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## CONTENTS.

Scottish Mountaineering and its Relation to Mountain- eering Abroad—II.....	G. Graham Macphee
The Spell of Ben Lui.....	C. R. P. Vandeleur
Sealladh Bho Eighe.....	Ross S. Higgins
Beinn Mhor, South Uist.....	John MacLennan
The North-West Renfrewshire Hills.....	Geo. F. Todd
Sunrise from Ben More.....	G. R. Roxburgh
Agag's Groove.....	Alex. C. D. Small
In Memoriam—	
Lionel W. Hinxman.	
Sir Felix O. Schuster, Baronet.	
Herbert C. Boyd.	
William Low.	
Proceedings of the Club—	
Easter 1936—Sligachan.	
Easter 1936—Aviemore.	
Library and Club Room.	
New Members.	
Editorial Note.	
Notes and Excursions.	
S.M.C. Abroad.	
Reviews.	
The Junior Mountaineering Club of Scotland—	
The First Ten Years.	
Sectional Meets.	

## ILLUSTRATIONS.

Brocken Spectre, Liathach.  
Ben Lui.  
Beinn Mhor, South Uist.  
Agag's Groove, Buachaille Etive.  
S.M.C. at Sligachan.  
Bruach na Frithe.  
Loch Coruisk and Sgurr Dubh.  
The Sunlit Ridge, Na Gruagaichean.

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*June 1936*

BROCKEN SPECTRE, LIATHACH

*Drummond Henderson*

# THE SCOTTISH Mountaineering Club Journal.

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## SCOTTISH MOUNTAINEERING AND ITS RELATION TO MOUNTAINEERING ABROAD.

### II.—REMARKS ON SNOW AND ICE CONDITIONS.

By G. GRAHAM MACPHEE.

SO much has already been written about snow and ice climbing in Scotland that nothing novel need be expected in this article. At the Editor's request, an attempt is made to give a brief survey, with stress on some points that one's own experience indicates as important.

The chapter on Snow Conditions in our "General Guide Book," by that great authority Harold Raeburn, needs no eulogy of mine, and should be carefully studied. There are several articles scattered throughout the pages of our *Journal* which would well repay perusal, and acquaintance with the chapters on Snowcraft in the standard mountaineering textbooks is assumed.

There are no glaciers in Scotland, so this branch of mountaineering can be learned in practice only abroad. However, bergschrunds and ice-falls which give good practice can be found in winter in certain places, such as Ben Nevis. Apart from actual glaciers, all kinds of snow and ice technique can be acquired in Scotland. To find suitable conditions is another matter, and, in my experience, depends entirely on luck. One climber may go again and again to the mountains only to find rain and storm; while another may, on a single random day-trip, chance on perfect snow and ice. By acquiring snow and ice technique I do not mean the mere ascent of a mountain

more than 3,000 feet in height in winter, nor even the collecting of a long list of such ascents. No doubt some experience of value is bound to be obtained thus, but such a pursuit is surely unworthy of *all* the energies of a mountaineering club. The disease humorously described as *Munrovitis* seems to be attacking even our younger and presumably more daring and energetic members, with the result that serious rock climbing and snow mountaineering are tending to be neglected in favour of hill walking.

In Scottish winter climbing, time is everything. The period of daylight is short; therefore an early start should be made. The tendency is to dawdle before and after setting out on an expedition. Many a climb has had to be abandoned which could easily have been achieved if time had not been wasted in the early stages. Other climbs (including, alas, some of my own) have been completed at a ridiculously late hour. Prolonged halts should be avoided. The fewer and shorter the halts during a winter climb the better.

Equipment is dealt with in our "General Guide Book" in broad terms; nailing for boots in "Mountaineering Art," by Harold Raeburn, and in the *S.M.C. Journal*, Vol. XX., pp. 31, 108. Regarding rope, I emphatically disagree with the lengths given in our "General Guide Book," p. 65. As a member of the then committee, I dissented from their inclusion in the revised edition. One hundred feet of rope for four climbers is, in my opinion, not only ridiculous but dangerous on any but the easiest climbs. It allows of an average length of only 28 feet of rope between two climbers *at most*, and would not be enough for ascending the Tower Ridge of Ben Nevis in safety. Under difficult winter conditions, at least one climb on Ben Nevis (Tower Gap Chimney) requires 150 feet of line for the leader alone. For "fell-walking on snow" and for ordinary easy gully climbs, a short rope may suffice, but on any difficult or unknown climb there should always be 100 feet of line between every two climbers. A length of 100 feet of Alpine line weighs less than four pounds, so weight is no excuse for not taking enough. Much time may be

lost by having too short a rope. Time may also be lost by getting a long rope tangled, but such an elementary fault is quite inexcusable.

The modern tendency is to have a very short ice-axe. This is a great disadvantage when testing snow-bridges on the descent, and like many modern tendencies has been carried to absurd extremes. Each climber must find what suits himself. A shaft about the length of an ordinary walking-stick is probably best. A very light ice-axe breaks more easily than a heavy one of the same quality of wood. The only satisfactory ice-axe sling I have used is one devised by myself to combine the good points of several different types. It has been used with success in the Himalayas and elsewhere. Some climbers "never use a sling." The time they waste on a mixed rock-snow-ice climb is almost unbelievable; and I have seen such a man lose his axe altogether.

It is essential to have plenty of warm clothing, and it is better to carry a few ounces of unneeded Shetland woollies in the rucksack than to risk death from exposure if benighted. This applies to summer as well as to winter in Scotland. A narrow escape from what might have been tragedy occurred on a long climb started on a brilliant morning at the end of June. About half-way up, above the most difficult portion, a sudden storm came on. Sleet and snow fell, and lay to a depth of several inches, delaying progress in the upper easier section. Thanks to an insufficient supply of spare clothing—and who would have expected to need heavy winter equipment on a fine midsummer's day—the party got badly chilled, and one member was not far from collapse before safety was reached, at a late hour. As it says in the "Guide Book," we must remember that it may be winter ANY DAY IN THE YEAR on the higher hills in Scotland. For winter climbing I find woollen mitts or woollen gloves the best. They wear out quickly, but are well worth their expense for the firm grip they give on snow or ice handholds and on wintry rock. Most people prefer a woollen (Balaclava) helmet to any other headgear.

At least two members of each party should have

electric lamps and compasses. One compass should be luminous in case the party gets benighted. Candle lanterns may be used instead of electric lamps, but they do not leave the hands free, like the best type of electric lamp, which has a bulb and reflector pinned or fastened to the coat, and a wire connected to a battery in the pocket or rucksack. One map and one aneroid should also be carried in each party. Luxurious modern climbers have been known to carry vacuum flasks, but it is doubtful if a hot drink even on a cold day is worth the extra weight, apart from the risk of breakages. The formerly indispensable whisky-flask is nowadays seldom encountered on the mountains. *Plenty* of food should always be carried.

Crampons, or ice claws, are of little use in Scotland. Occasionally the kind of snow where they prove helpful may be encountered, and good practice may be obtained, but most people consider that their use tends to lessen the sporting nature of Scottish winter climbing.

It is not proposed to deal with ski-mountaineering here. My own somewhat limited experience in Scotland has been that skis are far more trouble than they are worth, so far as mountaineering is concerned. In the Cairngorms skis are occasionally of some help, since, with soft fresh snow, they facilitate perhaps the ascent and certainly the descent, and may enable long expeditions to be made; but such good snow conditions occur only too seldom. With old crusted snow, particularly when alternating with frequent drifts of wind-blown new snow, the technical difficulties to any but the most expert ski-runners make walking easier. Ski-mountaineering is at its best in early spring in the Alps. With ski-running as a sport in itself this article has no concern.

Practically all kinds of snow and ice that are known in the Alps may be found in Scotland. In addition, there is more than rarely a tenacious, sticky, tough kind of snow-ice, apparently similar to that described as occurring in the Himalayas, and also very rarely in the Alps, as on the Brenva route. It may be due to frequent alternations of temperature above and below freezing-point, combined with the moist atmosphere of Scotland. The dry powder-

snow, so frequently encountered in the Alps, is rarer in Scotland, where the snow conditions are largely modified by the atmospheric humidity due to the prevailing westerly Atlantic winds.

Great judgment is needed to know when snow is safe. This can be learned only by experience, although some people seem to have a kind of instinct which warns them of danger. It may have been lack of familiarity with Scottish snow conditions which resulted in a fatal accident on Ben Nevis when the snow, a few feet below the summit cornice of the Castle, slid down without warning. When a sudden thaw occurs, snow is more likely to be dangerous or avalanchy, especially in the late spring. This applies when the sun gets round on to a face that was previously in shadow. This may have been the cause of a serious accident on Ben Nevis at Easter 1936, when a party of four was swept down by a fall of stones and ice, perhaps loosened by the sun on the west side of Tower Ridge. Conversely, when the temperature falls below freezing-point, as in the evening or in shadow, the snow gets fixed and hardened, and then other dangers may arise. In glissading down a gully, harder snow may be suddenly encountered in the shadow; or a gully which afforded a laborious ascent on soft snow in the sunshine may provide an unexpectedly rapid descent when the snow has frozen in the shade later in the day. The same gully may vary considerably from day to day. The snow in No. 3 Gully on Ben Nevis was too soft one day for even a sitting glissade; next day, owing to a touch of frost, it was almost too fast for a standing glissade, and at least two unwary climbers had narrow escapes. Towards the foot of gullies the would-be glissader should beware of lurking crevasses or a bergschrund. Neglect of this precaution led to a broken leg at the foot of a Ben Nevis gully a few seasons ago. At Easter 1936 three slight accidents on Càrn Mòr Dearg, due to incautious glissading, might have had serious consequences. Under good conditions, magnificent glissades may be had in Scotland—far better than any I have enjoyed in the Alps. The usual elementary precaution

must, of course, be taken of making certain there are no hidden pitches where control might be lost. Some people even go so far as to ban glissading down any slope that has not been previously ascended the same day.

The climbs in Scotland are shorter than those in the Alps, and this is why pitches of far greater technical difficulty can be climbed in Scotland than would be possible abroad on account of the time required on an ordinary climb. The steep ice-pitches of Scottish climbs are really frozen waterfalls, usually in gullies, and would not be attempted on a long Alpine climb. They are, however, good practice for Alpine work, just as severe British rock climbing is good training for rock-work on foreign climbs. In Scotland, as elsewhere, conditions vary tremendously from year to year, and sometimes even from day to day. The upper couloir on Stob Ghabhar may one time be a difficult and even dangerous ice-pitch, with thin and insecure ice over rock, while another time it may have a comparatively easy, thick snowy covering. The Tower Gap Chimney on Ben Nevis once presented one of the hardest climbs I have ever done, while a fortnight later it proved to be fairly easy in its upper portion. In summer this climb can be ascended in less than an hour from foot to top, but on the occasion above-mentioned the frozen waterfall at the foot, which actually bulged to form a slight overhang at one place, required  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hours with a lead of over 130 feet. Such a pitch would not be attempted with prudence at the start of a long Alpine climb.

