly companion searched for an hour before she found him dead. Stretchered down by Glencoe MRT. RN Sea King was turned back by fog. 72.
- MAY 25th – Leading Acapulco E3 on Creag Dubh, Newtonmore, Gavin Thomas (26) fell to the bottom from the crux of the first pitch. Very badly smashed ankle. Stretchered down by Cairngorm MRT. 21.

MAY 27th – RAF Wessex airlifted Ivy Eley (68) with ankle injury from Beinn an Socaich (Grey Corries). Descending steep path wearing chamfered heel boots. Lochaber MRT. 19.

JUNE 20th to 21st – A party of 4 walking from Corrou Station to Rannoch on tracks became lost and spent the night on the hill. One went ahead to get help, but waited till daylight then returned to the party. Robert Keppie (64) had been OK during the night but took ill when he started walking again. Tayside Police SARU used a Range Rover, but Robert died from a heart condition before rescue. Evacuation by RAF Wessex. 12.

JUNE 26th to 27th – Strathclyde Police MRT and RN Sea King found Sydney Firth (58) after he had been separated from his party on Ben Cruachan. 8.

JUNE 30th – Walking up Mam na Gualainn (north of Loch Leven) with companions, Robert Nicol (67) collapsed with a heart attack and heat exhaustion at about 150 metres altitude. Glencoe MRT and Scottish Ambulance Service, who used a defibrillator, stretchered him down. 24.

SUMMER – Search by Police and Lochaber MRT after holidaymakers found man's body in ravine of Allt na h-Atha near A82 Fort William – Fort Augustus.

JULY 4th – All Terrain Vehicle overturned in hills above Loch Laggan. Dead on arrival (RAF Wessex). Body placed with police.

JULY 9th to 10th – Lewis Clark (18) suffered exhaustion at head of Loch Treig. Airlifted by RAF helicopter. Lochaber MRT. 17.

JULY 17th – Dominic Thoby (Male 29) wearing T shirt, jeans and trainers, got cragfast trying to climb out of the gorge by the south wall at Lower falls, Foyers (Loch Ness). Winched out by RAF Sea King. 14.

JULY 27th – Camping at Tigh-na-Sleubhaich, Mamores ((West Highland Way), Rudiger Kohlmayr (19) scalded his foot boiling water for tea. Companion walked to Kinlochleven on 28th. Rescue by Police 4W Drive Vehicle. 4.

AUGUST 3rd – Robert de Kinkelder (23) slipped on rocky ridge of An Gearanach ('Ring of Steall' seems to be the 'in' phrase) Mamores, dislocating knee (patella?). RAF Wessex lifted him to Fort William with companion. Wanted to pay for rescue. Lochaber MRT. 32.

AUGUST 5th to 6th – Walking from SSW up the 'wrong' side of Loch Ericht 14 children with teenage leader were lost on the craggy, rough, SE shore for almost 2 days. Some were only 8 years old. Even their (changed) intended new route up the W. side of the long loch would have been far too ambitious. It could have been a disaster if the weather had been poor as they had very little in the way of equipment or leadership. Several were rescued by fishermen in a boat, who raised the alarm at Dalwhinnie. Others were winched out by RAF Sea King. Cairngorm, Kinloss, Leuchars and Tayside MRTs, SARDA, Northern and Grampian Police. Several hundred man-hours.

AUGUST 24th to 25th – Failing to descend from the Mamores down Coire a'Mhail, Richard Bulmer (47) and Mavis Bulmer (44) had to bivouac. Found by RAF Wessex on summit of ridge just below Am Bodach. Airlifted and placed with Lochaber MRT at Polldubh.

NB – A real blackspot. This was noted last year. Also see cragfast rescue August 27th to 28th this year. To repeat: – 'The descent of this coire is not recommended to any who do not want to go down Steall Waterfall, unless they know at first hand the escape route.' J.H.

AUGUST 27th – Derek Liddington (29) stretchered by Lochaber MRT from Steall Gorge, Glen Nevis with fractured patella from slip on path. 23.

AUGUST 27th to 28th – Whistle blasts and torch flashes alerted as distant person when Philip Wilson got cragfast descending NE from Sgurr a'Mhaim into Coire a'Mhail, Mamores. Led off in 3 hours around midnight by Lochaber MRT. 18.

SEPTEMBER 7th – David Bawn (59) ill near top of Aonach Mor. Lifted by RAF Wessex.

SEPTEMBER 8th – John Russell (53) ill on Carn Mor Dearg W. Face above hut. Airlifted from CIC Hut by RAF Wessex. Lochaber MRT. 11.

OCTOBER 12th – Missing person search of Creag Dhubb area, Newtonmore for someone who had been elsewhere. Cairngorm MRT, SARDA, RAF Sea King. 276.

OCTOBER 18th—Col between Aonach Mor and Aonach Beag. In a party of 6, no crampons or helmets, Peter Stoneley (61) slipped on ice falling on to rocks and injuring head and back; William Ranger (63) injured his groin from a similar fall. Airlifted by RAF Wessex. Lochaber MRT. 38.

NOVEMBER 1st—Thomas Cooper (15) slipped and sprained an ankle crossing a river with his party. Loch Ericht track 1 mile NE of Ben Alder Cottage (MacCook's Bothy). Airlift by RAF Sea King with 3 Cairngorm MRT aboard. 202nd rescue by 202 Squadron in 1991. 10.

NOVEMBER 3rd—Margaret Coutts (60) slipped wearing trainers, went over on her ankle and fractured it, descending from Upper Achintore track into Glen Nevis. Stretcher carried by Lochaber MRT. 9.

NOVEMBER 25th—Lochaber MRT called out for person thought to be overdue on the hill.

CAIRNGORMS

JANUARY 12th—Geraldine Westrupp (37) fell after leading 2 rope lengths of a climb on Hell's Lum, Cairn Lochan, because the ice collapsed. She was held on an ice screw but injured her leg. Lowered by friends. RAF Sea King. 18.

JANUARY 13th—Injured skier Glenshee. RAF Wessex.

JANUARY 19th to 20th—Night search of Mayar and Dreish by both Tayside MRTs for Gordon Milne (38), Hugh Bell (32) and Graham Simpson (20). They got lost when benighted and dug in so well they had not heard their intended rescuers close by. Walked in at 09.30. RAF Wessex. 224.

JANUARY 23rd—Descending to Glen Muick from the Meikle Pap bealach, Nancy Redpath (60) slipped on ice near the path and broke her ankle. She wore lightweight boots. Grampian Police MRT and RAF Wessex. 10.

JANUARY 26th—James Hunter (20) killed by fall on skis. West Wall, Coire na Ciste, Cairngorm.

JANUARY 26th—Leslie Anderson (34) was leading a rope of 3 on Parallel Gully A, Lochnagar. He fell 200 feet when climbing the final snow cornice and was injured although held on the rope. Lowered to the foot of the climb by his rope mates and others. Hoisted by RAF Wessex. Grampian Police MRT. 19.

JANUARY 26th—Stuart Adam (17) was glissading a steep gully in the Winter Corrie of Dreish. His axe struck a hidden rock which knocked it from his hands. He then fell 250 feet and must have struck more rocks, one of which badly dented his helmet. With cardiac and cervical injuries he was airlifted by RAF Wessex but died in hospital. Tayside Police SARU. 42.

JANUARY 27th—Mark Selwood (27) soloing Aladdin's Mirror Direct, Coire an-t'Sneachda, Cairngorm. At 40 feet up first pitch he removed his right ice tool and the left tool pulled through the ice. He fell to the bottom then slid down neve into rocks. His helmet smashed and he got fatal head injuries, dying after rescue by RAF Sea King. Kinloss MRT. 10.

JANUARY 27th—Simon Underwood fell 10 feet and suffered a knee injury in Coire an-t'Sneachda, Cairngorm. Stretchered out to Snow-Trac by Kinloss and Dundonnell MRTs. RAF Sea King diverted to above rescue. 42.

JANUARY 28th—Brett Lund (23) unconscious from ski fall at foot of Coire Fionn, Glenshee. Ski Patrol rescue and RAF Wessex.

FEBRUARY 1st—Soloing Parallel Gully A, Lochnagar, Renny Allan Croft (Male 38) climbed the ice of the first pitch, then slipped at a small snow basin above the ice. He fell down the pitch and made no attempt to brake when sliding down the steep neve below. He was unconscious from head injuries and died next day in hospital. Grampian Police and Braemar MRT. RAF Wessex. 33.

FEBRUARY 4th—Kinloss MRT and RAF Sea King airborne for missing boy (9) on coastline N. of Peterhead. Aircraft returned to base when informed that boy was safe. 52.

- FEBRUARY 6th – Steep neve slope NE Face Cuidhe Crom, Lochnagar. Andrew Taylor (19) – his crampons caught in ice and he fell, breaking femur, tibia and fibula of right leg. Grampian Police and Braemar MRTs. Airlift by RAF Wessex to Dundee. 41.
- FEBRUARY 8th – Ian Gilder (36) without ice-axe or crampons, walked through a cornice above Coire an-t'Sneachda, Cairngorm, and fell 400 feet into soft snow and got bruised. He was walking out when he met a party from Glenmore Lodge. 4.
- FEBRUARY 10th – Ascending SW slope of Meall Chuaich, Dalwhinnie, Paul Glover (39) stopped and removed crampons, then stood up and slipped. He fell 30 feet into a shallow, rock strewn burn. His back and ribs were severely bruised with lacerations to his face and hands. His companion went for help and stopped a Police 4WD vehicle on the A9, which was able to reach him. 2.
- FEBRUARY 16th – Descending Coire Cas in darkness, Christopher Watts (39) slipped and injured his ankle. Rescue by Cairngorm Chairlift tracked vehicle. 4.
- FEBRUARY 26th to 28th – Searches of vast areas of moorland by RAF Sea King, police dogs, SARDA, Cairngorm and Kinloss MRTs for a disturbed man (45) wearing a kilt. Drynahan Lodge, Findhorn Valley, Dava Moor areas. Found safe in a cafe at Tomatin. 500.
- FEBRUARY 27th – Aberdeen and Braemar MRTs alerted for 2 skiers overdue in Glenshee. They turned up safe. 24.
- MARCH 2nd – George Blades (68) and Peter Blades (40) both got leg injuries from an avalanche of Aladdin's Couloir, Coire an-t'Sneachda, Cairngorm. RAF Sea King to Raigmore Hospital. 5.
- MARCH 2nd – Jill Murray (19) airlifted by RAF Sea King from Coire Cas.
- MARCH 2nd – Hearsay reports of 9 people avalanched in Northern Corries of Cairngorm. A few slight injuries airlifted by Sea King helo.
- MARCH 2nd – Fiona Stewart (36) and her husband were on summit of Glas Tulaichean in mist. He took a bearing to get them down but she walked ahead a few yards and disappeared through a cornice; falling down the E. Face and getting shaken and bruised. She tried to climb back up but fell again from below the cornice. Her husband descended by a less spectacular route and 'phoned rescuers. She was found descending Glen Taitneach by RAF Leuchars Landrover. Tayside Police SARU and RAF Wessex. 81.
- MARCH 2nd to 3rd – Leading Parallel Gully A, Lochnagar, Richard Berry (28) fell off the large plateau cornice. His second, George Brimlow (34) was belayed by one chock which pulled and both fell 800 feet. Berry was killed and Brimlow was unconscious with a cut face and broken wrist. Brimlow came round in darkness; then they were hit by an avalanche and Berry was partially buried, but his friend could not dig him out because the snow was frozen. With daylight Brimlow went to Gelder Shiel Bothy for help. Braemar, Grampian Police and Leuchars MRTs, RAF Sea King. 142.
- MARCH 2nd to 3rd – Kevin Rogers (32) and Andrew Bunnage (31) completed Eagle Ridge, Lochnagar in darkness and walked east roped. Visibility was poor in wind and snow. Bunnage was 20 feet left of Rogers when he fell through a cornice. Rogers was dragged 10 feet before he managed to hold. With no communication and the rope tight on the harnesses they stayed like that all night. At 09.30 Rogers managed to tie his ropemate off to an ice-axe and go down for help. Another climber lowered a top rope to Bunnage who climbed to safety. Braemar, Grampian and Leuchars MRTs, RAF Sea King. 80.
- MARCH 3rd – Nicholas French (7) fell into the sea from 120 foot clifftop at Slains Castle, Cruden Bay, Aberdeenshire. Fatal. His father was treated for hypothermia after rescue attempt. Police. Peterhead Coastguard and Lifeboat. RAF Sea King.
- MARCH 9th to 10th – Lynda Blackwell (31) separated from 2 friends in mist and climbed Mount Keen alone. She got lost NW of the summit and stayed put for the night without shelter or extra clothing. She walked out to Glascorrie on S. Deeside Road. Aberdeen, Braemar and Grampian Police MRTs. 39.
- MARCH 15th to 16th – David Park (35) and Douglas Jeffries (35) got cragfast under an unusually large cornice at the top of Parallel Gully B, Lochnagar. They stayed the night. At midday Aberdeen, Braemar and Grampian Police MRTs lowered a rope to them from the plateau, with a radio attached. They were hoisted up and walked off. 328.

MARCH 21st—Party of 10 ski-touring Lurchers Gully, Andrew Oxley (24) fell and broke leg. RAF Sea King. 5.

MARCH 30th to 31st—Mayar area, Glen Doll. Robert Bogie (37), with a dog, could not navigate off the hill in mist and darkness, so they stayed the night. When he emerged from his shelter he met another man who had also been benighted, because he lost his compass in snow, but no-one had known he was missing. All 3 got down safely. Both Tayside Teams, RAF Wessex. 94.

APRIL 23rd—Attempting to walk from Loch Lee over Mount Keen to Ballater, David Hutchison (44) pulled a calf muscle but carried on. He was found by Grampian Police landrover near Shiel of Tanar Bothy. 9.

MAY 4th to 5th—David Gilhan (40) suffered an illness aggravated by exhaustion (carrying very heavy pack) in Lairig Ghru near Corroir Bothy. Aberdeen and Grampian Police MRTs. RAF Sea King airlift. 30.

MAY 23rd—Una Warren (12) in an organised party of 24 children simply fell on flat ground on Meall an Daimh, Ben Vrackie, Pitlochry, bruising a thigh. Tay Police SARU, RAF Wessex.

MAY 24th—Man (25) hoisted by Cullen firemen when he was stuck halfway up a 120 foot sea cliff at Portknockie, Banffshire.

MAY 25th to 26th—Adam Liversedge (20) fell 20 feet and got knee ligaments torn (rock gave way under his weight) leading 'Citadel,' Shelter Stone Crag. Held and then lowered off by companion and bivvied in Shelter Stone. Could not walk out next day. Good weather airlift by RAF Sea King. Cairngorm MRT. 10.

MAY 25th—1 mile south of Lochcallater Lodge, Braemar, Sheila Heron (43) stumbled on a rabbit burrow and sprained an ankle. Carried out by Braemar MRT. 6.

JUNE 1st to 2nd—4 girls (all 14) on an award scheme got lost in Abernethy Forest. They had been told to camp if they got lost and await rescue! They were found by 4 Cairngorm MRT members using mountain bikes for searching. Is this a first for Scotland? Also searching were Glenmore Lodge and RAF Sea King. 100.

JUNE 1st to 3rd—Searches by Grampian Police, Cairngorm, Kinloss and Glenmore Lodge MRTs for 2 birdwatchers: Graeme Dickson (39) and Michael Millar (25) who camped at Lochan Buidhe on the Cairngorm Plateau. On 2nd June they wakened to find the ground snow covered and visibility poor. Having no map or compass and unable to navigate they stayed put and were found by RAF Wessex at 16.40 on June 3rd. 65.

JUNE 5th—Robert Wareham (32) was walking on a ridge, midway down a cliff near Todhead Lighthouse, Kineff when he fell 10 feet on to a rock ledge breaking a leg. Ambulance Service and Grampian Police.

JUNE 16th—Aberdeen MRT alerted for a boy missing in Fetteresso Forest, near Stonehaven. He turned up safe. 10.

JUNE 17th—Aberdeen MRT on standby for mentally handicapped walker missing in Peters Hill area. Safe. 10.

JULY 6th—George Fowle (57) was delayed waiting for a friend on a traverse of Macdui and Derry Cairngorm. Overdue but safe. Grampian Police. 2.

JULY 8th—A lad of 19 in charge of his stepmother got separated from her in mist, then he got lost. She searched the top of Peter Hill, Forest of Birse, Banchory for 2 hours before going for help. He was found wet and cold, but safe by RAF Sea King on a steep slope above River Avon. Grampian Police and Braemar MRTs. 65.

JULY 25th—HM Coastguard, Police and RAF Sea King involved when man (24) slipped off rocks into sea, and brother (29) went in to save him. Both treated for shock and one for hypothermia. Cransdale Rocks, Collieston, Aberdeenshire.

JULY 28th—Polney Crag, Craig a Barns, Dunkeld. Stuart Murray was 20 feet up, leading the 1st pitch of a climb. Leaning back to place a nut runner, he overbalanced and fell sustaining a compound fracture of a leg with a smashed and dislocated ankle of the same leg. Ambulance crew, local doctor, Tayside Police SARU. 12.

AUGUST 4th—Upper Cave Crag, 'Coffin Corner,' Craig a Barns. Leading, Steven MacKenzie (28) fell off at 30 feet on 1st pitch. His runners pulled so he fell to the ground, breaking his wrist, with cuts to face, arms, shoulders and legs. Carried to road by Police and Ambulance Service.

- AUGUST 4th—On a footpath beside Burn o' Vat, Ballater, Florence Dixon (50) slipped and broke her ankle. Stretchered to road by Braemar MRT. 28.
- AUGUST 9th—Charles Chatterley (42) was late reaching Glen Derry from Sugar Bowl, over Cairn Lochan and Macdui. Aberdeen, Grampian Police MRTs. 23.
- AUGUST 17th to 18th—Steven Webster (35) and Stewart Strang (32) were trying to get back to Coire Cas Car park from Beinn Mheadhoin. They got lost at Fords of Avon, then their map disintegrated in the rain. They rested at Bynack Stables and walked out at dawn. Cairngorm MRT. 21.
- AUGUST 18th to 19th—Overdue in Lairig Ghru, Peter Meenan (44) and Susy Meenan (12) turned up safe. Cairngorm MRT. 4.
- AUGUST 21st—Kirsten Felscher (16) slipped on a scree path near Loch Avon head, spraining her ankle. Member of party of 8 German scouts. All lifted by RAF Sea King. 15.
- AUGUST 31st—Leading 3rd pitch of 'Big Deil's Route' on Hell's Lum, David Bissett (33) slipped on dry rock and fell 13 feet on to a ledge, breaking an ankle. He lowered his 2nd till she was at the foot of the climb, abseiling himself. He was rope-stretchered from there and airlifted by RAF Sea King. Glenmore Lodge MRT. 10.
- SEPTEMBER 1st—Walker with heat exhaustion on Craig an Dail Bheag, Glengairn, Braemar. Airlifted by RAF Wessex. Grampian Police MRT. 11.
- SEPTEMBER 1st—Aberdeen MRT recovered walker with severe blisters from Glen Derry. 2.
- SEPTEMBER 24th—Tracy Reid (Female 20), ill at Bob Scott's Bothy, was taken by vehicle to Aberdeen RI and detained. Grampian Police. 8.
- OCTOBER 9th to 10th—Successful search for deaf man Anthony Duffy (50) found near East Summit Carn Bhac between Glens Ey and Geldie. Though cold and wet he walked off unaided. A mountain bike had been found at the top of Allt Christie Beag track. Aberdeen, Braemar, Grampian Police, Leuchars MRTs, RAF Wessex and Sea King. 555.
- OCTOBER 10th—Leuchars searcher from above incident got separated in mist and walked down wrong glen. Braemar, Kinloss, Grampian Police MRTs, RAF Wessex. 159.
- OCTOBER 11th to 12th—Searches of Craig Dhubh, Newtonmore. Missing man (48) was safe elsewhere. Cairngorm and Gordonstoun MRTs, SARDA, RAF Sea King. 288.
- OCTOBER 14th—Cairngorm MRT plus volunteers and SARDA searched woodlands around Coylumbridge for a missing boy (13). Found safe in Aviemore. 72.
- DECEMBER 7th—Hamish Irvine (28) was approaching the climbs in Coire an-t'Sneachda, Cairngorm—in a party of 3—when he dislodged a large rock which gave him a bad tibial fracture. Lift by RAF Sea King. 8. *See article this issue!*
- DECEMBER 22nd—Neil Mackland (23), walker with minor head injury found near summit Lochnagar by RAF Stafford MRT on training exercise. RAF Wessex airlift and Grampian Police MRT. He had been blown over when descending path with a companion. 32.
- DECEMBER 29th—Catherine Arnold (65) was returning from Chalamain Gap when she slipped on path high above Allt Mor, Cairngorm, opposite and above Sugar Bowl, spraining an ankle. Nearby RAF Sea King effected night rescue in good weather and visibility. Cairngorm MRT. 6.

SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS

- JANUARY 2nd—Without crampons but carrying an ice-axe, descending W. Face Stob Binnein, Graham Cameron (23) slipped on steep neve. Severe chest (haemo-pneumo thorax) and arm injuries. Stretcher lowered by Killin MRT to RN Sea King hoist. 120.
- JANUARY 14th—A body seen by a lady with binoculars in twilight turned out next day to be a rock protruding the snow on Wood Hill. Ochils MRT. SARDA. 95.
- JANUARY 14th to 15th—Robert Bleach (40) descending NE Ridge, Ben Lui, could not see well because of spindrift so he snowholed overnight, not seeing lights of nearby rescue searchers. His descent next day was hampered because he had lost his glasses in the snowhole, but he did see the Wessex rescue helicopter. However he waved so cheerily they thought he was not the guy they were looking for, so he had to walk down. Killin and Leuchars MRTs, SARDA. 389.

- JANUARY 26th—Descending hard neve on East Ridge, Ben Lui, David Davies (31) slipped, failed to brake with his ice-axe and fell 1,000 feet down slopes and over a crag. Fatal head injuries. He was wearing bendy boots without crampons. Evacuated by Killin MRT using a wheeled stretcher. RN Sea King had to hover/Taxi along A82 to Crianlarich due to deteriorating weather, and was unable to maintain separation from high voltage wires, so landed at Ardlui and stayed overnight once casualty was confirmed as dead. 121.
- JANUARY 27th—Clifford Healey (53) and Susan Healey (49) were descending steep neve on Ciochan Beinn Laoigh (N. Ridge Ben Lui) when one of Clifford's crampon bars broke. Trying to fix it he slipped and fell 500 feet losing his axe trying to brake and sustaining chest and arm injuries. Susan fell 100 feet trying to reach him, with facial abrasions. 130.
- JANUARY 27th—Descending through woods in Coire Chaorach (below Ben More NE Ridge) Amanda Orr (25) tripped and broke an ankle. Killin MRT. 18.
- JANUARY 28th to 29th—With a map and no compass Ronald Bray (45) got lost in thick mist near the top of Ben Lui. He wandered to south side of Ben Oss and bivvied. Picked up by Killin Police 4WD on hill-road Glen Falloch.
- FEBRUARY 3rd—Descending from Ben More by a ridge in mist, Peter White (31) slipped into Central Gully and slid down snow slope about 200 feet. His companion lost sight of him, went down alone and reported him missing. Killin MRT and SARDA were called out but he walked down uninjured. 10.
- FEBRUARY 3rd—4 experienced walkers with crampons and ice-axes were attempting the main Lawers Ridge from Meall Garbh. They were not using a rope or helmets. At the steep ascent of the NE Ridge of An Stuc and near the top of it, Thomas McArthur (54) lost his footing on ice, slid and tried to brake but the axe was wrenched from his hands. He went to the foot of a steep drop and got bad head injuries. He was left unconscious in a bivvy bag. A night search in extreme conditions failed and he was recovered dead next day by Tayside Police SRU. 133.
- FEBRUARY 3rd to 4th—Andrew Neil (29) and Alistair Wilson (27) forced to dig in after a white-out on the Cobbler. Walked down safe. Arrochar MRT positioned and recovered by RN Sea King. 26.
- FEBRUARY 16th—Brian Ludwig (42) descending N. Face Ben More with ice-axe and crampons alone got cragfast because of steepness. Escorted down safely by Killin MRT. 44.
- FEBRUARY 20th—Although it was their 13th Munro a party of 3 were inexperienced and were attempting Stuc a'Chroin from Ben Vorlich without ice-axes or crampons. Near the summit David Nicol (31) sat down to await a companion when he slipped and fell 300 feet down snow and rock, fracturing his neck (5th cv) and sustaining skull and pelvic injuries. Stretcher carried by Killin MRT and winched by RAF Wessex. 72.
- MARCH 9th to 10th—Angus MacDonald (30) and Frederick Fermor (28) started noon and got benighted on Schiehallion. In mild conditions they found good shelter and walked off safe next day. Tayside teams alerted.
- APRIL 3rd—A slip on wet grass when Jacqueline Anderson (22) was descending east slopes of Maol Mor was aggravated by her wearing nylon jacket and trousers. Her outer clothing had negligible friction so she fell further and went over a 15 foot crag causing lumbar spinal fractures. Maol Mor is west of Loch Katrine. Lomond MRT called out. Airlift by RN Sea King. 8.
- APRIL 7th—Margaret Firth (42) suffered a leg injury when she was blown over in Alva Glen. Stretcher carried down steep sided glen by Ochils MRT. Helicopter not requested because of violent wind gusts.
- APRIL 20th—Descending NNE Ridge Ben Lui wearing light summer boots and without ice-axe and crampons, Raymond Collins (22) slipped on neve, fell 100 feet breaking his back and compound fracture of leg. RAF Wessex placed winchman on hill then helicopter landed on ridge to load casualty. Mist came down and helicopter was weathered in at 3,000 feet. Killin MRT stretchered casualty down and also assisted aircrew off the mountain. 144.
- APRIL 27th—Callander Craig—to NW of town. Robert Smart (12) scrambling on heavily wooded rocky steepness fell 20 feet due to looseness and decaying vegetation. Shock and pain to leg and neck but no serious injuries. Stretchered by Killin MRT. 9.

- MAY 4th—Unconscious casualty (J. Kerr) stretcher winched by RN Sea King from foot of outcrop on Ben Cruachan. Fallen climber. 21.
- MAY 11th—Lomond MRT helped Stewart Aikman (32) down Ben Lomond Tourist Path. One of 168 entries in a private entry hill race he had slipped and hurt his leg. 28.
- MAY 28th—Wearing trainers, scrambling on Creag Bheithie, Pass of Leny. With a companion, Martin Nixon (17) was climbing a gully near Poggleswood, Callander. Slipped (rock and grass) and fell 30 feet. Arm and leg injuries. Assisted walked down by Central Police. 3.
- MAY 28th—Walking on a path on Craigmore, Aberfoyle, Margaret Keenan (45) suffered a heart attack. Ambulance stretcher was not good enough so Callander Police assisted with MacInnes stretcher. 7.
- JUNE 3rd—RN Sea king recovered Philomena Muggins (41) from Ben Lomond with a broken leg. 10.
- JUNE 18th—Hills in Loch Ard Forest. Hill walker with broken ankle, Gladys Matthews, stretcher lifted by RN Sea King. Police and Ambulance. 6.
- JULY 1st—Reay Leask (Male 64) died of a heart attack when walking with his wife on moors near Strathblane. Stretchered by Killin MRT. 11.
- JULY 1st—Two men in their 60s got lost and overdue walking from Brig o' Turk to Balquhider without a compass. Killin MRT. 12.
- JULY 17th—RAF Wessex. Report of walker in distress Beinn Dorain. False alarm.
- JULY 21st—RAF Wessex lifted Matilda Ingram (47) from Schiehallion suffering spinal fracture, neck and head injuries. With a party of 23 she had gone ahead of a slower companion descending from the summit to Braes of Foss. She had strayed from main path and slipped on scree. Tayside Police SARU. 4.
- AUGUST 8th—Kenneth Duffus (14) winched by RAF Wessex from 50 feet up Kincaig (sea cliffs) at Elie, East Neuk of Fife. Cragfast on holiday.
- AUGUST 14th—Male of about 65 died of a heart attack on a path through a grouse moor at the eastern end of Glen Lyon. Airlift RAF Wessex.
- AUGUST 18th—Albert Pitters (47) was hill walking with his daughter (10) on Meall Reamber, St. Fillans. Climbing a deer fence, a wire broke causing a fall on to rock and a tumble of 30 feet. Broken pelvis and slight head injury. Airlifted to Stirling by RAF Wessex. 5.
- AUGUST 23rd to 24th—Searches by both Tayside MRTs, Kinloss MRT, SARDA, RAF Wessex and RAF Sea King for 2 lost and benighted boys (both 13). They had run ahead from 2 leaders and 2 other boys in mist on a path at the Ben Lawers/Ben Glas bealach. Walked out to Lawers village safely. 605.
- SEPTEMBER 1st—Lady with ankle injury Ben Lawers. Airlifted by RAF Wessex.
- SEPTEMBER 28th—Descending Ben Lomond Tourist Track, Carol Goddard (36) slipped on grass and broke an ankle. Stretchered by Lomond MRT and airlifted by RAF Wessex. 100.
- OCTOBER 10th—Linda Wilson (17) slipped on wet grass on sheep track beside Glenwhinnel Burn and sprained her ankle. Stretchered. Ochils MRT. 21.
- OCTOBER 12th—James Clelland (50) took ill with a heart attack, when he was in a party of 3 near the summit of Meall Glas, Glen Lochay Hills. Evacuation in mist. Killin MRT & RAF Wessex.
- DECEMBER 20th to 21st—False alarm. Search of Dumyat by Ochils MRT and SARDA for student (Male 24) missing overnight. 18.

SKYE

- MARCH 26th—Rotten Gully, Inaccessible Pinnacle, Sgurr Dearg. Traversing Cuillin Ridge with 2 friends, Mark Pearce (25) was lowering himself down a small drop when his handhold rock came away, causing his death from a 600 foot fall. The party had unroped and removed helmets as the ridge was considered easy just then. Skye MRT, RAF Sea King. 45.