Avalanches do occur in Scotland, but not on the same large scale as in the Alps. There is, of course, the historic Loss of Gaick, evidently a very large avalanche, but there are few steep snowfields of sufficient extent to provide similar dangers. The most common Scottish avalanches are in gullies, usually due to a cornice giving way in the late spring. At this season ridges should be chosen as climbs. At all times the state of the weather and of the snow should be considered before starting a snow-gully climb. Any evidences of recent avalanches or of cornices about to give way are danger signals. An

avalanche in No. 5 Gully on Ben Nevis carried a climber down for about 800 feet, fortunately without serious consequences. The *S.M.C.J.* records several other instances of avalanches. In Scotland, owing to the moist atmosphere, the snow is usually, though not always, more cohesive than Alpine snow. Fresh powder snow lying on old hard snow, which is so frequently the precursor of avalanches in the Alps, is not often encountered in Scotland. New snow in Scotland seems to cohere from the start, and seems to consolidate more rapidly. Hence, steep slopes, which would be dangerous and liable to have avalanches in the Alps, may sometimes be traversed quite safely in Scotland.

The actual technique of step-cutting, belaying, etc., can best be learned by the novice from an experienced leader in practice, and from the standard textbooks in theory. Yet it is strange how even experts differ on such an everyday matter as the best way to cut an ice-step; so my advice to the novice would be to choose a good leader!

It may be asked what sort of climbs a man may reasonably hope to accomplish guideless and safely in the Alps, when once he has mastered the technique of Scottish snow and ice, and, of course, rock. Any attempt to answer this question brings me on to very controversial ground. The answer depends on so many factors. If such a climber is going out with others who have already had Alpine experience, he need have no qualms, provided he uses his common sense and keeps his eyes open; but, again I would say, "Choose a good leader."

The chief objective dangers in the Alps are falling stones and sudden bad weather. The former may be lessened by the choice of suitable climbs, as some routes are known to be more liable to stone-falls than others. A much-frequented route is not necessarily a safe one; for example, the ordinary route by the Grands Mulets on Mont Blanc has one very dangerous place, due to *chutes de pierres*. Couloirs, or gullies, are avoided in the Alps owing to this danger. Falling stones dislodged by a party higher up the mountain are, of course, in a different category from natural stone-falls.

Sudden bad weather is of serious import only on long and difficult climbs, unless the party is slow and incompetent. It should not trouble the competent novice on his first season, as long, difficult expeditions will not be attempted. The Matterhorn by the ordinary route is an easy climb for a strong party, and may be done by weaker parties *in fine weather*; but the sudden bad weather for which this mountain is notorious has not infrequently overtaken incompetent parties with fatal results.

In the Alps, glacier work will have to be learned, such as testing snow-bridges, sounding for hidden crevasses, use of the rope on a glacier, and route-finding. The art of moving quickly all together on easy rock can be learned in Scotland, as can also, above all else, the ability to descend quickly—for in the Alps there is usually no “easy way down.” For this reason, “climbing down” should be practised more in Scotland than it is. Taken as a whole, the experience of all branches of mountaineering that can be learned in Scotland is sufficient to enable a climber to visit the Alps with the knowledge that, except for a few minor points that can easily be picked up, he will be competent to deal with any of the ordinary difficulties which present themselves. Such experience can best be acquired in Scotland, of all the British climbing-grounds.

Regarding a starting-point for a first visit to the Alps, I hesitate to offer an opinion. Arolla or Saas-Fee are favourite places for the beginner, and Austria offers many easy but interesting mountains, such as the Grossglockner. If an experienced climber is one of the party, he will be able to select a suitable locality; and I will go so far as to say that it is best to have one such member in the party, rather than for a party of complete Alpine novices to set out by themselves.

#### REFERENCES FROM *S.M.C.J.*

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 Vol. VIII., p. 285, “Scottish Snow”—Harold Raeburn.  
 Vol. X., p. 17, “Some Mechanics of the Rope and Axe”—Gilbert Thomson.  
 Vol. XV., p. 323, “How to Stop a Fall on Hard Ice”—W. W. Naismith.



*January 1928*

*J. E. MacLaren*

BEINN LAOIGH FROM SHOULDER OF BEINN DUBHCRAIG ABOVE CONINISH

THE SPELL OF BEN LUI.

By Rev. C. R. P. VANDELEUR.

ALL we who love mountains have our favourites. While loving all mountains, we love some more than others—perhaps for æsthetic reasons, perhaps because the climbing to be had on them is specially good. But besides having our permanent favourites, many of us, probably, have been for a time under the spell of some mountain, because we had set our heart on scaling it, but have returned from it defeated, possibly by the difficulty of the mountain itself, more probably by the weather. In such circumstances, that mountain is apt to interest us more than any other, till the day comes when at last we conquer it. Then, it may be, our interest in it becomes less intense: it falls back into its proper position among our mountain friends.

There was a time when I regarded Ben Lui as an extremely dull mountain. In those days, I think, I had never properly seen it, and my impression of its dullness was partly, at any rate, derived from the outline sketch of it in the advertisement of Loch Awe Hotel in the *Journal*—hardly a fair test, certainly! After the Easter Meet of 1921 (the only Meet I have ever had the pleasure of attending), I was stopping for a few days at Dalmally, and one day I set out to ascend Ben Lui, with little enthusiasm—almost, indeed, as a duty. In a depressing mist and drizzle, I mounted a third of the way, perhaps, up the slope of Beinn a' Chleibh; then I turned. And the next day, which was my last in the district, I devoted to Cruachan—a far finer mountain, I was convinced, than Lui.

It was not till the summer of 1932 that I approached Ben Lui again. By that time I had a genuine longing to see what it was like, for during the eleven years' interval the fact had gradually been dawning on me (mainly, I think, through the pages of the *Journal*) that it must in truth be a noble "Ben," anyhow on the Tyndrum side.

Early in July I arrived at Crianlarich. Of course I ought to have known better than to go to the Highlands in July. But I had a comfortable feeling, derived from the newspapers, that it was going to be an exceptionally fine summer everywhere, the Highlands included! On my arrival at Crianlarich, however, it was only too evident that the drought, which had lasted for the past six or seven weeks, had definitely broken. Of the twenty days which I was able to spend in the Highlands, four were fine! On the afternoon of the day I arrived, I ascended Cruach Ardran, and saw from its slopes the depressing sight of the advancing rain-clouds. Away to the west there appeared for a moment what I took to be, and still believe to have been, the summit of Ben Lui. Then it was swallowed up in a cloud of inky blackness.

Two or three days later, I think it was, I hired a car and drove to Tyndrum, hoping for the best. As I started to walk up the valley towards Ben Lui, I at first mistook Beinn Chuirn for its bigger neighbour, and rejoiced that it was clear of clouds. But in a few minutes the real Ben Lui appeared from round the corner to the left, its upper part smothered in dark clouds. Depressing though the sight was, it was fine too. To me the mountain was mysterious and majestic. It rose up before me somewhat as Sinai must have done before the Israelites. I think it was at that moment that it really laid its spell on me. By the time I had reached Coninish farm, it was evident that the chance of the clouds lifting from it that day was small indeed. I resolved to return another day for better luck, and for the present to turn my attention to Beinn Chuirn. The latter mountain gave me some reward, for I discovered that it possessed some quite fine cliffs falling from the summit on the far side. From it, too, I surveyed Ben Lui, as far as was possible. I could see the gate-posts, so to speak, of the north-eastern corrie, and that on the right, Stob Garbh, looked especially stern and forbidding. Into the sanctuary between them my eyes could not penetrate. All was blackness there, and I could only guess the exact position of the summit. To the right of Stob Garbh the slopes looked perilously

steep. All this, I know, sounds very exaggerated language to use about Ben Lui, which most of you, I expect, regard as one of the homeliest of your native hills. But it was new to me, and we all know how storm-clouds lend mystery and grandeur to quite an ordinary hill.

On my way down Beinn Chuirn, I visited a rather remarkable waterfall, called on the map Eas Anie, which had attracted my attention while walking up the valley. I also encountered a very voluble lady, evidently the proprietress of Coninish farm. She was much more interested in economic matters than in mountains, but we agreed in our condemnation of the weather. Arrived at Tyndrum, I managed to buy a tolerably good photograph of Ben Lui, and was able at last to study the "lie" of the corrie and the position of the highest point, that fascinating peaklet at the left end of the summit-ridge.

The days passed, but the weather did not improve. An ascent of Ben More and Stobinian was all that I achieved. They were outside the zone of the worst weather, and conditions on them were quite pleasant. From their summits I saw the country to the eastward, including the Ben Lawers group, bathed in sunshine, with blue sky overhead, while to the westward all was black as night. Crianlarich seemed to be on the dividing line between the region of bad weather and that of comparatively good weather. I felt half inclined to change my plans and repair forthwith to the Eastern Highlands, but soon rejected the idea.

I had resolved that, if the weather did not clear, I would do my best, in spite of it, to reach the summit of Ben Lui on the last available day. So the morning of that day saw me again descend from a car at Tyndrum and take the path to Coninish. The day was, I believe, the wettest and wildest of my stay in the district—a real "soaker." As I walked up the valley, only the lower slopes of the mountains could be seen through the driving rain. By the time I reached Coninish I was drenched. Pressing on, I crossed the stream, and set foot on the actual lowest skirts of the mountain. Keeping close to

the tributary stream flowing from the corrie, I went at my best pace up the moderately steep slope, for there was no incentive to dawdle, the "going" was good, and the wind was, I think, behind me. It did not seem to take me long to reach the lip of the corrie, up which I proceeded for some distance. In front of me, I knew, though I could not see it, was the final abrupt face of the mountain, with its Central Gully, which gives such a sporting snow-climb in the winter and spring. But the Central Gully was not for me. Turning sharp to the right beyond a big, black rock, which projected somewhat into the corrie from that side, I climbed a steep slope of loose stones and earth, which presently brought me to the crest of a ridge of pleasing narrowness—that which runs out to Stob Garbh. I turned to the left along this ridge, now buffeted by a strong wind. On my left the slope fell abruptly to the corrie, being soon lost in the clouds. I was pleased to fancy that an appalling precipice was below me! After a few minutes—welcome sight—the summit cairn loomed through the mist, across this gulf. A steep little scramble, in which I was helped by the gale behind me, landed me at last on the summit-ridge, and a few moments later I was at the cairn, gazing down into the clouds which filled the corrie. It was a satisfaction to have conquered, and that satisfaction, together with thoughts of a hot bath and dinner, heartened me to endure the dreary miseries of the long trek back to Crianlarich.

But I was still unsatisfied. Ben Lui was still Mount Mystery to me. Impressed as I had been by the grandeur of its upper part, I longed to see that grandeur fully revealed. I resented the clouds, which had allowed me to see so little and left me to guess so much. Next day I went on to Skye, where I had my four fine days, as well as some more exceedingly wet ones. But even the grandeur of the Coolin could not break the spell of Ben Lui, or weaken its fascination over me. Presently came the day when I had to leave the Highlands and travel southward. It was one of the most tantalising I have ever spent—a day which would have been perfect on the hills, but which I was compelled to spend in the train!

It was after leaving Mallaig that the weather began to improve. Nevis was shaking the last of the clouds from his crest as we passed by. Beyond Corroun, the purple cone of Schiehallion looked its best. The Clachlet group, away across Rannoch Moor, showed bewitching contrasts of light and shade, and seemed to be vainly, or cruelly, inviting me to explore its deep corries. Finally, as the train ran into Tyndrum, I caught a tantalising glimpse, through the trees, of Ben Lui's graceful form—the only time I had seen it properly. For a few moments I saw the north-east corrie, the scene of my recent experience. "Ben Lui is a fine mountain," said a fellow-passenger. "Ben More and Stobinian are dull to climb, but Ben Lui is a different matter." I felt he was right.