- APRIL 13th – Climbing an unnamed gully on The Storr, Richard Gammack (26) slipped down a scree/clay slope and became cragfast 175 feet up the gully. Rescued by a Skye MRT abseiler. 41.
- APRIL 18th – Michael Goulbourne (34) slipped on screw/scree and was cut and bruised. Great Stone Shoot, Sgurr Alasdair. Skye MRT, RAF Sea King. 68.
- MAY 20th – Cow winched out safely by RN helicopter after 100 foot fall into gorge at Watninish.
- MAY 21st – Patricia Barnham (21) lifted by HMCg helicopter with badly sprained ankle. Slip in Glen Dibidal (SW of MacLeod's Table South).
- MAY 22nd – Robert Neill (57) fractured a scapula leading on Window Buttress, Sgurr Dearg. He slipped and fell 12 feet, pulling a runner and falling on to his 2nd. Skye MRT and HMCg helicopter. 35.
- MAY 27th – Coir a' Tairneilar. HMCg helicopter lifted Royal Marine. Heat exhaustion.
- MAY 28th – Alan Kimber reported he had seen a woman leader (It turned out to be Kathleen Sweeney (39)) falling to her death on Sron na Ciche, probably on Median Route, or off route on the East Buttress, the falling body accompanied by a shower of loose rock which was probably indicating a hold or holds coming away. Kimber managed to get to a second woman who had stopped the fall and was still on the stance with the body hanging on a tight rope. An RAF Sea King had taken the dead leader off the cliff and then Kimber had escorted the second (who had bruised or broken fingers from holding on to the rope) to above an overhang, where she was in a position to be also airlifted. Skye MRT. 42.
- MAY 30th – A slip on dry rock during a roped climb on the South Buttress, Sgurr Dearg caused Ian Brown (39) to fall 15 feet and dislocate his knee. Airlift by RAF Sea King on training with Skye MRT leader aboard. 3.
- JUNE 7th – Trying to lead 3rd pitch of a climb on Sron na Ciche, Mark Gibson (23) pulled up on a handhold which came away causing a fall and leg injuries. Airlift HMCg helicopter. Skye MRT. 24.
- JULY 24th to 25th – Aella Cage (Male 25), Heather Matthews (24), Kathryn Wycharies (23) and Liza Greatrex (22) got lost on a return walk from Loch Coruisk and camped down overnight. Vain search by Skye MRT. HMCg helicopter called but missing people turned up. 71.
- AUGUST 2nd – Upper Coire Lagan. Mary Millar (44) tripped when running down wet rock slabs fracturing her left lower leg and ankle. Airlift by RAF Sea King. Skye MRT. 30.
- AUGUST 16th – HM Coastguard Boat 007 launched Portree to assist Police in recovery of 2 bodies from base of cliff on north side Portree Bay. They had apparently fallen whilst attempting to climb.
- AUGUST 19th – Coruisk Path, half mile S. of Sligachan. Coro Nurez (Female 33) slipped on mud breaking a leg. Skye MRT. Air Ambulance to Inverness. 13.
- AUGUST 28th – Film crew on location at The Storr. Production manager Ginny Roncoroni (44) slipped on dry moorland twisting her knee. Skye MRT. 3.
- SEPTEMBER 2nd – Ref: 464254 Am Basteir. David Hurst (37) was climbing with Michael Osbourne. Osbourne went ahead a short distance to plan their route and called back to Hurst. Hurst agreed on the route and set out to join his friend. Osbourne heard a noise and saw Hurst fall 100 feet bouncing off rocks then going out of view. Osbourne climbed down 500 feet to where his friend had stopped, obviously dead from extensive injuries. Recovery by Skye MRT, Police, RAF Sea King. 71.
- SEPTEMBER 3rd to 4th – Separation incident. Paul Bright (27) failed to meet his companions camping at Loch Coruisk. He walked out safe to Strathaird Farm. Kinloss and Skye MRTs, HMCg, RAF Sea King. 61.
- SEPTEMBER 8th – Walking near Banachdich Gully, Derek Walker (46) was immobilised by a trapped nerve. Passers-by alerted Skye MRT, but he got down uninjured. 4.
- SEPTEMBER 11th – Beinn Dearg Mhor, Red Cuillin (above Loch Ainort). Peter Molloy (29) slipped on the S. ridge above Coire nan Laogh, fell 20 feet on to scree then rolled a further 30 feet suffering cuts, abrasions and concussion. Companion alerted passing motorists. Skye MRT. RAF Sea King. 29.

SEPTEMBER 19th to 20th Alone on hill James Donaldson (31) sustained arm and scalp injuries descending Sgurr Dearg (Ref: 445214 An Stac or head of Coire Lagan) in rain and mist. At one point he had to abseil from a large block, but it moved and he fell 80 feet and was unconscious for 3 hours. He survived in a bivvy bag and at 11.00 alerted passers-by with whistle blasts. Airlift by RAF Sea King to Broadford, later Raigmore. Skye MRT. 72.

OCTOBER 26th—Party of 5. John Spiller (51) slipped on wet scree in Coire na Banachdich (Ref: 436216) and hurt his leg. Stretcher Skye MRT. 147.

ISLANDS (other than Skye)

MARCH 1st—Couple in early 20s overdue from Barkeval, Hallival, Askival traverse to Glen Dibidil.

MARCH 15th to 16th—Mull presumably. Salen Coastguard found Catherine MacGillivray (21) and Andrew Howie cold and wet, otherwise unhurt, near Gortferen. They intended to walk from Ariveagaig to Acarsaid Point.

APRIL 1st—Rescue of Marie van Keinbi on Isle of Rum.

APRIL 1st—Anne Hempstock (52) slipped on wet rock on Newton shore path, Lochranza, Arran. Leg injury. Stretchered out by fellow walkers and ambulance service. Arran MRT called out. 7.

APRIL 17th to 18th Walking alone, Sandra Murray (46) got lost in mist and darkness and bivvied out amongst rocks. Glen Rosa area. Arran MRT. 26.

MAY 25th to 26th Searches by Rum National Nature Reserve staff and Langside Club for Mr and Mrs Skelton lost and benighted on Askival. Map blew away. Cloud base 500 feet on east, down to sea level on west. Eventually they got down on east side of the range. No route plan had been left so searches were extensive. 120.

MAY 27th—Sarah Risbin (23) leading South Ridge Direct, Cir Mhor, Arran was unable to haul over the top of 'Y' Crack and she came off. Her protection held the first time and she was uninjured. She tried a second time and fell off injuring an ankle. Her party arranged an assisted abseil. Airlifted to mainland by RN Sea King. 15.

MAY 29th—Island of Rona (between Skye and Torridon). Ann Kaley, injured walker, recovered from coast with suspected broken leg by RN Sea King re tasked whilst airborne. 6.

JUNE 13th—Lochovinish? Which Island? Walker collapsed. Airlift to Stornoway by HMCG helicopter. Good weather.

JULY 10th—One of a party of 12. Andreana Wells (20) slipped on the south side of the Roas/Sannox Saddle and sprained her ankle. Good weather. Stretchered out by Strathclyde Police and Arran MRT.

JULY 14th to 16th A party of 6 girls (16–18) on a Duke of Edinburgh Award hike failed to turn up at a bothy and were found on the West Coast of Jura.

JULY 20th—Lynn McCormack (13) injured a leg on the Goat Fell Path. She was helped down by her father and other walkers. Arran MRT. 4.

SEPTEMBER 2nd—Caren-nan-Sgeir, a rock 7 miles NW of Ullapool. While walking on a shingle beach on the island a woman passenger from a cruise boat slipped and broke her leg. Airlifted to Lewis by HMCG helicopter.

SEPTEMBER 15th—Ardmeanach Peninsula, Mull. RN Sea King and HMCG Officer stretcher rescued injured walker from base of cliff near Fossil Tree. 15.

OCTOBER 13th—Leon Shaw (21) fell climbing (a rope?) on Tannera Mor, Summer Isles. He fractured his skull, 2 ankles and a wrist. Airlift to Raigmore by Rescue 119 helicopter.

OCTOBER 15th to 16th First light search during gales and snow showers for missing stalker in Paic area, Lewis. Spotted by fish farm boat near head of Loch Shell. Airlifted by HMCG helicopter to Seaforth Head.

OCTOBER 20th Man washed off rocks at Point of Ness, Lewis. HMCG crews and HMCG helicopter. (from ITV report).

OCTOBER 25th—Edith McKelvie (78) and Elizabeth Craig (74) overdue but returned home safe. Arran MRT and SARDA. 12.

- JANUARY 20th—RN Sea King rescued (day into night) 2 injured walkers from Afton Reservoir (New Cumnock to Carsphairn Range). 10.
- MAY 5th—RN Sea King recovered fallen climber, Joseph McMahon, from 2 km east of Largs. 5.
- AUGUST 20th to 21st—St. Ann's area (near Forest of Ae). Moffat HRS searched woods and steep river gorge for partly-sighted male, later traced safe in Dumfries. 110.
- AUGUST 22nd—Moffat HRS walked off 1 woman and stretchered off another. They had been stranded near the waterfall of Grey Mare's Tail. Released after hospital treatment. 60.
- AUGUST 26th to 27th—Youth of 16 was found by forest workers at Blackhill of Bush Bothy after failing to find a rendezvous with his father, for late night fishing at Loch Dee, 3 miles in wrong direction. Searches of river by SARDA, Police and Galloway MRT. 96.
- SEPTEMBER 8th—Alan Warren (70) was recovering from a stroke in Dumfries Infirmary after an airlift by RN Sea King from Barholm Hill, Wigtown Bay. Galloway MRT. 26.
- SEPTEMBER 8th—Christine Millar (55) hillwalking with 2 female companions near Tala Linnfoots, Tweedsmuir, on Carlvain Hill (Ref: 78/142189). She stumbled in a hole, breaking her right tibia and fibula and dislocating her ankle. Stretchered off by Tweed Valley MRT to ambulance. 15.
- SEPTEMBER 16th—Lamb Hill area of Pennine Way, Cheviots. Sarah Martel was walking on duck-boarded path. She stood on one end of a board which went down. The other end see-sawed as it was not fixed down and she suffered broken foot bones. Later she got blistered knees from crawling to a hut. Borders SRU, Police, Ambulance. 84.
- OCTOBER 12th—Elderly male with a medical condition separated from friends near top of Hartfell. Found own way down. Moffat HRS, RN Sea King. 40.
- NOVEMBER 7th to 8th—Near Kirkconnel, Moffat HRS found man suffering from hypothermia at daybreak on his 81st birthday, while awaiting RN Sea King. Stretchered to ambulance and he recovered in hospital. 60.
- NOVEMBER 30th—Forest of Ae.
- NOVEMBER 30th to DECEMBER 1st—Galloway part of Southern Uplands Way. 2 walkers found safe. 100.

NON-MOUNTAINEERING INCIDENTS

- JANUARY 16th—Search for missing person at Dalbeattie, Kirkcudbrightshire. SARDA and Moffat HRS. 35.
- JANUARY 16th—SARDA standby for missing elderly patient at Dumfries.
- FEBRUARY 18th—False alarm. Aircraft crash suspected when flares and bangs were reported near Peebles, but a youth had discovered pyrotechnics in his father's dinghy and accidentally discharged some. RAF Wessex helicopters. Police. Kinloss MRT. 350.
- MARCH 18th—Moffat HRS helped Police search for young man who left a suicide note. Found dead a week later in a locked building. 80.
- MARCH 31st—Tweed Valley MRT called out to search for a woman missing overnight. She 'phoned in—safe. SARDA. 12.
- APRIL 13th—Police found a car with a note. Called out Tweed Valley MRT but driver was found safe before they deployed.
- MAY 7th—Richard Beattie (20) killed by falling tree when working in forest at Glen Rosa. Recovered on stretcher by Arran MRT. 3.
- DATE—Search for patient missing overnight from Dingleton Hospital, Melrose. She was found safe. Tweed Valley MRT.
- JUNE 22nd—Search by Moffat HRS for driver of Landrover found 48 hours before on its side in a ditch. Missing person found in Merseyside. 72.
- AUGUST 17th—Moffat HRS helped Police search for person missing from remote farm, later known to have been abducted. 50.

OCTOBER 1st to 2nd – 70 year old man was found cold and safe in a cowshed after a pub visit. Glenelg and Kinloss MRTs. RAF Sea King. 324.

NOVEMBER 3rd – Kinloss MRT came on a road accident on A9 south of Aviemore. They alerted Glenmore Lodge on civilian MRT frequency who reacted instantly to call an ambulance. 4 casualties still trapped in a Fiesta were treated.

NOVEMBER 16th – Mid Murthat. Moffat HRS helped Police search for missing person from N-bound train. Nothing found. Carriage door found open when train stopped at signal. 70.

NOVEMBER 30th – Lothian Police, Tweed Valley MRT, SARDA and Border SARU searched River Tweed for Ian Cleghorn (69) found drowned at Gattonside (Weir). 74.

DECEMBER 4th – Search by Tweed Valley MRT and SARDA of grounds and area surrounding a hospital, for a missing woman patient (26). She was found safe in a house by Police. 87.

DECEMBER 8th – Low flying light aircraft thought to be in difficulties in Kirriemuir/Glamis area. Red flares seen in Clova/Prosen area. Search by Police and RAF Wessex called off at dark.

IN MEMORIAM

COLIN DODGSON j.1952

COLIN VALENTINE DODGSON died on July 27th, 1991, after a long struggle borne with his characteristic grit and determination. When he joined the Club in 1952, at the age of forty-two, he had already completed all the Munro's, the Corbett's, all the 2000ft tops in England, the 2,500fts in Wales and the 3,000ft summits in Ireland. By the time he was seventy-five, he had completed all the 2,000ft tops in Great Britain. What was even more remarkable was that the great majority of these were done in winter conditions and often alone. His occupation as the owner of a busy tea-garden in his native village of Grasmere precluded anything but strictly local activities for the greater part of the year. During these 'inactive' months, he and his great friend, Tim Tyson, would get up at dawn and wander the local fells achieving their ambition to bathe in all the 729 tarns in the Lake district.

If ever a man could be said to be devoted to the hills, it was Colin; but he had other interests too, the chief of which, apart from his family, was music. He sang in four Cumbrian choirs and made annual visits to Covent Garden and Glyndebourne.

He was a great companion on the hills and quite unshakable by any quirks of weather or fate, greeting any mild disaster with a shrug of the shoulder, a grin and 'it could have been worse!'

His sense of humour was quiet but impish and he had tremendous stamina. Those who enjoyed the pleasure of his company will share, to some extent, the sense of loss that Rita, his wife, and the rest of his family have suffered.

R.R.S. Higgins.

DEREK LEAVER j.1958

THE SURVIVING mountaineering fraternity of the fifties and sixties was immensely saddened to hear of the untimely death last year of one of the most active participants of that momentous era.

Derek arrived on the Scottish scene in the early fifties as a student at Edinburgh University, and indulged his passion for climbing with both the EUMC and the Edinburgh JMCS - one club was insufficient to cater for the active requirements of Derek and many of his illustrious contemporaries such as Smith, Marshall, the Currie Boys, O'Hara, to name but a few. He was also soon to join the SMC (1958) whereupon he served on the Committee (1962-65) and, for a number of years, as an ever-present Honorary President of the Edinburgh JMCS.

His climbing friends have suffered a double bereavement since Derek lamentably withdrew completely from roped climbing after his marriage in the sixties, although he always retained his love of the mountains. One wonders whether the tragic death of Clarkson, a climbing associate of many years, could have influenced the decision to eliminate his more hazardous pastimes in the interests of family life. Derek's mountaineering abilities were mirrored in his professional life. Notwithstanding his all embracing mountaineering activities on hill, rock, ice and the Continent, he graduated brilliantly in Chemistry, and was instantly retained by Edinburgh University first as a Research Fellow, and then as one of the youngest lecturers in Organic Chemistry. I was privileged to know him well in both capacities, although my contacts with him were infrequent in recent years.

Derek was a remarkable man. At a time when mountaineering was becoming intensely competitive he climbed for pure enjoyment. He probably remains the most under-rated climber that has ever graced the Scottish scene. He would prefer to repeat an elegant Severe rather than attempt a first ascent of an unworthy route. Yet his achievements, when the mood took him, were spectacular - and largely unnoticed. He was in at the beginning of the EUMC's important development of the Fionn Loch area with a number of fine routes on Beinn Lair before the O'Hara influence persuaded him to turn his attention to Beinn a'Chasgein Mor - Avoidance and Sunday Climb. The Scafell Guide draws special attention to two routes - Chartreuse (HVS), and Leverage (XS) - 'a superb day's work by one of Britain's best climbers' (Robin Smith); Derek was there too. Robin Campbell enthuses over Jimmy Marshall's coup in achieving the 1st ascent of Trapeze on Aonach Dubh (SMCJ 18, 13); Derek was there too.