Returned to my work in the South of England, I was still haunted by the mountain. On no other did my thoughts dwell so much. It had become an obsession. In vain did I tell myself that this was a foolish and absurd mental kink, and assure myself that I had seen mountains compared to which Ben Lui was merely a mole-hill, and even in Scotland had climbed some that unquestionably were grander—Sgurr nan Gilleann and An Teallach, for instance. My reasonings generally ended in my taking out once more the post card I had bought at Tyndrum, and gazing at it long and earnestly, as if I might make some fresh discovery! How can I account for such behaviour? What explanation can there be, except that Ben Lui had cast its spell over me?

My holiday in 1933 was dedicated to Switzerland. But the Alpine giants did not make me think less of Scottish hills, and the following year found me once more in the Highlands. This time I arrived on the 22nd May. For the first week the weather treated me none too well. Then there was a great improvement, with the result that my Scottish campaign that year was by far the best I have ever had. I left Ben Lui till near the end, and when at last I approached it once again (on the 5th June, a memorable day), I was sated with some of the best things that the Highlands can give to the mountain Rambler. I had had an interesting, if

tantalising, day in the mist on that grand mountain, Bidean nam Bian. On a perfect day, I had traversed the whole of the Aonach Eagach ridge. I had ascended Ben Nevis by way of the Allt a' Mhuillin and the east ridge, and enjoyed to the full the magnificence of those great precipices of Carn Dearg and "the Ben." Also, I had had splendid walks over the Mamores and the Aonachs. And so I knew that Ben Lui could not show me anything as grand as some of the scenes I had lately beheld. Nevertheless, I felt no lack of enthusiasm for it, as on that glorious morning it rose serenely before me into the cloudless sky, flecked with snow on its upper part. Different indeed was the aspect of things as I now walked up the valley from what it had been on my two previous visits! The waterfall Eas Anie was now invisible—because it was non-existent.

For the sake of obtaining a wider knowledge of my mountain, I did not this time ascend by the corrie, but went up to the "bealach" between Beinn Chuirn and Ben Lui, and then attacked the latter by the series of bluffs or "steps" which are noticeable on the left skyline of the mountain as seen from Loch Awe. Some amusing little rock problems could be found here, but I so chose my route as to indulge in nothing more than the very mildest scrambling. Higher up, I got on to the mountain's main ridge, pausing now and then to admire the view of Loch Awe backed by Cruachan. It was a moment of special satisfaction when I passed the junction of the Stob Garbh ridge with the main ridge, and at last had a clear view down into the main corrie. Still deeper was my content just afterwards, when the actual summit was beneath my feet.

The panorama was clear, but of the distant mountains only Bidean nam Bian and Ben Nevis stood out with distinction. It was the view near at hand, down into the depths of the corrie, which I most enjoyed. I had, indeed, often looked into much grander and more awe-inspiring depths. Had I not, for instance, just recently looked down the great precipices of Ben Nevis and Carn Dearg? The fascination lay in tracing my route

of two summers before, and in contrasting the rigours of that day, when I had almost groped my way up the mountain, with the delights of this one, with its crystal clearness. Like all good things, that time on the summit was soon over. The summit of Beinn Oss also was included in the day's excursion, and in due course I returned, well content, to my hotel.

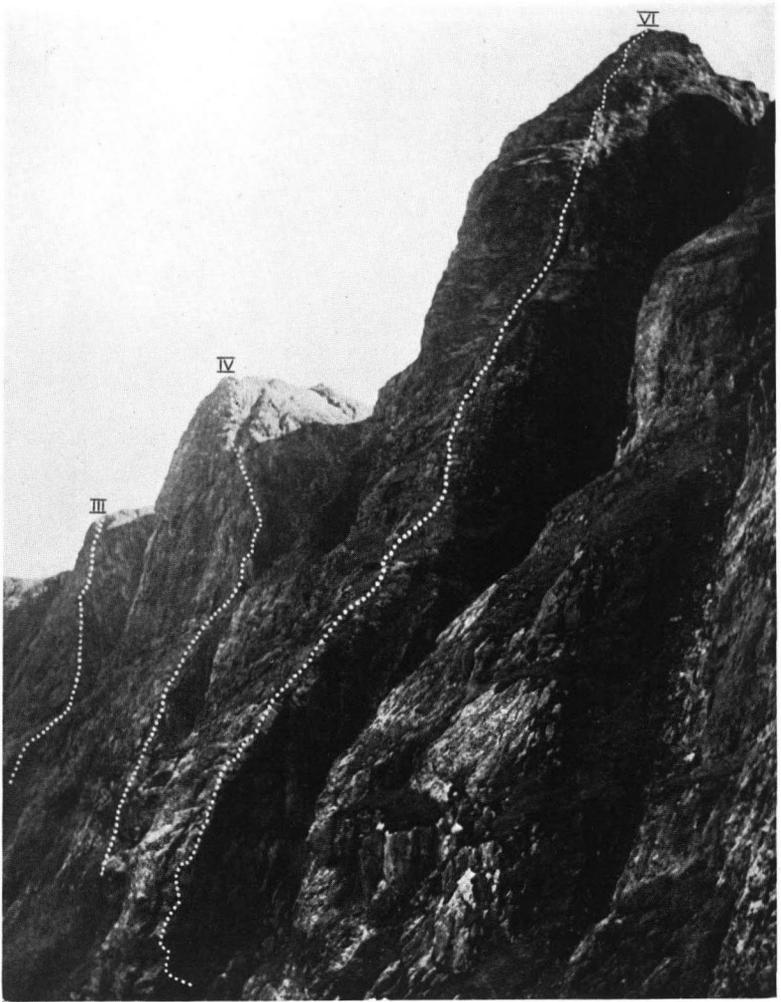
What are my feelings toward Ben Lui now? Well, it is still, and always will be, one of my favourites. Always it will have for me very special memories. But no longer does it possess for me an atom of mystery. I have seen it fully revealed, and know it for a fine mountain, but only one among the many fine mountains of Scotland, not to mention those of other lands. Surely it will yet cast its spell over others, as it did over me. But, as far as I am concerned, that spell is broken for ever. On that point, at least, I am now sane. Is it well to know our mountains thoroughly and intimately? Or would we be wise to be content with a less complete knowledge, so that their mystery, their spell, might remain?

SEALLADH BHO EIGHE.

NOW at last we touch the cairn  
That marks the summit of our day's ambition,  
That huge crag, that half the morn  
Flaunted its crest athwart the sky.  
We take our ease, and view  
The serried ranks of hills around,  
Broken only by the myriad glintings of the lochs  
And one small patch of snow  
That gleams, in its unusual beauty,  
Across so many miles.

Is it for this we climb?  
This sense of peace and beauty  
That strikes the mind as something tangible.  
This sense of comradeship—not only  
With him who shares this scene, but with the One  
To whom the scene belongs.  
Then, my soul uplifted, and my eyes feasted,  
I turn and downward go  
To bathe my body in a pool, that mirrors clear  
The heights that bathe my soul.

R. S. H.



BEINN MHOR, SOUTH UIST

*D. J. Dawson*

## BEINN MHOR, SOUTH UIST.

By JOHN MACLENNAN.

THE rock-climbing possibilities of Beinn Mhor in South Uist appear to have been first investigated by Mr Botterill of the Yorkshire Ramblers in 1930 and 1932, and later and independently by Mr J. A. Parker of the S.M.C. in 1933. A full account of their activities can be found in the "Islands Guide," pp. 87 to 88, and in the references given below.

The following climbs were done between 30th March and 7th April 1936 by a party of three, D. J. Dawson, C. Ludwig, and J. D. MacLennan.

The climbing is found on the south wall of Coire Hellisdale on the eastern side of Beinn Mhor, and consists of about half a mile of steep rock cut into seven buttresses by eight gullies, running obliquely across the face. The buttresses and gullies were numbered consecutively from the east. Buttresses 1 and 2 are much smaller than the others, as they rise from slopes of steep grass high up on the mountain. This steep grass is continued westwards across Buttresses 3 and 4 as a broad terrace which divides these buttresses into an upper and lower half. As already mentioned, the gullies run obliquely across the face in a westerly direction from above downwards, so that the buttresses consist of a broad eastern face and a narrow arête immediately above the gully on the west; *e.g.*, the true edge of Buttress 3 is directly over Gully 4.

The climbs on the buttresses and in the gullies will be considered separately.

## A. BUTTRESSES.

*Buttress 1.*—The climb starts at the lowest point of the rocks immediately to the east of Gully 2. About 150 feet of steep but fairly easy face climbing, tending always towards the right, brings one below an overhang. This is turned on the right up a series of narrow grass ledges directly over Gully 2. The crest of the buttress

above the overhang is regained by a 15-foot vertical pitch on small but good holds. Thereafter 150 feet of climbing up 20-foot vertical pitches with broad grass ledges in between brings one to the top. No doubt there are variants to be made to this route to the east of the overhang, which could be turned with equal facility on either side.

*Buttress 2.*—The climb begins immediately to the west of Gully 2 up an easy 20-foot chimney. Then follows 300 feet of pleasant face climbing directly up the buttress to 50 feet of grass. A further 20 feet of steeper rock brings one to a grass ledge from which an 80-foot crack runs steeply upwards and to the right to the top of the buttress. There are two small overhangs towards the top, but the excellent holds render this the most enjoyable pitch of the entire climb.

*Buttress 3.*—This buttress is bisected by the grass terrace mentioned above. The lower part offers no difficulty at all, consisting of 250 feet of grass and rock at an easy angle. Above the terrace the buttress narrows to form a very well-defined arête above Gully 4. The first 200 feet are easy, but at a fairly steep angle. The ridge then becomes less steep for 100 feet. A rather more difficult 60-foot vertical pitch follows with excellent holds. 100 feet of easy scrambling takes one to the top of the buttress.

*Buttress 4.*—The lower half of this buttress is very similar to the lower half of Buttress 3, but rather longer and at a steeper angle.

Above the terrace the climbing is considerably more difficult. The route keeps as close to the true edge of the buttress as possible. It begins with a 10-foot vertical pitch, rather wet and slimy with very small holds, leading to a grass platform. Another easier 30 feet up an indefinite chimney brings one to a larger grass platform. Then follows 60 feet of climbing up steep rock, rather loose, with a lot of vegetation, to a grass ledge below an overhang. A 10-foot vertical wall with slimy holds brings one to a crack which runs upwards and to the right directly below the overhang. This crack is followed for about 30 feet on the vertical wall of Gully 5. The foot-

holds, after considerable excavation, are good, but as much cannot be said for the handholds. The ridge is regained above the overhang by a press up on to a mossy ledge on fairly good holds. Another 200 feet of easier climbing up short pitches of steep rock brings one to the top of the buttress.

*Buttress 5.*—200 feet of easy grass and rock brings one below a severe 60-foot pitch. This consists of a large black overhang, very obvious on the buttress at a distance. The pitch begins up 15 feet of vertical rock with fairly good holds, to a platform below an overhang. After traversing to the left on loose and inconveniently placed holds, one climbs the overhang up a narrow 15-foot gutter with poor holds to a slimy sloping platform below the final overhang. Here the holds improve immeasurably, and the remaining 30 feet is more exposed than difficult. Owing to the entire absence of sound belays on the lower 40 feet, pitons were used for protective purposes on this pitch. There then follows 200 feet of small vertical pitches with moss ledges in between.