Derek's slightness of figure belied his impressive strength and fitness, but enhanced his grace on hard rock or ice. He was the most stylish of climbers; one who would take a beginner up January Jigsaw and instantly engage the attention of a gallery of hardmen en route for epics and divert them into watching in admiration for an hour or so. His artistry on ice, in the days when every step had to be cut, was a poem to balance and economy of effort. Throughout his life he remained the best-natured and 'nicest' man that I have ever met. Had he had the obsessive drive of many of his contemporaries for spectacular achievement he would have equalled any of them and been recognised today as another of our mountaineering geniuses.

I will never forget you, Derek.

Mike Fleming.

MYLES MORRISON j.1952

WITH THE death of Myles Morrison of Kilmacolm, at the fine old age of 90, the Club has lost one of its most genuine and best loved characters. Although our families were very friendly, there was ten years difference in our ages, and it was not until 1938 that I climbed with Myles.

That summer, we were both members of a JMCS party based on the Riffelhaus, above Zermatt, which included, amongst others, such well-known personalities as the late Ian Charleson and the late Benny Humble. Among other peaks climbed were the Breithorn, Liskamm, Monte Rosa, and of course the Matterhorn, Myles doing the Swiss-Italian traverse.

After the war I was glad to propose Myles for membership of the SMC, and for many years thereafter, his kenspeckle figure in the old Argyll kilt and his famous (if rather fusty) vintage Rolls-Royce were familiar features of the many enjoyable Easter Meets of the Club in the fifties and sixties. His nickname, 'The Laird', was apt!

A fanatic about the Cuillin, seldom a year passed without his joining our annual June visits, and latterly he also joined us in August holidays in lesser known Austrian and Swiss ranges of the Alps.

A civil engineer by profession, he acted as our 'marine engineer' on several successful outboard motor on Lochs Mullardoch, Quoich and Morar, utilising this means of approach to the remoter peaks of the district.

Myles continued his regular visits to the hills until nearly 80 years of age, but thereafter failing eyesight and gradual physical deterioration entailed a steady loss in the quality of life.

Of small, wiry and compact build he was an excellent rock climber, while his endurance on long hard days belied his slight figure. One of nature's gentlemen, his kind and genial nature endeared him to all who were privileged to know him, and our sincere condolences go out to his daughter and the sister in South Africa with whom he was so close.

J. Norman Ledingham.

BARCLAY FRASER j.1945

BARCLAY was a quiet, scholarly, gentle man, who fired all with whom he came in contact with enthusiasm for his many interests.

By profession a teacher of history, he developed over the years a vast knowledge of the history of Scotland which made him, along with his pawky sense of humour, a fascinating companion in the hills. His first teaching posts were in London and later in Halifax, before coming home to be H.M. Inspector of History in Scotland.

Besides a considerable knowledge of the crags of the Lakes, Wales and Scotland, he had visited the Pyrenees which were his second home and it was there, in the 30s, while leading a party of students, that he met his beloved wife Janet.

His home for many years was in the ancient village of Cramond on the Forth estuary. Here he developed a keen interest in archaeology and played a leading part in excavating the large Roman fort in the centre of the village; an account of which was given by Tom Weir in the Scots Magazine in March 1981.

Barclay had the great misfortune to break his neck in a fall when in his early eighties. His enormous willpower soon brought about a recovery sufficient to enable him to climb his last Munro, Carn a' Chlamain, on the day of the Club's Centenary Dinner, a feat which demanded courage and determination of the highest order.

He was a poet of some distinction, and at his funeral service his friend Tom Fleming beautifully read two of his poems and also one written by his brother Douglas, who is also a member of the Club as is his son, Andrew.

W.M.S. Myles.

ROBERT DENNISON WALTON j.1945

BOB WALTON died suddenly in March 1992, at home in Dumfries.

He had a lifelong love of the outdoors in every shape and form, from climbing in the Alps to beachcombing walks by the Solway Firth. He grew up in Glasgow, began climbing while at Glasgow University and told wonderful tales of student climbing trips to the Alps in conjunction with Austrian students. The last of these was actually interrupted in mid trip by the declaration of war, but he brought back a superb selection of large format black and white slides and prints.

Having found May, a wife who could survive a blizzard on Stob Ghabhar on an early outing together, he honeymooned in an Austria just recently opened to visitors, and on a budget severely impacted by rationing. Forty years later on an anniversary trip back to the same alpine villages he commented that a single dinner cost more than the entire honeymoon.

In 1956 he moved from Galashiels to Dumfries Academy as principal teacher of mathematics, and proceeded to introduce family and friends to the hills. I remember days in appalling rain: the time on Scafell when my mother turned blue from the dye in her jacket and I said I never wanted to climb another hill; and the day on Am Faochagach when we were thwarted by uncrossable burns that you could barely see for the torrential mist. And I remember wonderful days in the sun: rising above the sea fog on Brandon; my first Munro on a snowy Lochnagar one Easter and a picture perfect day for his final Munro - Luinne Bheinn (he always considered it an appropriate name for the last one!)

I remember Easters in the Lake District with my mother while he went on the SMC meet and exciting mountain friends like 'Uncle' Willie Docharty, but in general he enjoyed family expeditions on the west coasts of Scotland and Ireland and to Norway. He also introduced the annual Galloway hill walk to Dumfries Academy and convinced a surprised education authority to pay for it like any other school sport - he always loved to take on bureaucracy for a good cause and in later life was active in various local battles for the Scottish Rights of Way Society.

After I left for University he and May began a twenty year series of high level walking trips in the Alps, and revelled in exploring remote corners of alpine glens and passes. They also enjoyed the chance to explore the Sierra Nevada when I moved to California and were continually astonished at the number of peaks over thirteen thousand feet and the vast wilderness areas. He considered Mono Lake on the California-Nevada border one of the most beautiful places he had ever visited and made several visits to Yosemite. And he shared vicarious pleasure in my recent backpacking and kayak trips to Alaska.

But perhaps his greatest love was the island of Arran which he first visited as a boy and almost every year thereafter. He knew every corner of the island - its shoreline and mountains, geology and weather - and shared that knowledge on our annual family trips in August, and our final trip together last year, just after my mother died. He wrote and published two books on Arran to share that knowledge and love: 'Seventy Walks in Arran' and 'Arran in Pictures', as well as authoring a local book: 'Guide to 200 Walks and Climbs' in Dumfries and Galloway.

He will be greatly missed by those who shared walking and teaching with him, and who enjoyed viewing his superb collection of outdoor slides accompanied by his wry commentary. But we can picture him happily together again with May, climbing endless hills in the Scottish rain.

Ian Walton.

ROGER O'DONOVAN j.1975

WHEN Roger O'Donovan joined the Club in 1975 he was already well known in mountaineering circles. His name had featured in the Journal with several first ascents in Skye in the early 1970s, when he worked as an instructor for the Scottish Youth Hostels Association. Subsequently he joined the staff of Glenmore Lodge where he naturally became active in mountain rescue work as well as acquiring an intimate knowledge of the Cairngorms. In 1976 he became Deputy Principal, a position which he held until he left the Lodge in 1988, by which time he had become very much a part of the establishment.

I got to know Roger during this period, and we had some great days on the hills together. A stonefall accident had deprived him of an index finger and he was content to do classic routes, but he had of course climbed harder and much more extensively than this. His Alpine climbs included the Lauper Route on the Eiger and he had been on expeditions to Africa, India and Antarctica, as well as to Greenland, Baffin Island and the Yukon. But he appreciated the accessibility of the Scottish hills and his enthusiasm for their every aspect was undiminished by these wider travels. He enjoyed ski mountaineering and canoing, and in particular sea-canoing from his retreat in Harris.

After leaving the Lodge, Roger enrolled as a mature student at Aberdeen University, where he studied English Literature, and at the time of his death he was only a few months away from taking his final exams. He also did consultancy work in the safety and inspection aspects of the oil industry. After the Piper Alpha disaster, realising the difficulties of evacuating an oil platform down scramble nets and knotted ropes, Roger was instrumental in developing and testing a new, compact abseiling device which is now standard equipment in North Sea installations. He was deeply concerned, too, with environmental matters, and he acted as a consultant to the Nature Conservancy Council, with a special interest in Creag Meaghaidh.

A day out with Roger was always an enjoyable one, and his great experience made him a thoroughly sound and reliable rope-companion. Our most memorable outing was one mid-summer just a few years ago, when we met at a pre-arranged time below the cliffs of Ben Lair, to make an idyllic ascent of Wisdom Buttress, while June went off for a long walk with the dog. Both she and Roger had by that time climbed all the Munros, some of them no doubt several times.

At the beginning of 1991 we learned that Roger had contracted cancer, and before long he had to undergo surgery of drastic seriousness. He recovered from this sufficiently to do a bit of walking and cycling, but the affliction returned and it became obvious that nothing more

could be done to prevent its spread. The courage and cheerfulness displayed by Roger, and June too, during those last few months, were simply remarkable. A fortnight before he died, some of Roger's friends got together and arranged a helicopter flight which took him for a last visit to the Ben and up the west coast to the Cuillins. It took him a great effort to get in and out of the helicopter but even in this he saw humour, and with failing speech he recalled the trip with the same, unfailing enthusiasm. 'A day on the hill', he said to me, 'is worth ten of any others' - and who among us would disagree?

To Jane, and Roger's mother and sisters, we extend our sincerest sympathy.

Peter F. Macdonald.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB

New Members

The following fourteen new members were admitted and welcomed to the Club in the year 1991-92.

- Ian H. Blackwood (26) Accountant, London.
- Allan A. Davidson (37) Freelance Camera-Assistant/Operator, Edinburgh.
- Brian M. Davison (30) Research Assistant, Lancaster.
- Charles A. Hornsby (29) Medical Doctor, Inverness.
- Colwyn M. Jones (33) Dental Surgeon, Glasgow.
- John K. Morrison (31) Student, Glasgow.
- Charles J. Orr (38) Police Officer, Bonnyrigg.
- Doug Rennie (32) Stone Mason/Building Contractor, Bridge of Cally.
- Alex. Runciman (31) Shop Proprietor, Perth.
- Peter J. Stewart (43) Electrical Engineer, Banchory.
- Nigel M. Suess (46) Banker, Edinburgh.
- George B. Szuca (32) Unemployed, Glasgow.
- Neil M. Wilson (25) Computer Programmer, Glasgow.
- Gareth S. Yardley (26) Scientific Officer, Edinburgh.

The One-Hundredth-and-Third AGM and Dinner

December 1991 saw the Club assemble at Pitlochry (the very heart of the tourist version of the Highlands), in that Gormenghast of hotels - the Atholl Palace. This opulent labyrinth was a contrast to anything we have frequented in recent years, and it's a pity that more members did not take advantage of Gerry Peet's bargain rates.

After the Sturm und Drang of the 1990 AGM it was back to business as usual, although the afternoon's debate on the Great Access Question overshadowed our more internicine concerns. It was a historic occasion in one sense, as Jane Naismith made her appearance as the first Lady Member to attend an AGM - we trust she will not be the only one there next time.

Continuing the theme of the afternoon the general theme was access - access to the SMC and to its Dinner.

As usual the early business drifted through easily. Report after Report was accepted, the acquiring and spending of large sums of money passed almost without comment, the apparently endless Agenda was being devoured. Then came the first shot of battle as the Western District expenses were queried by a Dundonian. Indignation was expressed at Glaswegian profligacy. They do things differently in Dundee (when they do them at all that is), and are well known to be able to run a complete weekend at the CIC on a sheep-gnawed turnip and the smell of an Arbroath smokie.

After this the Members got restless. The congratulatory tone of the APRS award to the Aonach Mor ski development (as quoted by Jim Clark) came in for heavy criticism by Bob Reid. The NTS also got some stick, particularly over the way they are tampering with Holy Writ in downgrading Unna's Rules to 'Principles'.

The activities of the Publications Sub-Committee again excited interest. The Byzantine complexities of the Club/Trust relationship are nowhere better exemplified, and Donald Bennet provided an interesting (if incomplete) guide to this Seraglio. Publications is an issue

which exerts a continuing fascination for some members. Are they watching a conjuring trick, or can the Publications Sub-Committee really walk on water

Access to the Club - in the form of the technical qualifications now demanded of aspirants - was the subject of a motion from Bill Wallace. He sought to modify these, at least for the more elderly of those who have discovered a love of Scottish Mountaineering and its true guardian. This motion produced the predictable response. There was a snarling and a lashing of tails in the body of the hall. Older applicants are always regarded with suspicion by the 'technos' ('if not then, why now'), in much the same way as medieval Franciscans must have watched yet another middle-aged Borgia don the scarlet cap. Much growling from past and present tigers ensued until Sandy Cousins rightly reminded everyone of the responsibilities attendant on an applicant's sponsors. (Personally speaking, I sometimes wonder if opposing sides in this dispute are talking about the same thing. Few of our older members have had any experience of stealthy shoes and chalky fingers - never mind banana picks. If they had, they might remember the old song 'The Very Severs almost bored him to tears and he felt about girls much the same'.)

Mundane matters of finance intruded again after this ethical passage as the scale of the expenditure required to fund the proposed renovation of Lagangarbh was unfolded. In addition to the magnitude of the funds required there was considerable reluctance to commit serious money to a building on which we did not hold a long lease.

Bill Brooker's and Stan Pearson's proposed amendment to the Constitution baffled many present. It seemed to regard the Dinner as an elaborate biological experiment in which heterosexual partners were not allowed to participate. This was possibly an attempt to ensure the survival of at least one member of a breeding pair - like flying on separate planes. The advice from the floor to leave well enough alone until there was a problem was eventually taken.

Calls for a Club policy on access (to mountains this time) gave rise to considerable discussion, but no definite outcome. There was, however, a general feeling that we should do more than insert paragraphs into Guide Books. The need to campaign for both access and conservation was raised.

The route to the Dinner was devious and subterranean (entirely fitting) and we eventually found ourselves in a tent-like barn of a room. The meal seemed to have met general acceptance and the service was efficient. After the meal came the usual circus.

Iain Smart's Presidential Address contained some pretty far-fetched claims as to his ancestry but, that apart, it was another urbane and polished performance. The toast 'To Our Guests and Kindred Clubs' was largely (fortunately) inaudible to the main mass of diners due to the speaker's lack of preparation, indifferent sobriety, and obstinate refusal to use the microphone (He'll no get asked again!) Alex Mathewson of the Cairngorm Club delivered a restrained Reply.

The unsteady gait of Members and Guests the next morning was entirely due to the ground outside the Hotel being covered with a sheet of ice. It was the last ice most of us have seen this winter.

Bob Richardson.

J.M.C.S. REPORTS

Glasgow Section.- 1991 proved to be another prosperous year both home and abroad for the Section. A slow start due to heavy snows early in the season hampered activities for those celebrating hogmanay in the Highlands. Better pickings proved later on once the snows had consolidated.

In total, 21 meets were held during the year. Most of these were to the usual and popular resorts around the Highlands. Of note, a concerted effort was made by members to make good use of the Coruisk hut.

Three new members were admitted to the Club, bringing the total membership of the Section to just under 100. It is with sadness, however, that the Section reports the death of Jack H. Henson.

Although there was no official meet abroad over the summer period, a contingent of members crossed the Atlantic for a spot of combined climbing and sunbathing in California. Back in Europe meanwhile, the French Alps remained the focal point for some for both climbing and ski-ing while elsewhere trips were made to Italy, Austria and Scandinavia. Further to the east, winter trips were made to both Polish and Czech sides of the High Tatra whereupon the Vice President found himself benighted!