The remainder of the ridge, though narrower, is at a much easier angle and largely grass, with occasional short rock pitches if climbed direct.

*Buttress 6.*—The greater part of the lower 200 feet of this buttress is very glaciated and holdless. One begins the climb at the mouth of Gully 7, up the vertical left wall of the gully for 20 feet on good if somewhat loose holds, and so gains steeply sloping slabs on the true arête of the buttress. Twenty feet more of these slabs brings one below an overhang. While this overhang is small (about 10 feet), the finish on a steep mossy ledge is very difficult, owing to lack of holds. Above the overhang there is 120 feet of difficult climbing up similar steep, almost holdless slabs. From the foot of the overhang to the finish of the slabs necessitates a single run-out, as there is nowhere any sort of stance. Since no belays were to be found on this part of the climb, pitons were again used: 100 feet of easy rock and then 200 feet of grass at an easy angle then follows: 200 feet of enjoyable climbing up grass ledges and 10-foot vertical pitches of rock takes one to the top.

*Buttress 7.*—This is the narrowest of the buttresses and also the easiest. The lower two-thirds consists of slabby rock at an easy angle, the upper third is a little steeper with the rock more broken. There is a good deal of vegetation.

#### B. GULLIES.

With the exception of 3 and 6, the gullies were used more as rapid routes of descent to the buttresses than as definite climbs. In any case, they are perfectly simple, and can all be climbed throughout.

Gully 3 is the most interesting of the gullies; for, though offering no difficulties, it is steeper, rockier, and considerably drier than the rest.

Gully 6, though quite easy, is extremely slimy and disagreeable, and should be avoided.

#### REFERENCES.

1. *Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal*, Vol. XX., p. 79.
2. *Yorkshire Ramblers' Club Journal*, Vol. XIX., p. 13.

#### THE PHOTOGRAPHS.

1. By Mr J. A. Parker, looking eastwards from the summit of Beinn Mhor. This shows only the upper halves of Buttresses 3, 4, and 6, and the upper third of Buttress 7—left to right. (Not reproduced here, but in *S.M.C.J.*, Vol. XX., facing page 80.)

2. By D. J. Dawson, from the northern slopes of Coire Hellisdale. One can just see a bit of Buttress 5. The 60-foot overhanging pitch is out of sight behind Buttress 6. (Not reproduced.)

3. By D. J. Dawson, from near the foot of Buttress 7, the lower grassy slopes of which fill the foreground. One can just make out two small figures on the smooth lower 200 feet of Buttress 6.

*To the Editor,*

*"The S.M.C. Journal."*

DEAR DR BELL,

I understand that Mr Parker has already written you about some climbs in South Uist; herewith an account of them. I am also sending a sketch of the cliffs by Dawson, and three photographs, one by Mr Parker (of which I believe there is a block), the others taken by Dawson. The routes marked are only approximate.

I do not think there is anything to add to the account, except that we left no cairns anywhere; there are still pitons on Buttresses 5 and 6. Ludwig or I led all the climbs, Ludwig leading each of the three really severe pitches.

Yours sincerely,

JOHN MACLENNAN.

## THE NORTH-WEST RENFREWSHIRE HILLS.

By GEO. F. TODD.

THERE are three main masses of uplands in Renfrewshire\* : those in the north-west of the county, extending south into the north of Ayrshire ; the smaller group of moors south-west of Paisley—these are the Gleniffer Braes, the Fereneze Hills, and the Lochliboside Hills, with their highest point in Corkindale Law (848 feet) ; and thirdly, the moors of Eaglesham, Mearns, and Neilston, with Ballageoch (1,084) and the Corse Hills (Corse Hill, 1,230 ; Ellrig, 1,215).

The north-west Renfrewshire Hills—they have also been called the Kilbarchans, the Largs Hills, the Kilmacolm Hills, or the North Ayrshire Hills, the name having power to vary with the view-point—are roughly in the form of a triangle, shaped slightly to the outline of South America. The boundary of this area runs south-east from Gourock in a rough arc to Kilbarchan, then in a direction almost south-west by south to Ardrossan, and north along the coast to Gourock. From Gourock to Ardrossan the distance on the map is some 22 miles, and the greatest breadth of the area, from Skelmorlie to Kilbarchan, is almost 13 miles. All parts of the region are easily reached through the incurrence of roads and many footpaths. Thus the southern tip of the triangle is isolated by the main road from Kilbirnie to Largs ; tracks and rough roads leading from Kilmacolm to Largs (by way of Loch Thom), and other roads from Dalry to Fairlie and West Kilbride divide the district into further subsidiary sections. The northern area, with its southern boundary on the Largs-Kilmacolm road, is again split into sections by the roads from Inverkip and Gourock to Loch Thom, and in the other regions routes up many small glens to houses or

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\* The best map of the district is the O.S. 1-inch map, Popular Edition, Sheet No. 72, "Glasgow."

farms placed at their termini make more inroads upon the moors, and increase the accessibility of the higher parts of the district.

The main heights of the Renfrewshire Hills are, in the northern section, Burnhead (995), north of Garvock Loch and south of Greenock, and Sheilhill (972) west of Loch Thom. But there are higher regions to the south of Loch Thom where Creuch Hill is 1,446 feet, while south again there are still higher points (for they are hardly peaks) on Queenside Muir and Misty Law Muir—Hill of Stake (1,711), East Girt Hill (1,673), and Misty Law (1,662)—these are the highest points of the region. The line of these points forms the boundary between Renfrewshire and Ayrshire, and 4 miles south of this the road from Kilbirnie to Largs interrupts the reign of moorland. Beyond, in the narrowing southern tip of the district, the highest moorland points are Blaeloch Hill (1,331) and Kaim Hill (1,270), respectively, to the east and south-east of Fairlie.

These higher levels are based mainly on a rock foundation cast in the lower carboniferous age. This substratum, fashioned in most places from the lowest members of the carboniferous lavas, is similar in composition and in age to the rocks forming the basic fabric of the Campsie Fells and the Kilpatrick Hills. To these groups they are united, and together they form an arch of calciferous sandstone lavas running from Stirling, south-west by the Campsies and Kilpatricks, to the Cloch Point, and then turning south-east across the Renfrewshire Hills to Strathaven, to surround completely one side of the Glasgow district. South of the main mass of moorland there are members of the carboniferous group, and these fill the valleys from Johnstone to Dalry. Farther south again, between Dalry and the coast, there are even more recent lava additions, and these form the north Ayrshire coalfield.

On the northern side of the Clyde, the volcanic vents from which the related lavas of the Campsies and Kilpatricks flowed, can still be located in a long series extending from Dumbarton and Dumbuck to Fintry.

The necks of the lava flows south of the Clyde may also be traced, and a number are in the Renfrewshire Hills, including, for example, Misty Law and the Craigminnans. These basis-forming lavas were of a texture exclusively either basaltic or mugearitic, but on Dunrod Hill, between Inverkip and Loch Thom, there is evidence of flows of exceptional composition, with an upper or later flow of a quality mainly mugearitic, but with an earlier flow of Markle basalt.

Beneath these lavas, and between them and the upper Old Red Sandstone, there lies in the northern region another group of rocks. These interstices are a group of shales and cement-stones of the Ballagan type, yet differing from this standard outcrop as they contain sediments of the Old Red Sandstone *facies*, as an index of a former interbedding of the Old Red Sandstone and carboniferous systems. Generally this cement-stone group has formed beneath the lavas, but from Fairlie to the south they rest on a pedestal of Old Red Sandstone.

The upper Old Red Sandstone is the third system of rock foundation in the district, but this group is confined to the western coast between Inverkip and Ardrossan. Here the rocks are well exposed, and they lie along the present shore to form the cliffs which back the raised flats and mark a former edge of the sea. The facings of these cliffs are splintered and torn, the sandstone is friable and dangerous, loose blocks lie everywhere, and the rock is hardly safe for the cliff climber.

In addition to these rocks there are abundant dykes and plugs of igneous rocks of varying age. Many of these were born during the periods of carboniferous vulcanicity, but the largest of the dykes, which cross the map from north-west to south-east, are of tertiary age, and are related to the great Mull volcano of that period. These dykes may be traced with some continuity from Mull through the Renfrewshire Hills to the north of England, cutting intervening rocks as vertically walled intrusions, thin and wavering. They appear, for example, on Misty Law, intersecting the older rocks, and they are to be found again cutting prominently into the coastal rocks near

Wemyss Bay. Among some other geological features of the district are glacial striæ, and indications on the hills behind Gourrock, Greenock, and Kilmacolm mark the direction of ice movement as south-east, followed by a later turn to the south-west.\*

While the main geological nature of the district has only recently been elucidated, and there are many problems not yet resolved, the actual physical configuration of the region, however, has long been observed, and has been the subject of acute observation and interested comment.

The earliest descriptive accounts of Renfrewshire, in so far as they touched upon the hills, were purely topographical and that only briefly. A very early anonymous account, to be found amongst Macfarlane's "Geographical Collections," has it that "the County of Renfrew to the southert is both mountainous and moorish, and is in resemblance like a hedge which makes the lower country all like an Inclosure and is remote from any river." In 1710 George Crawford remarked shortly that this county possessed "many pretty Risings of the Ground." Crawford's work was revised in 1782 by William Semple, who introduced two further references to the hills. One is the first notice of Craigminnan, a small rocky outcrop, and the remains of a volcanic vent on Misty Law Muir which he briefly acknowledges with the statement that "there is a very high hill called Craigminnen." The other is a notable, if inaccurate, description of Misty Law—"a little to the South of the said loch (Queenside Loch) is a remarkable high mountain, called the Misty-law, the highest hill in the west of Scotland,† betwixt the Mull of Galloway and that high mountain, called Erickstone-braehead, or head of Clyde, where three great rivers, Clyde, Tweed, and Annan take their rise."

In some of the writings of the early nineteenth century the Renfrewshire hills receive interesting if hardly highly

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\* I am very deeply indebted to Dr W. J. MacCallien, F.R.S.E., of the Geology Department, Glasgow University, for supplying me with the raw material for this brief geological account.

† The traditional error of conferring priority of height upon Misty Law was not corrected until the thirties of the nineteenth century.

honourable mention. John Wilson, in his "General View of the Agriculture of Renfrewshire (1812)," divides the county into three types of district—"the hilly or more elevated, the gently rising, and the flat." He describes the former type with interesting accuracy; "though the whole of this district be considerably elevated above the level of the sea, yet it has no very great inequality of surface. A great portion of it forms what is called a tableland; as having no rugged or lofty mountains . . . and few steep ascents, except in some places where the higher region is connected with the lower grounds, or where a stream of water has worn for itself a deep channel. The most elevated points in this district are the hills in the south-east, and western extremities. Mistylaw, in the parish of Lochwinnoch, is the highest hill on the west; and Balagich and Dunwar in the parish of Eaglesham, are the highest hills in the south-east side of the county; the first is said to be 1,240 feet; the last two are about 1,000 feet above the level of the sea."

*(To be continued.)*

## SUNRISE FROM BEN MORE.

By G. R. ROXBURGH.