The Annual Dinner, held in October at the Kingshouse Hotel, was the usual affair and well attended by members. The Section was represented by the SMC, Lochaber and Perth Sections. The speeches were provided by guest Tom Weir and President Ian Thomson who recalled many of the highlights from his presidential year. The following day a handful of members suffering from sore heads and bleary eyes, wheezed their way up the Pap of Glencoe to accompany Tom on his first ascent of this prominent hill.

Social events included several slideshow evenings as well as a successful Burns Supper evening. However, dwindling interest in such events finally led to combined activities by both the SMC Western District and JMCS (Glasgow Section). A jointly organised cheese and wine evening at which Simon Richardson also presented a slideshow on sea-stack climbing proved to be an overwhelming success. A diary of activities is scheduled for 1992. The venue for these activities remains as the Staff Club at the University of Strathclyde.

The Section Annual General Meeting was held in November at which the following were elected: *Hon. Member*, W.H. Murray; *Hon. President*, Bill Forbes; *Hon. Vice-President*, Ian Cumming; *President*, Colwyn Jones; *Vice-President*, John Morrison; *Secretary*, Carl Schaschke, 50, Kelbourne St (3/1), Glasgow G20 8PR, Tel: (041) 946 8304; *Treasurer*, Anderson Foster, 14, Minerva Court, Finnieston, Glasgow; *Coruisk Hut Custodian*, Sandy Donald, 2, Baljaffray Cottages, Grampian Way, Bearsden, Glasgow.

Edinburgh Section.-The New Year was welcomed in, as is their custom, at the Smiddy, by a band of regulars. Subsequently, our keen XC skiers again departed for their guaranteed (almost!) snow in the Alps, abandoning a tepid, damp Scotland.

Winter meets were well attended, particularly the week-end based on Manse Barn. This could be considered our most successful of the year, for both weather and activity. The summer meets generally were less popular, fickle weather being a contributory factor in this, but the September week-end in the Peak district was very well supported.

Many of us holidayed in the Alps, and experienced good conditions both early and late in the season. One intrepid pair returned wildly enthusiastic from the Caucasus, and have invited Russian friends to Scotland. Visas permitting, Yury and Alex will shortly (i.e. mid-February) arrive in Scotland.

Our Annual Dinner and AGM were held in the Cairndow Hotel on Loch Fyne in November - from the recommendations of the Lochaber Section (They now correspond with the female secretary of this Section - is this a good omen for the future). (I doubt it - they never correspond with the Hon. Editor.) We endured really dreich weather on the Saturday, but things improved by Sunday. We were entertained after dinner with a most appropriate and amusing address by Gordon (Curly) Ross.

During the year, Bill Myles became an Honorary Member, in recognition of his long-standing and much-valued support and commitment to the Section.

The Huts are thriving in the capable hands of our dedicated Custodians. The Smiddy benefitted from the attentions of an effective work-party and will soon get a new sink and cooker. Essential external restoration work on Jock's Spot is being costed out. Jock's has become extremely luxurious with a fully functioning electric shower:- the well-groomed among you now need to pack a hair-dryer as essential hut gear, together with all the associated paraphernalia of 'smellies'. (Please note that we female associates don't descend to such a level of fastidiousness.)

Social events during the last few months have been the annual slide show, when J. Fowler generously hosted us again, and a skittles night.

We have a core of around 20 members who persist in being prolifically active and enthusiastic; others participate to a lesser extent. Last year was a lean one for recruitment, but over the last couple of months there have been around 20 or so enquiries about membership and activities.

Office Bearers:-*President*, A. Chow; *Hon. President*, J. Fowler; *Vice-President*, I. Simpson; *Hon. Vice-President*, M. Fleming; *Treasurer*, B. Finlayson; *Hon. Secretary*, B. Leatherhead; *Smiddy Custodian*, F. Fotheringham, Tighe na Sethe, Braes, Ullapool; *Jock's Spot Custodian*, A. Borthwick, 2 Aytoun Grove, Dunfermline; *Committee Members*: D. Buchanan, R. Dalitz, B. Donaldson, R. Sinclair.

Perth Section.- Overall membership of the club has increased slightly over the past year with 63 members, 5 honorary members and 17 ladies. The number of introductory associates remains healthy and enquiries continue to be received.

There were sixteen meets during the year, which is one up on last year, and the average attendance dropped to nine. The figure disguises considerable variations with several well attended meets during the year and a meet with an attendance of three! Hillwalking is still the mainstay of the club's activities however rock climbing venues have been very popular this year. The CIC winter meet was perhaps less of a disaster this year than has been the norm of late however the weather was no less kind. There was two compleations during the year. Last year's innovation was the cross country ski-ing week-end and this was repeated, however the snow conditions were not replicated and finding the wretched stuff involved a great deal more effort. The club took part in the Mountain Mind Quiz after a break of several years. The rest must have been beneficial and the trophy returned to Perth again.

The club was represented at the Edinburgh, and Glasgow Section and Grampian Club dinners during the year. Our own Annual Dinner this year was held at the Queens Hotel, Perth. This was a departure from the usual traditional mountaineering venue and was judged to be a success. A guest speaker, Robin Campbell was invited and provided much entertainment. The remaining speech was by Alex Runciman. The Annual Joint Lecture with the Perthshire Society of Natural Science was given by Barry Owen on his trip to climb Mount McKinley in North America. There were three mid-week meets during the winter months which continue to be popular, one was a showing of slides with Tom Rix and Ron Payne sharing the honours, in the next Grahame Nicoll told the tale of his trip to the Canadian Rockies and the last was the President's evening.

My thanks to the committee, which actually had another meeting this year, it must be habit forming, to meet conveners and to everyone who has assisted in the running of the club in the past year.

The Annual General Meeting was held in Perth in December at which the following officers were elected:- *Hon. President*, Bob Milne; *Hon. Vice-President*, Vacant; *President*, Alastair Dutton; *Treasurer*, Tom Rix; *Secretary*, Ron Payne, 70 Spoutwells Drive, Scone, Perth PH2 6SB 0738 51412.

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

Southern Hemisphere

A day on the 'REMARKABLES' in New Zealand.

See Moir's Guide, Northern Section, edited by R. Chandler and published by the New Zealand Alpine Club 1968 'Trampers Guide to the Southern Lakes'.

THEO NICHOLSON reports:-It was late in February 1972, whilst on a post-retirement world voyage, when my wife and I spent some weeks in New Zealand. A hired car gave the opportunity to see much of the country, especially South Island. While in Queenstown, a chance came of a lone day to climb the Remarkables, 7688 ft - a picturesque range to the East of Lake Wakipitu and about 8 miles SE of Queenstown which lies on the lake at about 1000 ft ASL.

So, having left our excellent B & B motel early on a perfect morning I parked the car at the junction of Boyds Road with the main road to Te Annu at about 1100 ft and set off at 0715. A belt of dense mist lay across the lower slopes about one thousand feet above me but a high barometer and a clear dew drenched night made a fine hot day likely. So it turned out, for the mist thinned and eventually vanished as I climbed.

Moir's guide recommended that the best way was straight up the third supporting ridge or rib from the North end. The previous day, I had examined the route through binoculars from Queenstown Hill so had little difficulty, lacking paths or signs, in hitting off the right approach although the whole mountain, above 2000 ft was hidden in mist. The slopes, covered by low scrub were certainly steep but at least one made height steadily. As I climbed, so the mist rose and thinned. At about 3000 ft I came out on to the crest of the subsidiary ridge leading up to the main backbone of the mountain. The mist now most conveniently dispersed. The way ahead was clear: just steep grass, tussocks and thorn were the only obstacles so progress was fast.

Soon, a lone figure appeared below me, coming up at a very good pace. I waited and found my lone fellow climber was John Stedman, an Englishman working in Christchurch and enjoying a brief holiday in the hills. We continued together for some time till after joining the main North-South ridge, at about 6400 ft, he branched left to go down to Lake Alta at about 6000 ft and a couple of miles away whilst I continued up the rocky ridge ahead. So far, my timing from the roadside at about 1100 ft to the main ridge at about 6400 ft was 3 hours 10 minutes. (Moir writes 'allow about 3 hours'.)

The East side of the mountain is very different from the rock faces, shattered towers and deep rock gullies of the West face overlooking Lake Wakipitu. Below, to the East, wide slopes of good summer grazing fell away at moderate angle and only towards the top, did they become shattered rock and scree.

I wished to go as high as time and energy allowed. The main rock ridge rose invitingly ahead and continued south in a series of rocky tops. On I went over the next top at about 6800 ft. Thence, to avoid a deep cleft in the ridge, I descended leftwards down steep rock and scree into a hollow where snow still lay deeply. Then up easy rock and so back to the main ridge which led up to the next top at about 7000 ft. To the East and about 500 ft lower lay Lake Alta. Ahead, the ridge continued, broken and rocky, to another top about 500 ft higher. This was reached by a pleasant natural rock staircase. I had hoped - not very confidently - that it might have been the main top. It wasn't, but at 7500 ft was a fine viewpoint. South, across a deep gap lay the real twin tops - perhaps 150/200 ft higher but they appeared to require a long descent and detour. Both time and energy were short so I stayed on my top to enjoy the view.

The morning mist had vanished except to the South where the Milford Sound area was wrapped in cloud. Mt Aspiring and the twin Earnshaw peaks were prominent to the North

whilst NE and about 100 miles distant, the snows of Mt Cook glistened in the sun. A host of smaller peaks filled the horizon and Lake Wakitipu lay, deep blue, sleeping below. Regretfully, it was time to descend, so down I went by much the same way as upwards. Soon, I saw John below; he kindly waited and together we descended by the further ridge - the second one from the left as you look up from below. It was both steep and rough for about half its length and our legs and knees were certainly weary!

We arrived back at the car at about 4.45 p.m. after 9 hours and a total ascent and descent of about 14,000 ft. A great day for a 66 year old to cherish!

(Moir, in his book, writes 'allow 10 hours for the return trip'.)

South America

GRAHAM LITTLE reports:- I spent a total of six weeks in Chile (stepping into Bolivia and Argentina) during August/September 1991 with Adrian Baker. Although our plans for a major Andean crossing were frustrated by exceptionally heavy snow blocking the access road, we did achieve ascents of five major volcanoes in the Puna de Atacama: Volcan Licancabur, 5916m; Volcan Simbad, 5924m; Cerro de Pili, 6046m; Volcan Lascar, 5641m and Nevado Ojos del Salado, 6885m. The latter peak is the world's highest active volcano and the majority of these climbs were first British ascents. Although technical difficulties were few, these volcanoes rise from a very dry desert and hold a mantle of exhaustingly unstable pumice and lava scree. I can also report that the Chilean people are honest and hospitable and produce some really fine wines.

Africa

Mike Taylor and Donald Bennet arrived at the Kibo Hotel on the south side of Kilimanjaro in mid-December to take part in the seasonal pilgrimage of hopeful high-level hillwalkers to Africa's highest summit. The November rains had not yet ended, and parts of the route were reminiscent of the CIC path. Five days later, after a short diversion to the Mawenzi Hut for acclimatisation, we reached Uhuru Peak on a grey morning. The sun rose from a sea of cloud which seemed to stretch across the continent, and promptly disappeared into a higher all-enveloping cloud cover. The famed views of Africa at dawn were denied to us.

Several days later, reinforced by young bloods Niall Ritchie and Jas Hepburn fresh from their Deeside gymnasias, we were on the lower slopes of Mount Kenya, toiling upwards through the Vertical Bog, still black and glutinous from the November rains that lasted until December. After two days of acclimatisation on Point Lenana and Point Piggott we settled into a very comfortable bivouac at the foot of Nelion a hundred yards from the start of the climb. The following morning by great misfortune MT succumbed to respiratory problems for which Mount Kenya is infamous, and had to descend immediately. More climbers suffer from AMS (acute mountain sickness) on Mount Kenya than on any other mountain, so we are told.

The three survivors climbed Nelion by the E face and SE ridge, which is the voie normale at that time of year. NR and JH continued to Batian and returned to the summit of Nelion at sundown where DB had dinner ready for them in the tiny tin hut which serves as a shelter there. Next day, being Hogmanay, we had a leisurely descent (almost entirely by abseil) and a stroll down to the Teleki valley camp to reunite with MT. Any possibility of a New Year celebration was ended by NR's exotic oriental cuisine which kept half the party on the trot, but not first-footing, throughout the night.

Europe

Picos de Europa

DAVE BROADHEAD writes:- In early July 1991 the Broadhead family joined forces with Noel Williams and family for a visit to Spain's Picos de Europa. The Plymouth-Santander ferry made a very pleasant approach, depositing us less than a couple of hours' drive from the mountains, though our first few days were spent on the coast in some bad weather, studying Robin Walker's information packed guide book and a variety of locally produced maps before deciding on an anti-clockwise circuit of the massif. After a couple of days at Soto de Valdeon on the south side the weather finally brightened up and we walked through the magnificent Cares gorge, beginning to get to grips with the complex geography of the area with circuits of the Torre de Friero and the Bermeja group. After moving around to Potes the distraction of a swimming pool enabled Noel and me to unpack our rock gear. In the La Hermida gorge the classic South Ridge of Cueto Agero (TD-, 300m) took a good line up an impressive buttress, unfortunately growing a disappointing amount of vegetation. Thick mist at the top caused some problems in finding the descent, while in contrast the elegant South Ridge of El Jiso (TD inf, 600m) saw us baking in the sun after emerging from the early morning mist but once again this outstanding line proved a bit disappointing in quality. With the help of the cable car we enjoyed a family ascent of the Pena Vieja (2613m) before the Williams family headed home via the Pyrenees, leaving us to spend a few more days on the north side of the range before heading back to the coast and the long drive home, looking forward very much to a future visit and the chance to climb more of the higher peaks and afford a return ticket on the ferry.

Robin Chalmers, Mike Taylor and Donald Bennet were in the Alps during May for some ski-mountaineering. Starting at Saas Fee, the Allalinhorn and Alphubel were climbed in rather bad weather. Plans to go to Monte Rosa were foiled by the gigantic rock-fall above Randa which severed both the road and railway to Zermatt. This was fortunate for us, as the continuing bad weather would certainly have foiled our plans. Instead, acting on the advice of the weather forecasters, we went south with Thomas Kimming to the Italian Alps and in better conditions climbed the Punta Galisia from the Benevol Hut, and La Tresenta and the Grand Paradiso from the Emmanuel Hut. Finally, on the last day we took the cable-car from Entreves to the Pointe Heilbronner and enjoyed a superb run down the Vallee Blanche, four of us alone on the finest ski-run in Europe.

CARL SCHASCHKE writes:- Six years after I'd met Lasse Stray on Norway's Romsdalshorn, I took the liberty of taking up his invitation in 1991 to climb with him back on his home ground. Meeting up with Lasse in Molde, a town synonymous with fjords, mountains, jazz and roses, we crossed the Romsdalsfjord to stay at his hut on the island of Bolsoy. From here we made a number of day trips across to the Romsdal mountains.

A word of caution: Norwegian weather forecasts are about as reliable as their British counterparts. The blistering sunshine expected couldn't have been further from the truth the day we chose to climb the South Face of Kvanndalstind (1744m). Described in 1885 by W.C. Slingsby as 'The steepest mountain in Europe' our ascent was in typical dreich Scottish conditions, one unidentified pitch followed another. Lost somewhere on the face the sketchy guide book description took on a thousand interpretations. We eventually found ourselves on the West Ridge at the foot of the Torshammer pinnacle. Taking time-out to climb this unusual 27m pinnacle, the guide book states 'exit through a narrow hole'. To this gross understatement I should like to add the clause 'suitable only for persons of restricted growth'.

Signing our names in the summit book on Kvanndalstind, Lasse translated the entries from the previous twenty (Nordic) parties since my last visit. Each declared Kvanndalstind to be the greatest of all the Norwegian mountains. The tales told of T-shirt ascents, blue skies and the breath-taking panoramas. Sitting soaked and chilled to the bone this was not a scenario I could immediately relate to. I contemplated selling my climbing equipment.

Like the dedicated Munroist, I ventured south in search of the 2000m peaks of the Jotunheimen and the better weather. These I found where the greatest of all hillwalks is that from Gjendesheim to Memurubu. It comes highly recommended although one should be prepared to be accompanied by the rest of Europe's hillwalking community. Fortunately, the masses dwindled considerably to complete an ascent of Surningsuen (2368m).

As a contrast to the highest mountains our last call was to the remote Setesdal mountains of southern Norway. Based at Lasse's other hut, we attempted the South Face of Fagervass knuten ($7^{\circ} 28'$, $59^{\circ} 20'$). Previously unclimbed, Lasse and I completed the first ascent following an obvious leftward line and graded it V, 170m.

The final venue with Lasse was in his home town of Kristiansand. On my final evening with him he entered his yacht in a regatta in competition with eleven others. While Lasse captained from the helm, I was his incompetent crew. Having spoken only English on our mountaineering excursions, we decided to use Norwegian for the sailing. Little wonder we crossed the finishing line in second from last place. The only useful phrase I came away with was 'Jeg forstar ikke Norsk'.

Czechslovakia March 1991.

COLWYN JONES reports:- Continuing the mountaineering exchanges of the last three years, eight SMC, JMCS and Etchachan club members flew into Prague on a warm spring day. A pre-perestroika customs official, demanded two of the group shave off their beards. But we kept our insulation of facial hair and he enjoyed a good joke, we think, before emerging from the mausoleum of Ruzyně airport.

Our friends from the Czechoslovak State Bank Mountaineering Club broke the air of oppression with their spontaneous welcome then loaded us into a fleet of Skodas, supplemented by a B.M.W., a recent addition and a symbol of their new prosperity.

After a welcome dinner we caught the overnight express to The High Tatras, where the carry-out was more expensive than the train ticket. Clear blue skies heralded our arrival at the main line station of Tatranska Strba, with the red faces of the Tatras reflecting the sunrise. The short rack railway up to Strbske Pleso, and we stood at six in the morning below the ski-jumping ramps, hungover and hungry. With two hours until anything opened, we stumbled the 6 kilometres up to the mountain hotel at Popradske Pleso where the frozen lake afforded parapenters a flat landing area.

The hotel was well placed for access to the central mountains, provided basic accommodation and had a restaurant, bar and shop. At a more civilised hour we could have taken a taxi.

Breakfast was devoured as the sun came up, and we discovered the ability to speak German was advantageous as East Germans climbed here during the cold months of the cold war.

Next day saw an early start and a party of six reaching the twin summits of Vysoka (2560 m) above the cloud, by a ten pitch mixed route on the north face. Two reached the opposite summit of Ganek (2459 m) following the impressive pencil-line west couloir. An adjacent route on Vysoka was climbed the next day with a sacrilegious abseil from the summit crucifix to avoid the soft snow descent route of the previous day, divine intervention! We also found the guide books only gave the summer grade, a variable indication of winter difficulties.

After a day spent 'winter cragging' on the vertical ice of frozen waterfalls on the west face of Kopky. The summit of Rysy (2499m) was 'bagged' with the opportunity to step into Poland from the summit. Here we met a Czech lady climber who spoke fondly of her Scottish male friends whom she had met at the international women's meet in Ardspeach!

The long north ridge of Ganek was completed in a long single day despite intimidating spindrift and a broken pick. Mala Basta (2289m) was ascended by the Puskasova route.

The ascent of Rysy allowed a first look at The Gallery, the huge vertical rock face on the north side of Ganek Peak. We also found the Rysy hut in the bealach between Rysy and Cesky Stit, was open and booked in for the next night. All four teams were to be found on the gallery in the morning sunshine.

The Stanislovsky Komin route up the right buttress provided a serious aid route started by three teams climbing in very thin conditions. The left wall of the gallery was bounded by a steep couloir the imaginatively named Klasicka Cesta or classic route. As the day wore on the party in the couloir experienced problems when the head of the leaders' Mountain Technology Vertige ice-hammer fractured. Their only winter gear made in Scotland! The

resulting delay meant the final pitch was completed in darkness with an inspirational lead by the Raeburn hut custodian.

The accompanying Czech could not find the descent route and after some acrimonious debate, we realised an enforced bivouac was inevitable. Every known Scottish folk-song rang through the clear night air to entertain the twinkling stars above. Dental floss was used to find a tasty titbit from between the teeth. A handy tip for any benighted and hungry climber.

Next morning the tired, hoarse and frostbitten party reached the Rysy hut to a derisory chorus of 'what kept ye'. They enjoyed a late breakfast and beat a slow retreat to the hotel to sunbathe, as the Mala Basta route was repeated and a rock climb, the S.E. ridge of Volia Veza (alpine grade 3) was completed in plastic boots.

Next day the party moved east to the Brncalova hut, helped by the bubble lift serving the ski area on Lomnisky Stit. Lastovica Veza (2625m) was climbed by the S.E. ridge and the Brull route. The final day was spent on the point five of the Tatras. Stanislovsky Cesta is a chimney on the Nemecky Rebrík face of Kezmarysky Stit, given a V.S. rock climbing grade. An adjacent gully system on Pysny Stit was also climbed.

The return to Prague was more subdued than the outward journey and we went to a Jazz night and a farewell dinner at the sports club before returning to London.

A successful expedition and mountains worth exploring in summer as well as an excellent ice-climbing area. The friendliness of the Czechs and the relative cheap cost of staying in the country are definite attractions which may not last as they become westernised.

Colwyn Jones.

The Arctic

DAVE SNADDEN reports:- I spent six weeks in the summer of 1991 on Baffin Island with my wife and 12-year old daughter. For most of this time we wandered around the stunning granite spires, passes and glaciers of Auyuittuq National Park. The logistics and timing of organising trips to this superb part of the Arctic are a little complicated, and anyone who is interested in going is welcome to contact me for reasonably up-to-date information on the area.

REVIEWS

Summits and Secrets: -Kurt Diemberger (Hodder & Stoughton, 348pp., illus., £10.99, ISBN 0-340-56048-7)

This autobiography covers Kurt Diemberger's climbing career, from his days as a gemstone seeker in his local Austrian mountains, to his early expeditions in Asia and Greenland. It does contain some detail of his student and working life but little about his personal relationships. Therefore a complete literary picture of the man is not painted. It was first published in Britain in 1971; re-appearing now to complement his new book about the disastrous events of 1986 on K2.

This book does not follow a strict chronological order. A justification for this is given in the opening chapter of, sometimes, ethereal prose. Several accounts of his early forays to the Alps and Dolomites provide, like those of other famous post-war climbers, amusing anecdotes and pause for thought for modern day activists. More daring climbs, especially that on the Konigsspitze, brought him to the attention of Hermann Buhl and so a place on his first Himalayan expedition. The chapter about this ultimately tragic adventure is probably the best in the book.

His earliest attempt at mountain filming is documented. An early repeat ascent of the Peuterey Integrale was the subject of this prize-winning film. Amusing events from his working/student life are interspersed between accounts of expeditions to the Himalayas, Hindu Kush, and Greenland.

There is a small collection of black-and-white photographs which are a little disappointing by modern standards. A summary of his major climbs to the present, and a comprehensive index, complete a book which is definitely worth reading.

Brian Dullea.

Scottish Hill and Mountain Names: -Peter Drummond (Scottish Mountaineering Trust, 1991, 214pp, drawings and colour cover illustrations, £9.95. ISBN-0-907521-30-4).

This selective account on the origin and meaning of Scottish hill names emphasises the great variety of names; the author writes that 'exploring this huge and fascinating variety makes up the bulk of this book'. It is easy to read and there are attractive drawings of hills.

Reliable publications in this field must involve careful study of local pronunciations, old written sources and ground inspection, and the many publications which ignore these basic rules are worthless. This book's author has used some publications that followed these rules, but some that did not, so some of the book is reliable, but some not. Unfortunately, readers will often not know which is which, because of inadequate text references and general guidance. The phrase on the cover that the book is 'thoroughly researched' is therefore an overstatement.

Further, the author is not thorough enough in using publications that he cites. For example, Lairig Ghru and Lairig an Laoigh do not mean gloomy pass and pass of the calf, but Dru pass and Lui pass, the incorrect Carn Eige should be Carn Eite, and the Cath in Coire Cath nam Fionn should be Cadha. Sneachdach Slinnean should not be Slinnean Sneachdach, as the author says on the grounds that adjective should follow noun; the many cases such as Geal Charn should have been a warning.

In a book wholly on place names, it is perverse to ignore the International Phonetic Alphabet and use inaccurate home-made suggestions instead, such as booya for the word Buidhe. The author too often accepts Ordnance Survey spellings, even where publications cited by him show that they are erroneous. The section on language does not mention that Pictish was once spoken over much of Scotland.

Too many derivations are at best highly uncertain without more research, and at worst not worth giving because they are so speculative. The statement that Bonnyfleeces is from Boineid Fleasg stretches credulity, and is typical of much that has brought place-name study in Scotland into some disrepute.

The one thing to be said for the book is that no other book on Scottish hill names exists. It is just a pity that this opportunity was not used to produce something of more reliability and lasting value.

Adam Watson.

A brief response to Adam Watson's review of Scottish Hill and Mountain Names (Scottish Mountaineering Trust, 1991).

My book was intended to 'take the mountains to the mountaineers', to let hill-people reclaim the heritage of names - their meaning and pronunciation. Therefore it was deliberately written with the minimum of 'text references' (that hallmark of academic books), and with a pronunciation guide more accessible to the layman than the IPA, and already used in other SMT books. The positive response of reviewers in 4 other journals, both popular and academic, justify my confidence in this approach.

The seven specific names he upbraids me for are a puzzling choice: six of them are little-known, Carn Eige being the exception (and I know of nowhere that it is spelt Eite, except in AW's review); three of them are not even hills (two Lairigs and a Coire) and are mentioned merely in passing in the book. I happen to think that he is probably wrong about the two Lairigs. He is certainly even more wrong about Slinnean Sneachdach, and Geal Charn is one of the few adjective-before-noun exceptions confined to mor, and colours like geal, a pattern discussed on pages 22, 75 and 125 of my book.

He complains that I do 'not mention Pictish'. I do! On page 61 I note that the Picts left us very few words (the experts say perhaps four); and anyway none are found in hill-names, a point Adam Watson must agree with since his own excellent co-authored book on Upper Deeside names has but one sentence on the same topic.

Finally there is his charge of speculation, a disreputable activity. Coincidentally the doyen of Scottish place-name study is also a Watson - Professor W.J. - whose 1926 magnum opus on the Celtic Names of Scotland is the bible of workers in this field. His book is full of words like 'perhaps', 'probably', 'may be' and 'possibly'. Is this speculation? Or is it simply laying out the possible options, as I tried to do, and suggesting how they fit the landscape and the language? I hope my readers will come to a less cynical conclusion than my reviewer.

Peter Drummond.

Southern Highlands District Guide:- Donald Bennet (SMC, 214pp., illus., £16.95, ISBN 0-907521-34-7)

This is a good District Guide continuing and a worthy successor to its predecessors. The area covered extends from the central belt northwards to the line of the River Awe, Glen Orchy, the southern edge of the Rannoch Moor, Loch Rannoch and Loch Tummel. From there the eastern boundary follows the rivers Tummel and Tay to the sea and includes the Kingdom of Fife. On the west the area is bounded by the coast from the Firth of Clyde round the Cowal peninsula to Kintyre and up to the lower reaches of Loch Etive.

The principles of entertaining information to be read as an aid to planning an outing or as a means of extracting later pleasure are welcome compared to the spoon feeding of the Munros or Corbetts. Routes are suggested rather than dictated and so pressure on footpaths or the need to devote part of the book's profits to their upkeep are not so necessary. Also welcomed are the descriptions of low level walks, often following old rights of way and Drover's roads. These are the paths that deserve to be popularised and reinstated instead of encouraging weekend crocodiles queuing for yet another tick their list or map. Another feature is the information on the Hydro electric schemes and it is interesting to discover how small is the power output resulting from these power stations. Is the intrusion of dams, tarmac roads, pylons and the inevitable reservoir shore lines really worth the meagre 20 - 40 MW of generation?

The photographs are superb as usual but could there be, just occasionally, a hint of bad weather. A good proportion of our outings seem to be in poor if not appalling conditions and as all hills then look the same even a single example would suffice. It would be also be some consolation that at least one of the photographers had been wet in the Southern Highlands. A thoroughly good district guide for which Donald Bennet is to be congratulated.

Ian Angell.

Flammes de Pierre:-Anne Sauvy (Diadem, 176pp, £12.99, ISBN 0-906371 -83 X).

The short stories that make up *Flammes de Pierre* are all set in the Mont Blanc range and the protagonists are all Chamoniards or French climbers from the cities. They are observed by Mme. Sauvy in a variety of predicaments and they exhibit the usual range of virtues and vices encountered in mountaineers. We meet a boastful priest in *The Penance*, a foolhardy youth in *Les Flammes de Pierre*, an enthusiastic but incompetent climber in *The Pest*, and so forth. Some of the story lines are simple, such as the Faust story (*La Fourche*), the husband who jeers at his wife for worrying whenever he returns from a climb late (*For Whom the Helicopter Flies*), and the hyperbolic vision of the future (2084). But most of the stories are clever fantasies in which something quite out of the ordinary happens - perhaps involving a ghost, a doppelganger, a strange death or escape from death. While there is much wit in these stories, and even some satire, Mme Sauvy's comedy usually stops short of farce, which helps to create tension since a tragic outcome is always on the cards, and frequently turns up!

I enjoyed these stories very much. Mme. Sauvy has an effortless narrative style, handles dialogue economically and skilfully, and her evocation of the Alpine scene is the assured product of long years of close acquaintance. Her work belongs in the tradition of short story writing begun in our literature by Poe and Saki and continuing to the present day in the likes of John Collier and Roald Dahl: fine writing, no frills, always a denouement and often a twist. What is perhaps remarkable is that she has managed to find story lines that are necessarily linked to mountains or mountaineering, an achievement which invites comparison with Wodehouse's wonderfully effective golf stories (though these are farces).

There has been quite a lot of short mountaineering fiction published recently. Mme. Sauvy's work is easily the best I have come across. She has two other collections not yet available in English (*Le jeu de la montagne et du hasard*. Montalba, 1985 and *La tenebre et l'azur*, Gallimard, 1991). Diadem's excellent editor Audrey Salkeld, who introduces *Flammes de Pierre*, is clearly impressed by Sauvy: I am sure we will see English versions of these other books before long.

Robin N. Campbell

Last Days:-John Roskelley (Hodder & Stoughton, 211pp., illus., glossary, £19.95, ISBN 0-340-55965-9).

A read I enjoyed, to my surprise, many expedition stories being found by me at least tedious if not boring. But then the standard of writing may well be on the increase, given both the increase in expedition writers, and presumably the increase in publishing competition. Evolution can be tough that way.

Roskelley was born in Spokane, Washington, and judging by his exploits in this book and his jacket photo he must fairly ruffy-tuffy. He's certainly pragmatic. The start of each chapter is enlivened by a quotation from 'Roskelley's First Climber's Dictionary, 1991', e.g. Chapter 14 begins with the definition of nomad thus:- 1. A member of a people free of stress and madness created by house payments, car expenses, charge cards, and civilized life. 2. What I should have been.