THAT curious half-light, which is a Scottish summer night, brooded over the hills and glens of Perth and Argyll. The silence was unbroken save for the distant murmur of running water, and occasionally, from the low ground, the faint and mournful cries of the peewits who seem to complain day and night of some secret sorrow to which time brings no healing. Following the warmth of the day, the cool evening breezes had caused soft, fluffy, cotton-wool clouds to form in all the valleys, and now Glen Falloch and Strathfillan looked like two immense glaciers, the former running down to Loch Lomond, hidden behind Cruach Ardran and his satellites, the latter to Loch Tay, which appeared as a filmy glitter of silver in the east. The atmosphere was warm and balmy. A sense of complete peace reigned over Nature as she lay sleeping, awaiting the coming of day.

The appearance of warm colour in the east was scarcely perceptible: one minute the filmy outline of Ben Lawers and Tarmachan was sketched against a cool grey sky, the next there was a gentle pink blush which turned the grey of the shadows into a rich purple, fading to blue. The dawn seemed to accentuate the stillness; down in the valley a dog barked and the sound carried sharp and clear to the lofty summit of Ben More.

Very gradually the rosy glow deepened and spread. High above the horizon lay a long streaming bank of cloud, the tide of colour crept up and washed with ever-strengthening waves upon this great mass, converting its billowy edges into folds of flaming glory. The clear sky above the horizon became dotted with tiny flecks of cloud which, with the ever-increasing light, changed from crimson lake to silver. Loch Tay was now a gleaming reflection of the colours above it, while the carpet of fluffy clouds in Strathfillan was suffused with a delicate rose-pink blush. From the valley, faint but clear, came

the silver notes of a mavis, and, as if it had been awaiting this bugle call to announce its arrival, the sun peered over the misty horizon behind Ben Lawers. The silence was broken; the signal had been given for Nature to awaken, the mavis was followed by a hundred others, the dog that had barked in its dreams before woke up in earnest this time and roused the farmyard with it. A cock crowed in Ben More farm, and, as if in answer, came a faint reply from Crianlarich. The soft persistent double note of the cuckoo floated up from the valley; there in the farm beside the river appeared a slowly curling wisp of blue smoke, showing that man was astir and that the night was over.

## AGAG'S GROOVE.

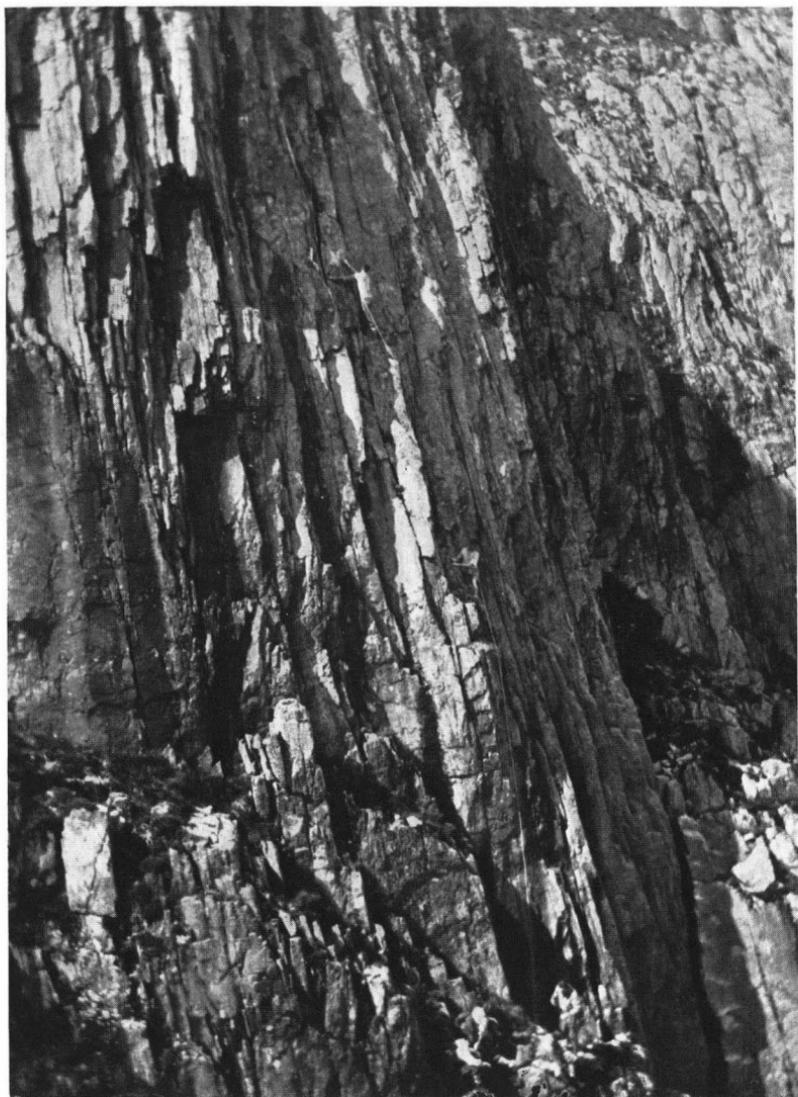
By ALEX. C. D. SMALL.

MOUNTAINS and meteorology are subjects so inextricably interwoven that it is difficult at times to dissociate them. And mountain memories this season have almost all dissolved in liquidity. Strange as it may seem in recollection, there were good days in what, by courtesy, may be termed the summer of 1936; days when not only was it dry, but even the sun shone, and not a cloud marred the sky. On such a day early in May a party in the most disordered *deshabille* dragged itself to the foot of the Crowberry Ridge and collapsed there, blessing a thoughtful Providence which with far-seeing wisdom had left large snowfields in the gully to provide long cooling drinks.

The subsequent revival in interest turned our attention to the rock face of the Crowberry Wall, starting a complicated and occasionally acrimonious dispute about the situation of the Rannoch Wall climb. Eventually it was located much higher than was thought reasonable by at least two of the members, who were with difficulty persuaded to descend from a tempting crack on the nose of the ridge. That day passed in making ascents of the Rannoch Wall, and also in that more delectable form of climbing, lying on one's back and conquering new routes with the eye of faith and the fancy of a sanguine imagination. This ruminant form of climbing, however, did disclose that a second longer fault ran up the face of the Crowberry Wall, merging into the overhanging bulge and then continuing to the crest of the ridge. If a way could be found up the bulge a new route seemed not improbable.

Then the lymphatic dreariness of summer settled upon the land, and no further opportunity of exploring the route presented itself for a long time.

By some unaccountable freak of Nature on 16th August the imperishable rain was in abeyance, and the improbable sun shone once more on our party gathered at the foot of the



*August 1936*

AGAG'S GROOVE, BUACHAILLE ETIVE

*W. H. Murray*

Crowberry Ridge. It shone not only upon us but also on a critical spectating "gallery" perched at ease on the Curved Ridge. Buachaille is an increasingly popular mountain, the hoarse shouts and the cheerful clatter of falling stones cleared by the swarming parties ringing round with the populous clamour of a cup-tie. Not that a referee would be altogether out of place, for with the simple faith of trusting souls we had mentioned our discovery to others, and the "gallery" contained not only spectators but competitors who missed priority only by minutes.

Round the corner from the usual start to the Crowberry Ridge is another corner with a raised floor. Against the great face there used to be an apologetic cairn, connected doubtless with some of the tentative nailmarks to be found on the most unlikely spots around the foot of this wall. The start of the climb lies up a slender crack in this corner, and is now marked by a substantial cairn. To the climber approaching the first rocks of the Curved Ridge the steep front of the Crowberry Ridge rises in a huge rectangular tower. Almost on the edge of the left wall an attenuated groove can be seen springing up to the bulging comb near the top, rather like an extra overlap on the side of a clinker-built ship, provided the hull was overturned. The line of the climb lies for the most part along this corrugation.

Our party, comprising J. F. Hamilton, A. Anderson, and A. C. D. Small, members of the Tricouni Mountaineering Club and the J.M.C.S., roped up on 100 feet of rope and 100 feet of line. Typical of the whole climb are the introductory pitches: steep climbing on small holds, a judicious choice of the drier ones being helpful, as the interior of the crack was too wet and mossy to be comfortable for rubbers. The second pitch is the hardest part of the lower section, having some loose rocks in addition to the vegetable drawbacks. An attractive but loose spike had to be avoided carefully by the first two, but as usual, when the third man came to push it down, it absorbed a great deal of energy before consenting to join the debris in the gully.

In about 90 feet the angle eased slightly, and the groove, furnished now with a shelf or rib on the left side, provided little difficulty for two more pitches. At 200 feet we reached a large block belay. It was now obvious that our pleasant progress was ended, as the comfortable flange merged with the impending bulge of the ridge. Hamish reconnoitred and then began to move up slowly by sloping holds a few feet to the left of the groove, which, not content with rising almost vertically for more than 50 feet, added to its repulsiveness some quite misplaced decorative effects in moss, oozing water, and mud. In a few feet he decided to abandon his rubbers, performing this feat entirely without the use of his hands. Careful movement brought him in 50 feet to a point just below what proved to be the crux of the climb. Here he tied on to a small spike. Alex. climbed up below him and settled himself on the largest holds he could find, while Hamish changed the belay.

From below it was so awkward to peer upwards against the sun that I turned the stance into a clinoid belay, and full length on a couch of moss regarded the struggle above, in tranquillity. Hamish, however, did not allow this state of things to last long; he climbed up a fiercely aquiline nose on apparently the most inadequate holds, aided only by a tiny crack, and then came to rest at a point where only the most vital reasons would have detained anyone. Then in a musing tone he called down to me. "If I send down a stone will it hit you?" "Of course it will," I replied, rising hastily. "Well," he said sorrowfully, as if my demise was a painful but inevitable necessity, "we'll just have to throw it down." Then as a conciliatory afterthought he added, "You'll try and keep the rope from being struck."

Pulling as much as possible of the line out of range, I disguised myself with transparent lack of success as a portion of the rock face, and nodding upwards, murmured, "Let battle commence." By a very delicate balance movement Hamish pulled the stone free; it plunged downwards and exploded on a ledge. Fragments whanged past my ear, surprisingly inflicting no damage

either to the rope (being the most important) or to myself. After a strenuous and difficult pull Hamish cleared the nose and, highly delighted, located himself above. I then moved up to the spike belay from which Alex. prepared to tackle the nose. He had lifted the leader's shoes and secured them in his belt, but the efforts called forth by the nose loosened one which fell free, hit me on the hand with startling softness—I was still engrossed with stones—and sailed down into Easy Gully. There was still another incident. Just as I reached the worst part of the nose, and was rather preoccupied with the lack of support provided by one sloping foothold and a greasy, finger-wide crack, there was a great crash in the gully below. Sparing a fleeting glance down through my legs I saw a climber sprawling on his back as he fell down the gully. Most reassuring.

Above this the groove continued with gratifying cleanliness to a sloping ledge above a grass corner, where several unsatisfactory belays could be contrived. A short distance higher the leader again found a spike belay by a direct climb; second man preferred to reach a small stance below it by a traverse to the left. From the traverse we obtained an excellent "close up" across the face of two climbers busily engaged in solving the problem at the crux of the Rannoch Wall climb. The final pitch maintained the interest of the climb right to the last handhold; it was taken slightly to the left of the crack by a narrow wall, returning to the crack about half-way and finishing on the right, an abrupt termination right on the crest of the Crowberry Ridge. A cairn was built to mark the finish, which is situated about 25 yards below that of the Rannoch Wall climb. After Hamish had added his last artistic touches to the cairn we walked up and sun-bathed on the Crowberry Tower, while our route was climbed for the second time by W. M. M'Kenzie, J. W. K. Dunn, and A. M'Alpine, all of the J.M.C.S. Thereafter Hamish added to his numerous distinctions by making the first hopping descent of the Curved Ridge on a solitary rubber shoe.

In length the climb is almost 400 feet. There are

loose rocks on the second and last pitches, but they are not troublesome, and will probably disappear with use. Apart from the greasy holds in the interior of the groove and on the nose, almost all the climb is over sound rock, and in dry conditions even these sections may take rubbers comfortably. As it was, one member of the party climbed throughout in boots, with no apparent difficulty, although stocking soles seem best suited for the holds at the crux. The new route is now the longest and most direct way up the ridge, and should provide a very attractive alternative to the routes already discovered. It opens up new possibilities on the hitherto untouched eastern corner of the Crowberry Ridge, as feasible traverses to the right linking up with the old routes, or even fresh routes on the intervening space between the old and this new one, will doubtless yield to further research. It is hoped that those who repeat this climb will sympathise to a certain degree with the difficulties of the Biblical nomenclator in "treading delicately."

**In Memoriam.**

LIONEL W. HINXMAN.

DURING the past eighteen months death has taken a heavy toll of the Club, and of the original members no fewer than five have passed away, the latest being Lionel Hinxman. It is so many years since Hinxman went to live in England that to many of our members his name is but a memory, and to most of the younger ones probably not even that: but by his contemporaries he is remembered as a very active and popular member of our Club.

Like the writer, he was an original member, and I knew him well from so often meeting him at the New Year and Easter gatherings and at the Annual Dinners: but to my loss I never came into more intimate touch with him, nor can I remember our ever climbing together.

As a climber, it may be said that Hinxman was cradled among the Scottish Hills, as for many years he was on the Geological Survey in Scotland, and he joined the Club from its very inception. He acted on the Committee from 1895 to 1898, and from 1900 to 1902 he was a Vice-President. In the earlier years of the *Journal* he contributed largely to its pages, and among his contributions was the very clever and amusing "Climbers' Guide to the Pronunciation of the Gaelic Tongue," which will be found on page 238 of Vol. IV., and in a later volume will be found an article on the "Geology of the Scottish Mountains from a Climber's Point of View," inspired naturally by his technical knowledge of his subject. But his contributions were by no means confined to such technical matters, and he wrote for the *Journal* many articles on climbing, pure and simple, and he made a number of useful contributions to the "Guide Books," relative mainly to the Northern Grampians, among which lay so much of his life-work.

Possessed of a fine voice, he often delighted the members and their guests at the Annual Dinners and at the Meets. He was a man of charming personality, and

John Rennie, who knew him well, described him to me as "a good companion on a hill," which means much.

T. FRASER S. CAMPBELL.

SIR FELIX O. SCHUSTER, BARONET.

By the death of Sir Felix O. Schuster, on the 13th May 1936, at the age of eighty-two, the Club has lost another of its few remaining original members. So far as is now known Sir Felix had not made any important expeditions in the Highlands when the Club was formed, but he was one of those prominent members of the Alpine Club who, by joining the northern Club at its foundation, gave it their valuable support and prestige. His only active association with the life of the Club was his attendance in 1901 at the General Meeting, followed by the Annual Dinner, at which he not only made an excellent reply to the toast of "The Alpine Club," but when songs were being given went voluntarily to the piano to play accompaniments, and it was then realised that he was an exceptionally brilliant pianist as well as a good mountaineer.

He made many other visits to Scotland, and was at Callander in 1881 and 1906, and at Aviemore in 1917, and no doubt made ascents in those neighbourhoods, but he was never with any climbing party. He used to go to the English Lake District, and the writer remembers meeting him one Easter at Wasdale Head about 1891 when he was there with a climbing party.

This is not the place to give any detailed account of either the public or the Alpine life of Sir Felix, but it may be stated that in 1879 he became a partner in a firm of merchants and bankers, and from that time until his final illness he held a distinguished position in the city, and few if any can have been more relied upon as men of sound judgment and unquestioned honour. He was a Director and Chairman of the Union of London & Smiths Bank for many years. He served on many important Government Commissions and Committees,

and was appointed a Member of the Council of India in 1906. In that year he was created a Baronet, and he unsuccessfully contested the City of London as a Free Trade Unionist.

His Alpine career began with an ascent of Pollux in 1876, and he continued to climb actively for about twenty years. He was elected to the Alpine Club in 1877, was Honorary Secretary from 1889 to 1893, and Vice-President 1899 to 1901.

Most of his climbing was done in the Zermatt neighbourhood, with occasional visits to the Oberland, but the expedition of which some may envy him the record was a "Centenary" ascent of Mont Blanc on 8th August 1886. After he gave up climbing he visited Zermatt and the Riffel Alp almost annually until 1934, and many friends will be sad because they can no longer hope to meet him there again.

Sir Felix, although he could not attend the meetings of the S.M.C., was a very faithful member of the Alpine Club, and attended every Annual Meeting and Dinner of the Club from 1879 until 1934. In him the Club has lost a very distinguished member, and many of us a trusted friend.

G. A. SOLLY.

#### H. C. BOYD, 1868-1936.

HERBERT C. BOYD died a few months ago in Canada. Boyd was a lawyer by profession. He graduated in Arts at Aberdeen University and then took his LL.B. degree at Glasgow University. Following a few years in Glasgow after qualifying, he was for some time a partner in a legal firm in Inverness, and then twenty-four years ago he emigrated to Canada. He was for six years at Edmonton, and then settled at Edgerton, Alberta, about a hundred miles from Edmonton, where he practised as a lawyer.

While in Glasgow, Boyd joined the Club in 1893. He was most enthusiastic in his love of the hills, and in those early days the Club, with its *Journal*, and the

opportunities which it afforded of meeting like-minded enthusiasts, meant a lot to him.

After he went out to Canada, though he remained a member of the Club, he had not kept in touch with his old friends in Scotland. I only saw him once since I climbed with him in 1898; that was in 1908 during his time in Inverness. In 1928, on a journey across Canada, I passed through Edmonton and spoke to him at Edgerton on the telephone. After that conversation I had a very cordial letter from him recalling the days, now forty years ago, that we had spent together on the hills. He was a very strong walker.

Among his earliest mountaineering friends was the late William Brown, also a lawyer from Aberdeen, and together they had many strenuous days on the Scottish hills.

Some of us who were on the Yachting Meet in 1897 will remember the rush that Boyd and Harrison Barrow made from the yacht, lying at Inverie, to ascend Sgor na Ciche and return to the yacht before she sailed in the afternoon. The impatient hoots of the yacht's siren caused that expedition to end in something like a marathon race—but the two men arrived in time.

At first Boyd was a hill-walker rather than a climber, but later, while retaining his zest for long walks, he came to enjoy a climb also.

He was keenly interested in the work the Club was doing from about 1892 onwards in opening up rock-climbing in Scotland, and took a special pleasure in having been a member of the party on two Scottish first ascents—the Churchdoor Buttress on Bidean nam Bian and the B.C. rib on Cir Mhor.

I will end these recollections of an old friend by quoting the last sentence of the letter he wrote me after our telephone conversation in Canada:—

“ My last visit to the mountains was four years ago, with my brother, to the Alpine Club Camp at Mount Robson. But my son Hugh and I find a good substitute at home in ski-ing. Last winter we were out every Sunday from Christmas to 25th March, doing on an

average 15 miles every afternoon, which I think pretty fair for an old stager of sixty. And my summer hobby is gardening.”

J. H. BELL.

WILLIAM LOW, 1861-1936.

WILLIAM LOW, of Balmakewan, a man well known and much respected in the county of Kincardineshire, was born in 1861. He was an agriculturist of repute, an authority on forestry, and his later years were devoted to the culture of the more difficult species of rhododendrons. The policies and gardens at Balmakewan are a joy to the discerning botanist, and his home-farm a model of up-to-date agricultural practice.

By his death the Club loses another of those few remaining men to whom we owe the beginning of organised climbing in Scotland. It was as far back as 1885, when climbing in Skye with a friend, that he first thought of forming a club in his local district. The idea appealed to the kindred spirits he approached, and the Dundee Rambling Club, which celebrates its fiftieth anniversary this year, was formed, ante-dating the S.M.C. by a few years.

The formation of this club was the beginning of climbing so far as the Angus district was concerned, and, together with a few others, William Low showed us the way.

These early pioneers may have taken less interest than we do to-day in the technical branches of our sport, but the hours they spent each day on the hills and the distances they covered irrespective of weather conditions stand out as records of their prowess and stamina.

Theirs was a fine example, and fortunate, indeed, are we to have had such forerunners.

C. W. WALKER.

## PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

SLIGACHAN—EASTER 1936.

9TH to 14TH APRIL.

THOUGH there have been Summer Meets of the Club in Skye in 1919, 1923, and 1924, this was the first Easter Meet since 1911—a quarter of a century ago. The neglect of the Coolins for such a long time is doubtless attributable to the fear that snow and ice are likely to be present at Easter, and that pleasurable rock-climbing is hardly to be anticipated. Moreover, it is rather a far cry to Skye. At any rate, for one reason or another, only eleven people (eight members and three guests) turned up at Sligachan. Of these eleven, ten were from South of the Border. If Aviemore doesn't supply the answer, where, may we ask, were the alleged Scottish Mountaineers? Further, those who did attend were mostly old stagers, with a glorious future behind them, people who, though happily not yet altogether edentulous, are now getting a bit long in the tooth from a climbing point of view. Had the company not been let down by one guest under thirty the average age would have been surprisingly high.

*Members* present were: Ex-Presidents W. N. Ling and G. T. Glover; F. D. C. Allen, E. A. Baker, J. R. Corbett, S. Cumming, H. Gardner, P. J. H. Unna.

*Guests.*—J. M. Davidson, W. G. McClymont (Alpine Club and N.Z. Alpine Club), and S. P. Taylor. Another member, Prof. E. C. C. Baly, although not officially at the Meet, was staying at Sligachan.

It was reported to the early arrivals that Skye had enjoyed a fortnight of perfect weather. The moor was firm, snow was off the ridges but was hard, though in small quantity, in the corries. There were odd patches of ice. With the wind continuing from north-east during the period of the Meet, conditions were generally fair, if cold. At times the sun shone brilliantly and "The



*Easter 1936*

S.M.C. AT SLIGACHAN

*G. T. Glover*



*Easter 1936*

BRUACH NA FRITHE

*H. Gardner*

Coolin " again revealed itself as a compact little group of real mountains set in the shimmering sea.

*Thursday.*—While Gardner was on Am Bhasteir, Ling, Glover, Unna, Baker, Davidson, Allen, and Taylor formed parties for the Pinnacle Ridge, and descended from Sgurr nan Gillean by the Tourist route. Corbett was collecting " twenty-fives " at Dunvegan.

*Friday.*—Ling, Glover, Gardner, Allen, and Taylor were in Corrie Lagan. Gardner was photographing. The others endeavoured to ascend the Cioch by the gully, without success, and it was then too late to take the usual route. Corbett and Unna had a long day on Blaven.