John Roskelley is a good, observant writer. If and when he turns to writing thrillers he'll have to hire an accountant. Arriving in China he meets his official interpreter in Zhangmu only one day late, despite the travel arrangements including the usual Chinese delays. His interpreter 'William' mediates with the official L.O., Liaison Officer, a Mr Chen. 'One look at Mr. Chen Jianjun...and I knew why our American forces had been stalemated in Korea. This guy could make first-string defensive linebacker on any number of NFL teams. Despite his sumo-wrestler build, Mr. Chen's movements were economical and fluid as if it cost him yuan, the Chinese currency, to step too far or reach out unnecessarily.' Roskelley felt that their late arrival had put them on Chen's wrong side. 'William confirmed my suspicion.

"Mr. Chen says you are late."

"Tell Mr. Chen I'm not getting paid enough for this shit. Have him take it up with Mr. Wickwire."

"I don't understand 'shit'," he said.

"It's American for anything that's a problem, like that," I answered, pointing at a pile of cow dung on the road.

"Oh, I see." The puzzled look was quickly replaced with a smile. "Yes, yes. I know what you mean. Good word, 'shit.'"

I'm not going to recount the climbing in this book, though Tawoche in Nepal and Menlungste in Tibet figure large. Suffice to say that you don't survive eighteen major Himalayan expeditions by being stupid. You also don't get your book read from cover to cover by this reviewer by being boring and/or non-humorous. And which famous British climber has left behind a child who has a remarkable likeness (To the British climber that is...) Roskelley is honest in his accounts of mountains and countries and the family life he has to abandon for each expedition. Recommended.

Quest for Adventure:-Chris Bonington (Hodder & Stoughton, paperback, 352pp., illus., £10.95, ISBN 0-340-56049-5).

Paperback edition of this adventure compilation, first published in 1981. A good pre-holiday read to get you in the mood for heroics.

Vortex:-David Harris (Diadem, 208pp., £13.99, ISBN 0-906371-19-8).

One of our reviewers, Bill Murray, while reviewing 'One Step in the Clouds' last year, commented that 'Vortex' should receive its just reward as a novel standing in its own right, as a 200-page book. And here it is, a thriller involving the North Cascades, drugs, and climbers.

The Alpine 4000m Peaks, a guide for mountaineers:-Richard Goedeke (Diadem, 240pp, 96 photographs, 32 sketch maps, 17 topos, ISBN 0-906371-29-5).

This plastic-bound guidebook is an edited version of the translated German edition of 1990. It describes some sixty-one mountains, and might serve as a good introduction to these classic peaks. The print is large and legible.

Himalayan Climber:-Doug Scott (Diadem, 192pp, many photos., £19.99, ISBN 0-906371-93-7).

Like Roskelley, Scott is another survivor. So is Bonington, come to think of it. Scott is like a dark horse, suddenly appearing just before the finishing post, pushing hard on the leader's heels, yet he's always been around, ugly Lennon/granny spectacles, flower-power locks and detached air; pretty ordinary really. Apart from the climbs that is. This fine, heavily illustrated book would sit well on anyone's desk; in fact, it's a bargain. The photographs, as Ken Wilson (well he would) says in the Introductory Note, include some of the best high-altitude shots taken, and I have to agree. Once again, looking with envy at some snow-plumed ridge above it all, I wonder whether or not I should have taken the safe route to mortgage and marriage. Stupid question really, considering his grossly elevated abilities. At least, like a few thousand others, I can claim to have had a pint of beer with him.

Colour separations in Bangkok, photoset in Yorkshire, and printed in Italy, this book will have you drooling over the greater ranges. Whether you get round to reading the words in between is another thing, but yes, consult the book.

Second Man on the Rope:-Ian Mitchell (Mercat Press, Edinburgh; 136pp., £6.95, ISBN 1873644019).

An enjoyable read for the most part, though here and there distinct fin-de-siècle feelings intrude; this man just might be running out of stories. Thus, the chapter punnily entitled 'Keeping Cuillin Difficulty' was the subject of a Kevin Sutton story in the 1991 S.M.C.J. ('Rainy Days and Sudden Nights'). Other minor pieces of 'secondary tellings' include the cover, where the classic photograph by A.E. Robertson of the crux section of Crowberry Ridge Direct has been crudely redrawn (the others inside are better). It's not that I mind these transforming works of art; we all borrow from before, it's just that there is no real nod, or bow,

or even passing wink to any other pre-existing work in the subject matter - man and the hills. And the leader on Crowberry Ridge is wearing E.B.s (not that I blame him!)

The stories that work best, as might be expected, are those that tell of real pain, such as 'Before a Fall', when Mitchell and his mate Davie, to whom the book is dedicated, are avalanched on Beinn a' Chreachain. But the writer and many of his readers are perhaps closer together than both sides think. It's quite probable, for example, that we crossed paths in the bar of Inverarnan Inn. I would have body-swerved his crowd, jovial, numerous, rough-edged, steaming in front of the log fire by right of being wet, while he would have ignored the pofaced duo or trio in the quiet draughty corner by the window, discussing the crux of the day. And both of us would have enjoyed our day on the hill, just as we were enjoying our foaming pints of ale.

Mitchell has the observant eye and the sharp tongue to go with it, even if reading writing in the vernacular I find irritating. But this isn't a forcan terrible buik, and fan ye gang tae the buik-shop mind an pay for this ane at least.

Ken Crockett.

Suspended Sentences from the life of a Climbing Cameraman:-Jim Curran (Hodder & Stoughton; ISBN 0-340-51817-0; £14.95)

For once the Editor did not have to twist my arm to do this. Having been impressed by Jim Curran's concluding chapter in Geoff Birtles' compilation, 'Alan Rouse - a Mountaineer's life', I was curious to read more. Additionally, the relative novelty of a semi-autobiography from someone who had associated with many well-known climbers, yet who never pretended to be any more than an average performer himself, fond of having a good time, appealed to me. As well as his own story, I hoped perhaps that Curran might bring an interesting perspective to bear on some of his more famous contemporaries.

Although it is not without interest, I left the book sadly disappointed. The earlier chapters, including one on making a film of Menlove Edwards' article, 'A Great Effort' and one on the successful Trango expedition, were quite enjoyable, but as I progressed I was increasingly overcome by the feeling that I'd read much of it before (and, it has to be said, better written). The cast was familiar - Anthoine, Brown, Boardman, Bonington, Boysen, Harris, Rouse, Tasker, Whillans et al, as were many of the locations - the Padarn for one. However, if you intend to write a book with names like those in it, I would suggest that you really need to have something new to say about them. For myself, I think I've heard enough stories about outrageous drunken behaviour. Unless they're really something...

In fairness, there is more to the book than I may be implying, and occasionally little insights are offered. Examples include the chapters on Kongur, where the differing attitudes of Boardman, Tasker and Rouse are briefly discussed. However, the interest such sections generated didn't begin to compensate for the irritation much of the rest of the book caused me.

The truth is that Curran's writing, at least as it is displayed here, is rarely up to the mark. The dialogue is stilted and the descriptions, while laden with adjectives, unconvincing; rarely does he succeed in creating an atmosphere, or even successfully communicate what one assumes were very funny occasions. The more serious passages are hardly any better; even his feelings during a trip to St Kilda, the disaster of K2 less than a year behind him and still a deeply disturbing memory, are not conveyed as compellingly as one would have wished. Either Curran is unable to articulate them, or has not put in the effort to do so properly.

In the chapters on the trip to Kongur, Curran mentions Kashgar, and paraphrases H.W. Tilman, who described the locals as regarding it as 'exceedingly bad form so much as to cross the street on foot if it is possible to ride across on a horse'. I suppose Jim Curran could hardly help it, but the last mountain book I read was *The Ascent of Nanda Devi*, and I was reminded of my delight in Tilman's witty, gripping, yet understated prose. I know few authors stand comparison, but nonetheless with the mention of Tilman the shortcomings of Curran's book were thrown into stark relief. I'm afraid, in this reviewer's opinion at least, that in every department except perhaps the photographs this book simply doesn't make the grade.

Bob Duncan.

The Climbing Guide to Scotland:-T. Prentice. (Crowood Press, 205pp., illust., £13.99, ISBN 1-85223-527-6).

This is a useful little publication but is more of a gazetteer to crags than a traditional guide book. Largely the book meets its ambitious objective of covering the whole of Scotland, summer and winter. Each crag gets the equivalent of an introductory paragraph in a local guide book. Thus it describes the general character of the routes, the quality of the rock, and normally important routes to get a bearing on the crag. There are no route descriptions as such, just general comments such as 'the stunning R arete is taken by THE EDGE OF EXTINCTION E6 6B,' with route names always in bold type.

Research has been thorough and fairly comprehensive. Sketch maps give a good overview of where the climbing is while details include the altitude of crags, the appropriate map and grid reference number as well as relevant publications including specific SMC journals where climbs are documented. A sign of the times – or perhaps the comprehensive nature of the publication-climbing walls are included.

After a while the author's obvious enthusiasm for stone circles and prehistoric relics starts to irritate after being told yet again that this or that artifact from the past 'should not be missed.' Similarly the phrase 'You'd better believe it!' when describing ice on Arran or the Cobbler niggles. The photographs are all action shots in black and white but are not quite produced to the high standard we all now expect in any book. Crags are listed by mountain which sometimes is not the most common way to refer to the crag. However these are minor complaints of a well-researched book where the author's enthusiasm comes across while directing us towards new climbing areas. Many who have been active in Scotland for thirty years will no doubt claim there is nothing new in this publication but for those of us with a less comprehensive knowledge and a desire to go somewhere different this book offers a much more useful starting point than do the glossy coffee table books.

Stan Pearson.

The Trekking Peaks of Nepal:-Bill O'Connor (The Crowood Press, 1989 (paperback edition 1991), 224pp, £14.95, ISBN 1-85223-651-50).

There are eighteen mountains in the Nepal Himalaya which are described as 'trekking peaks', and as such are more readily accessible to visiting mountaineers than is the vast throng of Himalayan giants. The trekking peaks are mostly of modest height (by Himalayan standards), from 5500m to 6500m. However, the name given to them is misleading, for some of them (for example Hiunchuli and Kusum Kanguru) are hard climbs by any route and even the easy ones involve more than ordinary trekking. On a good day with firm snow conditions Mera may well turn out (if you are sufficiently well acclimatised) to be a fine high-level hillwalk, but if the wind is blowing, or the snow unconsolidated, or the crevasses gaping open it is a very different proposition.

One of the attractions of the trekking peaks is the relative absence of red-tape associated with them compared with an attempt on one of the really high peaks. There is no need for a liaison officer; a climbing permit, a modest peak fee and a sirdar to help to organise things are the three essentials, although many parties will engage the services of a trekking agency to deal with the many other matters of transport, provisioning and porters essential for a mini-expedition.

Bill O'Connor has a wealth of experience as a Himalayan climber and a leader of parties on the trekking peaks. His book is a mine of essential information for anyone planning a climb on one of them. For each one there is a description of the approach, stage by stage, and of the various routes on the mountain. Numerous maps and photographs illustrate the text. There are also useful short chapters on the organisation of lightweight expeditions, equipment, keeping healthy, climate, emergencies and rescue, and the inevitable rules and regulations governing a visit to one of these lower mountains of the Nepal Himalaya.

This book can be strongly recommended to anyone planning a first visit to one of the trekking peaks, particularly anyone planning a do-it-yourself expedition. There are not a few problems and pitfalls to be met. This book will help you to anticipate and solve them, and thereby help to ensure a troublefree, and hopefully successful, expedition.

Mountains and Other Ghosts:-Dermot Somers (Diadem Books, 1990, 224pp, £12.95, ISBN 0-906371-63-5, also in paperback at £7.95).

Dermot Somers' short stories have appeared in the last few years in climbing magazines and the Irish Press, and they are collected here for the first time. As the title suggests, mountains feature strongly in many of these stories, and the author's first-hand experience on several of the biggest and blackest walls in the Alps gives his stories authenticity.

However, Dermot Somers draws on his climbing experience not so much as a subject in itself, but as the framework for the observation of human characters operating under tension in situations of considerable stress. (That seems to be a fair description of climbing the Eiger Nordwand on the day of Armageddon).

Readers of this Journal will probably enjoy most those stories which have a climbing or a mountain setting. I certainly did. I have often looked at the vertical columns of Fair Head in County Antrim and wondered what those climbs would be like. Now, after reading Somers' first story, I know and am impressed. In 'Dark Mourne' he tells of three young cyclists from south of the Border who arrive late one black night at the climbers' hut in the Silent Valley to find that it seems to have undergone a mysterious change of use, and its occupants pose a more menacing threat to unsuspecting visitors than would the occupants of the CIC on the night of a club meet.

D. Bennet.

Mountain Days and Bothy Nights:-Dave Brown and Ian Mitchell (Luath Press, 1990, 182pp, £5.95, ISBN 0-946487-15-4).

This collection of stories, anecdotes, histories and lore has been reprinted three times since its original publication in 1987 which indicates that it must be a good read with a growing readership. The tales are homely in the very best sense of that word. They record the doings, sayings, incongruities and idiosyncrasies of the denizens of the bothy underworld, a level of Scottish life in which romance always triumphs over adversity and squalor. All this is described in an easy philosophical style. As well as being a good read the book is an authentic word picture of this part of the climbing scene in latter-day Scotland, which, like any good picture, will increase in charm over the years.

Iain Smart.

Island at the Edge of the World:-Stephen Venables (Hodder & Stoughton, 177pp, 33 colour photos, £16.99, ISBN 0340-556005).

Stephen Venables was singularly fortunate in enlisting the co-operation of the military garrison on South Georgia as, without it, mounting an expedition to this wind and blizzard swept island would be extremely difficult. The contrast between South Georgia at 54°S and the city of York at 54°N is quite remarkable.

Climbing mountains in an environment where the weather destroys tents in a very short time requires a particular kind of tenacity which Stephen appears to have in abundance. The ascent of Mount Carse, the main objective of the expedition, was achieved by spending three weeks waiting in a snow cave for a brief weather window and then risking that it would continue for the two days required for the ascent.

The story is well told with interesting historical diversions relating to the Falklands war and the mis-use of the island by the whalers and sealers. The latter have much to answer for. The photographs - a pity there are so few - are a poignant reminder of how the greed of man can despoil even the most remote locations. The climbing and mountain photographs, all taken in the intervals between storms, are excellent but, not surprisingly, give no idea of the foul conditions which prevail.

The masochists among us will enjoy reading this book while dreaming of ascending blizzard swept peaks. I certainly enjoyed it!

Bill Wallace.

A View from the Ridge: - Dave Brown and Ian Mitchell (Ernest Press, 1991, 185pp, £6.50, ISBN 0-94815-311-3).

Whatever the reader may think of the authors' views on escaping the problems and tensions of the city, of the self-destructive tendencies of young Scots, of sex and the single bothy girl, they were categorically wrong in one opinion. On page 6 we read 'It'll no win the Tasker-Boardman Memorial Prize', but within three months of publication it became co-winner of the Award. It is a good read, and you may have to queue for it at your local library.

Neutral observers they are not - Dave Brown and Ian Mitchell are totally committed addicts who transmit their enthusiasm in a lively and humorous narrative, with keen observation of people and places. The fifteen divergent chapters encompass cycling, sailing, rail travel (all to the hills), bothying, ultramontane in Yosemite, fighting, drinking, a funeral, and most of the subjects normal amongst climbers. Evocative drawings by Maggie Ramage capture the atmosphere and enliven the presentation.

They helpfully announce their unifying thread early on: 'when on the hills you take with you the baggage of problems and tensions that drove you to seek their solace'. They sustain this theme consistently so that the reader is provoked to reflect on his own experience of the hills and to agree or disagree with their thesis, that Hell is not a city and there is no rural Utopia. The book also seeks to answer the question of motivation in an attempt to explain the addiction of the hills, but steers clear of metaphysics and philosophising.

They range widely in their quotations and in their travels through the Highlands; the setting of the one chapter written in the Doric tongue is Shenavall bothy and the north-west. Like their first book 'Mountain Days and Bothy Nights', this one is male-oriented and what shines through is their love of company. Not for them the solo excursion or the isolated campsite. Characters like Fishgut Mac, Postie, Stumpy and Mealy Puddin' abound, and the later chapters return inevitably to the sociable themes of the proletarian revolution in climbing of the fifties and sixties - The Auld Crowd, Requiem for Willie, the Married Man's Bothy Weekend.

These are two good men, true lovers of the hills, and anyone of their generation could add another chapter to their book. Any additions would have to reflect their theme that what you run away to reflects all that you run away from. The deplorable practice of club secretaries arranging winter club meets at your favourite remote bothy would reinforce the theme. On the other hand the mind-blowing concentration of a long unprotected ice pitch displaces all other tensions. Then there is the disturbing argument that 'climbing demands so much egotistical, physical and mental energy that it is inevitably a narrowing and constraining activity'.

Thus have I fallen into the trap which irritated slightly on first reading, of presenting a balance and tolerance of opposing views. They denounce Munro-bagging as a 'neurotic, middle-aged impulse', yet end the chapter by quoting Robertson with approval: 'I look back upon the days I have spent pursuing this quest as among the best spent of my life'. The pioneers did not necessarily have a harder time of it without the motor car. At least they could rely on putting their bicycles in the guard's van, which has since disappeared or is denied to us.

Then, horrors, one of them goes to Colorado to work as an Outward Bound instructor. He manages to reconcile his own anarchic enjoyment of the hills with the organised adventure laid on for his novices, in the beautiful and remote surroundings of the San Juan Mountains. Maybe they do not want to cause offence by taking sides too strongly.

One strange omission which is hard to believe is that the only one who gets lost in all these tales is the married man's dog. We could have enjoyed some more tales of heroic misadventure. They make up for this by visiting Collie's and Mackenzie's graves at Struan, without which the climber's pilgrimage to the Cuillin is surely incomplete.

Yacht owners will enjoy reading of approaches in wild seas to the hills of Skye and Knoydart, and everyone will wish to study their exploration of reasons for the scarcity of women climbers in the sixties and seventies. Their activity is compared unfavourably with women of the Inglis Clark-Raeburn-Bell eras. The scene changed in the eighties and it would be interesting to read the authors' views on why we now see so many good women's teams on the summer crags, but never on winter climbs. Recent history of Club A.G.M.s suggest that most of us will be muttering our own thoughts under our breath, provoked once again into taking sides, by this splendid book.

Ron Hockey.

In Monte Viso's Horizon:- Will McLewin (The Ernest Press, 1991, 255pp, £16.95, ISBN 0-948153-09-1)

The perplexing title of this book is partly explained by the sub-title, 'Climbing all the Alpine 4000m Peaks', since many of them can be seen from distant Monte Viso in the southern Alps. From this it might be a guide book of alternative routes or a history of noteworthy ascents, but it is neither; instead, the book is a unique account of one man's experiences and achievement.

Will McLewin is a man of many parts: mathematician by profession, accomplished musician, recognised horticultural botanist and successful fell-runner. But for us he is a mountaineer who over the holidays of the 22 years up to 1988 succeeded in climbing the complete list of fourthousanders in the Alps. Karl Blodig was credited with the first completion in about 1900, then Eustace Thomas (of stretcher fame) was the first British mountaineer to equal that in 1930, even if neither fulfilled the modern listing. Although the author admits to the arbitrary nature of such a list and the discretion that has to be exercised over inclusion or exclusion (a dilemma well-known to members of this Club), he was the first British mountaineer and one of the very few to ascend all the now-recognised 53 main summits and 39 subsidiary points. Unfortunately it is the consequence of such a list that many notable or even more difficult mountains do not qualify, but all of the fourthousanders are worthy mountains by any standard. Thus in Will McLewin's success in climbing nearly one-third of them solo, we recognise not only his skill and determination but also more than a suggestion of his philosophy.

The fourthousanders are divided in the book into twelve sections which coincide closely with recognisable mountain groups. Each section starts with an introduction containing a general but not definitive survey, then the mountains follow in separate articles of a few paragraphs or pages, starting with an indication of the chosen route, the grade in the usual French alpine system, and the party. No dates are given, although the year can be found in an appendix, neither is there much information on times taken, but plenty on weather and conditions. The book is abundantly illustrated with photographs, diagrams and maps. The photographs, mostly by the author, are of a near-uniformly superb standard and shine from the pages. Some monotony of blue skies and perfect weather becomes apparent as a result of the prime purpose of most to illustrate the routes, so that the leavening with a few atmospheric scenes of great beauty is all the more welcome. A few photographs are too dark, perhaps because an ultra-violet filter was not used on the camera, and it is unfortunate that the Rochefort Ridge has been left with an obtrusive object in the foreground. All photographs illustrating routes are accompanied by a small outline diagram to help with the identification of summits and important features, though it would have made reference much easier if the keys had been listed in alphabetical order. The simplified maps in three colours showing huts, routes and summits are models of clear draughtmanship. An interesting feature of the book is the insertion of a discursive essay on a general topic of mountaineering interest at the end of each main section. The index is fully detailed, with a somewhat elaborate scheme of page references, but there are a few trivial entries that would have been much better omitted.

Will McLewin's style is direct and unpretentious, so that the narrative flows and the reader shares his experiences. The writing is mainly subjective and anecdotal, because his intention throughout is to use the experience of ascending all fourthousanders as a framework for personal exploration and self-discovery. A few errors and mis-spellings (such as a persistent Feechopf instead of Feekopf) were noted in reading for this review; nevertheless these and other criticisms are minor blemishes in an otherwise fine publication, and these reservations are of insignificant importance to the general enjoyment and understanding of the book.

It is clear that much care and thought has gone into its writing and publication, so that at once it looks and feels good; there can be no better stimulus to opening, reading and enjoying. For those who have climbed some of the fourthousanders, this book will recall past pleasures; for others it will suggest challenges to come, and might even entice a few into emulating das grosseres Munros. However, for all interested in a range that for 200 years has represented the very essence of mountain form and mountaineering endeavour, it is a highly recommended account of one man's achievement which must be unique in mountaineering literature.

Trevor Ransley.

Journals of Kindred Clubs

The American Alpine Club Journal 1991.

As usual this is a superb diary of events in the climbing world.

From Tomo Cesen's solo of Lhotse's South Face in 46 hours to 45 routes done in 100 days, all on 14000ers in the Sierra Nevada.

There are articles on Himalayan Expeditions, namely Makalu's West Pillar which was a first female ascent for Kitty Calhoun Grissom, new routes on Cho Oyu and Shisha Pangma, cragging in the Karakoram on vertical granite towers, not forgetting The Everest International Peace Climb, when 20 climbers, comprising of Americans, Soviets and Tibetans reached the summit over a three day period. They also removed two tons of rubbish from the mountain, which in these environmental times, really does deserve a pat on the back.

There are the usual exciting new routes in the Alaska range, namely False Dawn on Foraker's South East Face and a new variant on the Hummingbird Ridge on Mount Logan, which consisted of an eight day ascent, followed by four days of descent, three of which were without food or water, until the climbers discovered a cache of perfectly preserved food, left over from a 1953 expedition, 'Manna From Heaven', was how David Nettle summed it up.

Climbs and expedition reports from the United States, the Himalaya and just about everywhere else in between. The section on Nepal has been well reported by Elizabeth Hawley, a remarkable lady who keeps meticulous records of each and every expedition into Nepal.

To sum up, a sumptuous menu, something to get your teeth into.

Kevin Wilson.

This is The Section for Reviews We Had To Do, even though we were not sent a review copy. The first review is of a self-styled 'fanzine', definitely the Private Eye of Scottish Hillwalkers. It's produced in Glasgow, where else? Find it in mountaineering shops at a ridiculous price. The second is for a paperback book of climbing cartoons by a Canadian girl. As we were not sent it for review, through some gross cosmic oversight, your Hon. Editor actually bought it for himself, which is recommendation enough. We will not provide its ISBN of course, but will give the title and say that it is published by Cordee.

The Angry Corrie

You go away for a weekend with some mates, climb a hill or two, get drizzled on, have transport troubles. You go down to the local pub, chat, and most importantly have a dammed good laugh.

Everyone in a group, old or young, tend to create humour with what they have; with the people, their clothes, equipment, cooking, whatever. A right good ribbing to bring people down to earth from potential lofty pretensions to being serious mountain dudes. It's part and parcel of the weekend experience, right? I think so, but if you disagree then don't buy the Angry Corrie. You might feel that too many sacred cows are being tickled to death before your eyes.

The Angry Corrie's aspirations may seem fuzzy, unless you saw Issue One's Editorial a year ago, where it was suggested that too much hillwalking writing was up in the clouds as far as the ordinary hillwalking punter was concerned. The Angry Corrie is trying to bring hillwalking down to earth through humour. It takes the mickey out of personalities, gear ('useless equipment reviewed' etc) and generally people's Munro-bagging obsessions.

It's still a fledgeling rag, only six issues old. Obviously put together on a bootlace budget, trying to find the right format, needing more punter contributions and with a propensity to try and squeeze a joke out of almost every sentence. It contains a mish-mash of articles, poems, a Vizesque cartoon, criticism, descriptions of hillwalks. With its drawings done by a tiny spider trying to shake the ink off its legs and the obligatory Letters to The Editor, most of which were probably drafted in the Clachaig (aren't all the best letters?) Therefore, it can be a bit hit or miss, but it's also distinctly different - it is the first hillwalkers' fanzine after all. It's cheap (50p for Munros' sake) and should give you at least a few laughs in its twenty or so pages.

I think it asks the reader to allow it to be silly in order to get some informative and serious points about the hill-scene across. I hope it can keep its sense of a humorous overview. There's always the danger of it creating its own niche and style of criticism and humour which could become stale. Also, writing that praises is virtually non-existent. At least the fanzine tries to create something that has information, criticism and humour in its pages. There are many untapped readers out there ready for talking that way about people and the hills.

Can the Angry Corrie survive, keep its balance and not become too daft? Like a good weekend away it always demands fresh input if it wants to stay funny and on the right track. Fingers crossed.

Malcolm Simmonds.

Climbing Tales of Terror, sub-titled *Wicked Lies & Malicious Slander*, is a book of climbing cartoons by a Mrs Tami Knight, a lady of obvious character who hangs out in a demented little corner of Canada's Coast Range. The book should come with a health warning, as one's viscera will be in grave danger of undergoing strangulation due to a severe case of the hysterics. An Italian Hitch of the small intestine is not to be sneezed at. This is the funniest collection of climbing cartoons I've come across, with a sustained and inventive line throughout. I've even found myself in the book (in the sketch entitled 'Identify the Climber most likely to Whine about a Bolt', I'm No.2, the 'Fossilized Guidebook Writer and member of the board of directors who hasn't climbed harder than 5.6 since 1975.'

The view from a female angle is of course examined, with a hilarious page on how to plan a climbing trip with a man (basically bring lots of toys for him and a really good set of ear plugs and a good bottle of malt for yourself). There is throughout the book a sustained attack on the microcephalic climbing subset who climb ice and who, it would seem, are not very high up in the evolutionary scale according to Mrs Knight (why Mrs, one asks, and not Ms? Because in Mrs Knight's house there are NO PIGS). Thus ice climbers are easily confused by handing them a jar of plastic flies with all the wings missing. Lycra comes in for much abuse, as do bolters, and whinemaster competition climbers. Then there's Roger's Disposable Avalanche Poodles. Buy or steal this book (either way she gets the royalties) and LIGHTEN UP WEENIES.

Ken Crocket.

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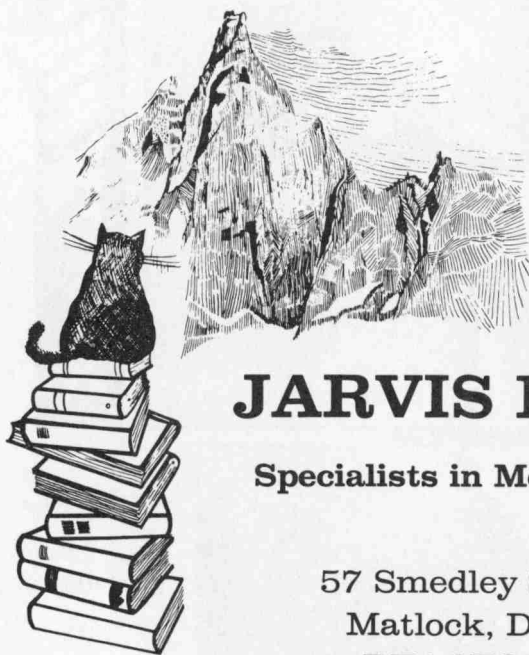
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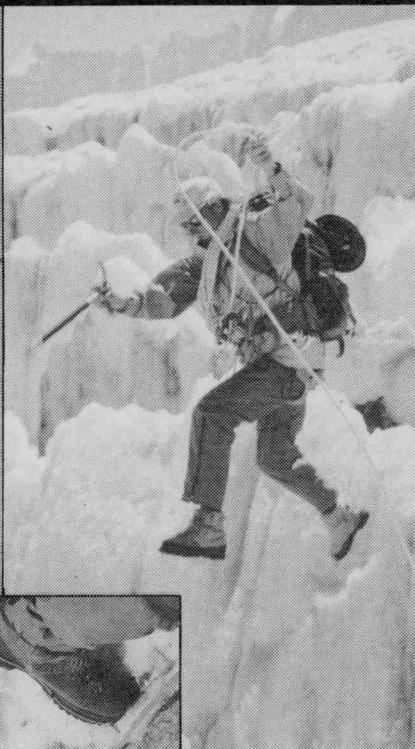
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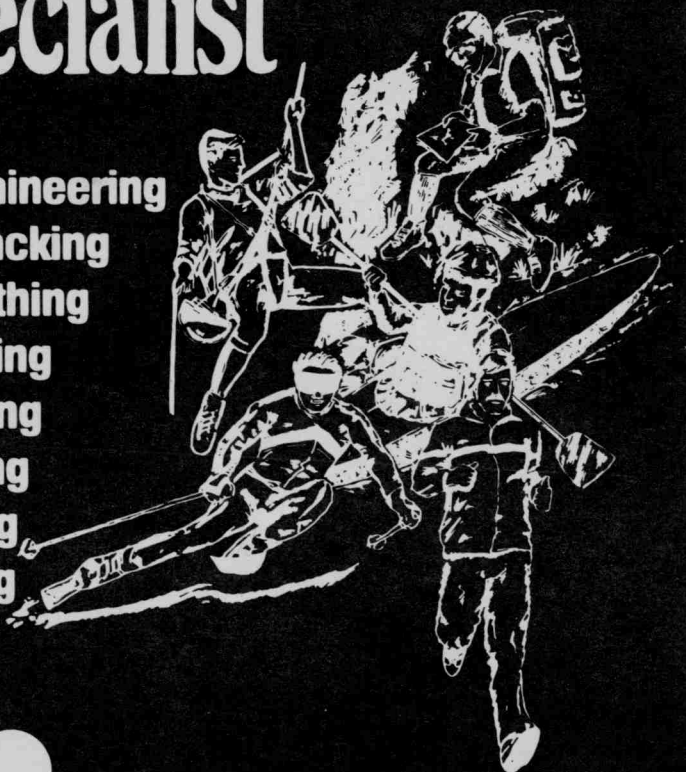
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