*Saturday.*—Belig, Garbh Bheinn, and Marsco were traversed by Corbett, while the rest of the people who were out, now reinforced by Cumming and McClymont, went to Sgurr Dearg. The " Inaccessible " was bagged by Davidson, Allen, and Taylor—also by the New Zealander who shinned up and down the short side in what seemed a minute or two. Unna and McClymont also traversed Banachdich.

*Sunday.*—The Cioch was climbed by two parties : Ling, Glover, Allen, and Davidson, Baker, Taylor. Gardner spent the day photographing, but nothing was seen of him by the party on Sgurr a Fionn Coire and Bruach na Frithe, consisting of Unna, Corbett, Cumming, and McClymont.

*Monday.*—Glover, Ling, Unna, Allen, Taylor, and McClymont visited Corrie Mhadaidh and traversed Bidean Druim nan Ramh. The last three pushed on over Mhadaidh. Gardner was photographing on B. Druim nan Ramh and Drumhain, while Baker and Davidson formed a walking party to Drumhain and Coruisk.

The Meet broke up on 14th April. It only remains to say that, under Mr Campbell, Sligachan Hotel more than maintains the high reputation it has always enjoyed among climbers. The accommodation has been recently enlarged and greatly improved. We miss the old " tin house " with its vast smoking-room and diminutive cubicles, but welcome the new wing which has taken its place.

S. C.

## EASTER MEET, 1936—AVIEMORE.

THE Easter Meet of the Club at Aviemore was not productive of any outstanding event. For once no rescue of wanderers in the Cairngorms enlivened the proceedings, and the weather was mixed. The wind, "at times reaching gale force," made the squalls of snow and sleet unpleasant, but between these squalls the ridges and peaks of the Cairngorms were magnificently revealed, though the views and photographic standpoints seldom seemed to coincide.

Some of the members joined forces with the Ski Club members and others in ski-ing parties, and seemed to derive pleasure from visiting such snowfields as were adequate for their purpose.

A party which climbed Creag Meaghaidh reported that twenty-nine people were engaged in ascending that hill by various routes. Ben More will have to look to his laurels!

By diligent search several enthusiasts found a modicum of real snow-climbing, but on the whole the ascents were of the usual Cairngorm type, in which weather and distance were the chief factors to contend with.

At the Cairngorm Hotel the atmosphere was pleasantly domestic. Sheriff Grant, Laird of Rothiemurchus, honoured the Club by dining with us on Good Friday.

The cold and damp days were followed by lazy basking in the comfortable lounges while digesting the excellent fare provided by the manageress, Miss Walker, and her staff.

Beneath the tow'ring Monadh Ruadh  
There stood a hundred men or fewer,  
Their hopes and hearts on hills intending,  
And upward glances all were sending.

In various coats and breeks bedecked  
At frozen snow with spikes they pecked,  
Their brows were wet with perspiration,  
The shorter word's a desecration.

At early eve the first returned,  
With sun and wind his face was burned.  
He'd hurried home before he ought-ter  
In search of baths with much hot water.

In singles and in bundles then  
Trickled in the other men,  
And last and least the over-bold  
Who found the water running cold.

Take heed, my hearties, from this tale,  
And think of Jonah and the whale;  
When mapping out all you will do,  
Don't bite off more than you can chew.

D. M.

There were twenty-six members present at the Meet, which lasted from 9th to 14th April. The following details are taken from the Meets Register, which has proved useful. The President arrived on 9th April.

The following members were present: Messrs J. L. Aikman, G. Anderson, C. G. Andrews, Allan Arthur, L. St C. Bartholomew, J. W. Baxter, R. A. Brown, W. L. Coats, J. Dow, C. A. J. Elphinston, W. Garden, N. L. Hird, J. Gall Inglis, R. M. Gall Inglis, R. Jeffrey, D. G. Kellock, J. Y. Macdonald, J. H. C. MacLeod, H. MacRobert, R. W. Martin, M. Matheson, D. Myles, R. B. Neill, G. R. Roxburgh, E. C. Thomson, J. M. Wordie.

*Friday, 10th April.*—Dow, Martin, Baxter, Elphinston, and Neill ascended Braeriach from the lower bothy in Glen Einich, going by Coire Dhondail over Sgor an Lochan Uaine; the latter three of the party did Cairn Toul also.

Wordie, Anderson, Matheson, and Hird went to Cor Arder. They ascended Creag Mhor, Meall Coire, Creag Meaghaidh (heavy going on north side), Sron Garbh Choire, descending by Cor Arder track.

H. MacRobert ascended Cairngorm on ski from Glenmore Lodge. Jeffrey was also ski-ing on Cairngorm.

Aikman walked and talked with the President, thereafter testing car springs on the Einich road and ascending Sgoran Dubh from the lower bothy.

Kellock and Thomson, on their way to the Meet, climbed A' Bhuidheanach Beag and Carn na Caim from Dalnaspidal in the company of three J.M.C.S. members. There was drifting mist and little snow.

Macdonald arrived for lunch, failed to arouse the President, so climbed Cairngorm alone.

*Saturday, 11th April.*—MacLeod and Roxburgh, in a fierce wind, driving snow, and hail, ascended Angel's Peak and Cairn Toul from Glen Einich.

Bartholomew, Macdonald, and Coats ascended Braeriach by Coire an Lochan, enjoying heavy step cutting in the central gully of the Coire.

Dow, Elphinston, and Martin ascended Sgoran Dubh Mor and Sgor Gaoithe from Lagganlie in Glen Feshie by Allt a Mharcaidh and descended by Allt Ruadh. Hird, Brown, and Anderson by the same route did Sgoran Dubh, Sgoran Dubh Bheag, and Carn Ban.

Thomson and Kellock did Carn Ban, Meall Dubhag, and Mullach Clach a' Bhlair from Glen Feshie. Visibility was poor, but they obtained a 300-foot glissade in Coire Domhain.

Neill and Baxter ascended Geal Charn by Allt Ruadh from Glen Feshie. They then did Sgoran Dubh by hard snow up the west face and continued over Sgor Gaoithe and Carn Ban, finally walking back to Kincaig.

H. MacRobert went up Carn Ban on ski from Achlean.

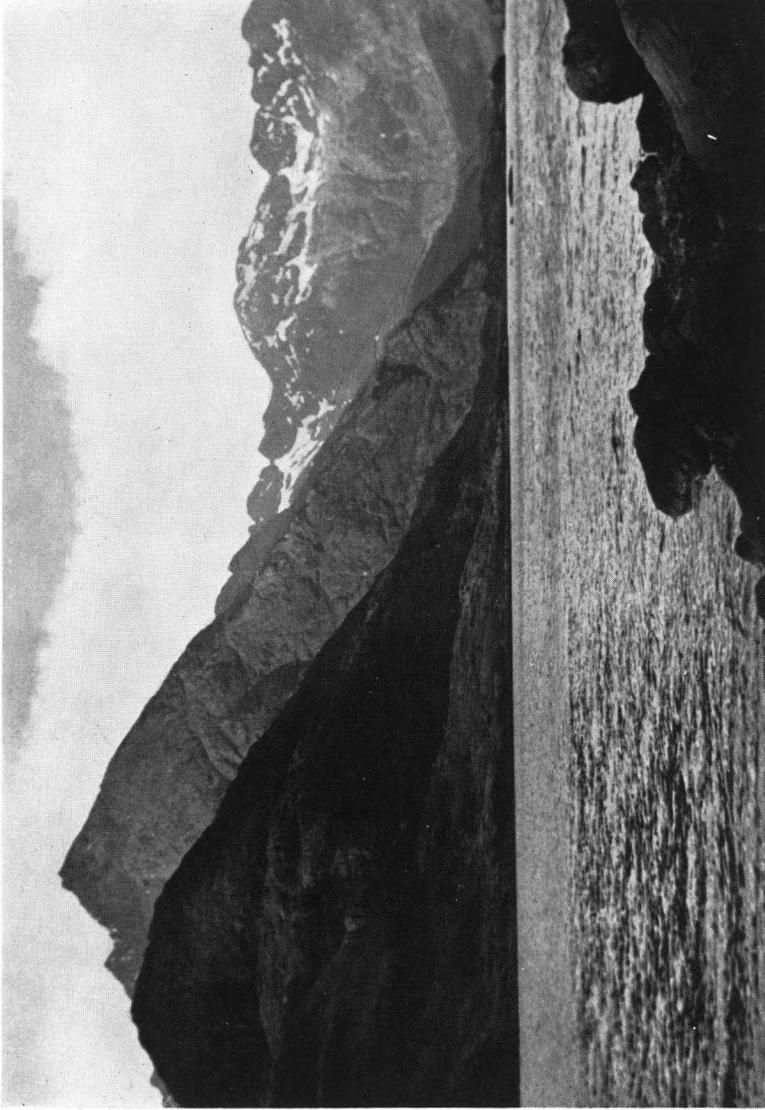
Myles and Andrews went by car to Ryvoan and so up Bynack Mor by Allt a' Choire Dheirg. They had a fairly steep snow climb, then proceeded to A' Choinneach and back by Strath Nethy.

J. Gall Inglis and R. M. Gall Inglis arrived via Geal Charn Drumochter, from the summit of which they enjoyed a magnificent view of the Alder range.

Aikman left for the C.I.C. Hut, Ben Nevis.

*Easter Sunday.*—MacRobert and Jeffrey were on Braeriach.

Roxburgh, Coats, and MacLeod did Cairngorm.



*Easter 1936*

LOCH CORUIK AND SGURR DUBH

*H. Gardner*

They had fine views and enjoyed three sitting glissades into Coire Cas. Martin, Bartholomew, and Elphinston did Cairngorm by An-t-Aonach, proceeding over Carn-an-Lochain with a descent into Coire an Lochain.

Hird and Matheson ascended Creagan Gorm and Meall a' Bhuachaille.

Myles and Andrews did Sgoran Dubh, Geal Charn, Meall Tionail and Sgor Gaoithe from Glen Einich, from which glen Dow went up Sron na Lairig by himself.

Corrie Arder had many patrons. R. M. Gall Inglis and Baxter did Carn Liath, went on to Creag Meaghaidh, and completed the round of the corrie before descending to Loch Laggan. Brown, Thomson, and Kellock walked up corrie Arder, found other climbers in possession of the most attractive gullies (surely all the Posts were not climbed that day for the first time unbeknown to the high priests of the Club), but enjoyed a snow climb up to the summit plateau, where they met the former party (Inglis and Baxter) and continued with them over Creag Meaghaidh. There they met A. L. Cram, B. S. P. Douglas, and a friend. It was a glorious day of hard snow, bright sunshine, and magnificent views from Ben Wyvis to Ben Nevis.

J. Gall Inglis represented the S.M.C. at church.

*Monday, 13th April.*—Hird, Elphinston, Wordie, and J. Wordie, junior, motored to Loch an Eilein and climbed Cadha Mor, Creag Dhubh, and Clach Choutsaich, returning to the loch by Creag Fhiaclach. Visibility was fair, but there were some snow showers.

Andrews and Myles climbed Cairngorm from Loch Morlich and left for home.

Roxburgh, Neill, Arthur, and Macleod did Carn Ban Mor, Meall Dubhag, Mullach Clach a' Bhlair from Glen Feshie in a fierce wind and blinks of sunshine.

Dow, R. M. G. Inglis, Baxter, Coats, and Kellock went to Glen Mor lodge. Coats skied on Cairngorm whilst the others went over Cnap Coire na Spreidhe. Inglis and Baxter bagged Cairngorm and overtook the others on the way down.

Cumming arrived for dinner and stayed overnight on

the way home from Skye. He reported the capture of three whales in Loch Cluanie (total weight, 5 lbs.).

*Tuesday, 14th April.*—Arthur and Kellock motored up Glen Einich and ascended Braeriach in a blizzard. There was much new snow, and visibility was limited to 5 yards. As they were the last survivors, this proved to be the stormy ending of a most successful Meet.

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### LIBRARY AND CLUB ROOM.

THE books in the Library have now been completely overhauled, and I have copied out several lists from the card index of the books in the Library, which I shall be glad to send to members who cannot visit Edinburgh. A list of books found to have gone astray is appended, in the hopes that some member may know of the whereabouts of some of them. The Library has continued to be little used, in spite of the fact that next to the Alpine Club Library it must be the finest of its kind in Britain.

Apart from the usual publishers' gifts, which are acknowledged below, we are indebted to Mr G. Seligman and to the Ski Club of Great Britain for a gift of some fifty back numbers of *Ski Notes and Queries*. We have also been enabled, by a kind gift, to complete our set of the *Scottish Ski Club Journal*. A list of "wants" appears at the end of this report.

The Club Room has been enhanced by the loan from Mr A. R. Anderson of an oil painting by David S. Ewart, A.R.S.A., of Harta Corrie, for which our best thanks are due. A photograph of W. W. Naismith has been hung in the room, and one of Mr J. G. Stott has just been received.

Much could still be done to make the room more attractive. The most important thing is to use it more, but, failing that, a decent carpet and a few more good pictures would be a distinct improvement.

It is hoped to arrange an attractive series of talks for the winter, and we would be much assisted if any member who feels moved to give us the benefit of his

experiences or a chance to discuss his theories would get in touch with the Hon. Custodian of Slides.

The following books have been found to be unaccountably missing from the Library:—

- “ Letters from Roundhead Officers.”
- “ Scottish Loch Scenery.” Lyden.
- “ Views of the Lakes.” Swan.
- “ Freedom.” Young.
- “ The Regular Swiss Round.” Jones.
- “ Mountaineering Art.” Raeburn.
- “ Guide to the Pyrenees.” Packe.
- “ A First Visit to the Alps.” Talfourd.
- “ A Visit to the Western Coast of Norway.” Wittich.
- “ The Continent by Queenboro’.” Tiedeman.
- “ Les Avalanches.” Allix.
- “ Frequented and Unfrequentated Ways in the Selkirks, etc.” Odell.

The following journals, etc., are needed to complete the sets owned by the Club:—

- Fell and Rock C.C. Journal. All Vol. IV.
- S.M.C. Guides. First Editions of Nevis and Northern Highlands.
- Oxford and Cambridge Mountaineering. 1921, 1922, and 1924.
- British Ski Year-Book. 1921, 1922, 1923, and 1925.
- Mountaineering Journal. Vol. I., Nos. 1, 2, and 3.
- Mountain Club of South Africa (Cape Town) Journal. Nos. 25 to 30 (inclusive).
- New Zealand Alpine Journal. 1897-1931 (inclusive).
- Gritstone Club Journal. The whole set.
- Climbers’ Club Journal. 1934.

We have received, and return thanks, for the journals of the following Clubs; it has been impossible to review them all, but they all well repay study:—

- A.C., F.R.C.C., R.C., Y.R.C., M.M.C., Cairngorm Club,
- H.C., S.A.C., C.S.F.A., C.A.I., C.A.B., J.A.C., C.A.C.,
- N.Z.A.C., M.A.A.C., B.A.A.C., C.U.M.C., S.C.G.B.,
- S.S.C., A.A.C., A.S.C., Appalachian M.C., M.C.S.A.,
- C.A.F., G.H.M., C.C. of Gt. B., Sierra Club, Norske and
- Svenske Touring Clubs, The Mountaineering Journal.

Apologies for any omissions from the list. They are all in the Library.

During the past year the following books, all presented by their publishers, have been added to the Library:—

- “Voyage de Saussure hors des Alpes.” By Charles Geo. Victor Attinger.
- “Everest—The Challenge.” By Sir Francis Younghusband. Nelson.
- “Guide to Climbs in the Scawfell Group.” By A. T. Hargreaves. Fell & Rock C.C.
- “The Highlands of Scotland.” By Hugh Quigley. Batsford Ltd.
- “Wayfaring Around Scotland.” By B. H. Humble. Herbert Jenkins.
- “Collected Poems of Geoffrey Winthrop Young.” Methuen.
- “Over Tyrolese Hills.” By F. S. Smythe. Hodder & Stoughton.
- “Snow Structure and Ski Fields.” By G. Seligman. Macmillan.
- “Short Guide to the Slovene Alps.” By F. S. Copeland and M. Debelekava.
- “The Technique of Alpine Mountaineering.” Brit. Assoc. S.A.C.
- “Rock Climbing and Mountaineering.” By Carl Brunning. Open Air Publication Ltd.
- “Blodig’s Alpine Calendar.” 1937.

E. A. M. W.

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## NEW MEMBERS

THE Club desires to extend a hearty welcome to the following gentlemen who have been admitted to membership at the Committee Meeting on 24th October: Messrs D. J. Fraser, R. G. A. Hemming, A. Henderson, D. Henderson, E. W. Hodge, J. B. Home, B. H. Humble, J. L. Innes, T. D. MacKinnon, J. J. Murray, and W. A. Stewart.

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### EDITORIAL NOTE.

THE new Editor was warned before taking office that Scotland was played out and that articles would have to be wrung by main force from backward contributors. There was, it is true, a kind of drought in the spring, but latterly there has been something in the nature of a minor avalanche.

The Hon. Treasurer and the Committee have now taken a hand in the business. We must cut down expense: we must also content ourselves with thinner journals, or the completed volumes comprising six numbers each will be most unwieldy to bind.

It is recognised that there is a tendency for more matter to be received for the November than for the April *Journal*. Even allowing for that and the clearing up of outstanding Reviews and so on, the Editor, after frankly facing facts, has regretfully felt compelled to hold over a considerable amount of material to the April number, most of this having already been set-up. This includes, along with one article and the continuation of the interesting article on the Moor of Rannoch, the whole of the section on New Climbs and several Reviews.

The Editor tenders his apologies for these omissions. He must also state that only a few shorter contributions are now required for the next number, and that the space allotted to the J.M.C.S. Sectional and Informal Meets and to Reviews must be drastically curtailed in future. It will also be necessary to abbreviate somewhat the S.M.C. Abroad Notes and the report of individual activities during the Meets, in cases where such accounts have been too detailed. By means of this rather unpleasant Geddes-axe procedure it is hoped that the *Journal* will proceed in a balanced manner and on a level keel after our next issue.

## NOTES AND EXCURSIONS.

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



GLENCOE AND NATIONAL TRUST FOR SCOTLAND  
FOR PLACES OF HISTORIC INTEREST OR NATURAL  
BEAUTY.

WHEN the estate of Glencoe was placed on the market in the early part of the year the Trust, being concerned for the protection of the amenity of the Glen and the preservation of some part of it for the Nation in all time, stepped in and purchased the Glen itself, stretching from the Alt-an-Rìgh westwards to include the Clachaig Hotel—the area purchased stretching to the summit of the Aonach Eagach ridge.

At a later date the Trust got the opportunity of purchasing an additional part of the Glen lying to the south of the Coe and stretching up the ridge of An-t-Sron to the summit of Bidean-nam-Bian. The purchase seemed eminently desirable from the Trust point of view, so far as the area included the land bordering the new road and stretching between it and the river. It was felt, however, that the expenditure of Trust Funds would hardly be justified in the acquisition of a rock massif like Bidean, even though the highest mountain in Argyll. It was at this stage that members of the Club, being informed of the position by the Secretary's circular, came nobly to the rescue, as it was largely due to their generous contributions that this additional portion has now been acquired by the Trust. The total amount subscribed by members of the Club, to the number of fifty, amounted in all to £412 in subscriptions, ranging from 10s. to £50.

Clachaig Hotel was subsequently sold to Mr Fairlie of Dalmally Hotel under Feuing Conditions, so as to give the Trust the necessary control in years to come in view of its proximity to the Trust property.

The eastern portion of the Bidean Coire, including Stob Coire-an-Lochain and Aonach Dubh, did not come on the market, as they were not parts of the Glencoe estate, but belonged to the Schomberg McDonnell Trustees, proprietors of Dalness.

It may be added that Dr Sutherland, of Bath, the purchaser of Torren, lying immediately to the west of Clachaig, has presented to the Trust the Signal Rock, a fine viewpoint, well worthy of a visit, reached by a path from the new main road and footbridge over the Coe.

The boundary of the area purchased runs from Clachaig Hotel up the Eas-an-Daimh' to the summit of Sgor-nam-Fiannaidh, thence along the ridge of Aonach Eagach, past Am Bodach to the point 2851 on Sron Gharbh, and down the centre of the Coire an Ruigh and the Allt Ruigh to its junction with the River Coe, thence westwards along the Coe across Loch Triochatan and up the waterfall burn through Coire nam Beith to the summit of Bidean-nam-Bian, back along the ridge over Stob Coire-nam-Beith and down the ridge of An-t-Sron to the point 2175, thence north-westwards by a large heather boulder (the reputed " Birstle " rock of " Kidnapped ") to the Alt-na-Muidhe and down that stream to its junction with the Coe, and back along the Coe to the point 195, when it joins in with Clachaig on the north.

The address of the Trust is 4 Great Stuart Street, Edinburgh, should any member wish to join or obtain further information.

A. W. R.

Mr J. G. Stott, who was the first Editor of the *S.M.C.J.*, and who has for many years resided in Australia, wishes to dispose of a finely bound complete set of the *Journal*. Would any member interested please communicate with the Hon. Librarian ?

#### HIKING IN CANADA'S NATIONAL PARKS.

A communication has been received from the Office of the High Commissioner for Canada pointing out the facilities which are offered for hiking and camping in the Canadian National Parks, and, in particular, the camp at Lake O'Hara in British Columbia. There are several organisations in Canada which foster this sport, and there is a growing Youth Hostels Association.

The Department of the Interior at Ottawa has forwarded to the reference library—Canada House, Trafalgar Square, London, S.W.1.—a limited number of copies of a new illustrated brochure entitled " The National Parks of Canada."

#### STAC POLLY.

This fierce little hill well repays close examination, and it will be to the advantage of succeeding parties if those parts of the numerous buttresses that provide good climbing are cairned and recorded. For instance, the western buttress (western terminal arête seems a misnomer, only near the top does the face approximate

to a ridge) provides a good scrambling climb with one good pitch near the top decorated with an abseil loop. Below, there are bound to be numerous tibbits, but it is difficult to discover them without spending a lot of time wandering over the buttress.

On a recent visit a fine 45-foot vertical crack, which gives a pleasant struggle, was found on the lower section. It lies to the right of a prominent nose rising in line above the "forefinger pinnacle," near the foot of the western buttress. There are good holds for about 20 feet, then jamming is required to aid movement on small holds; the finish is by a stride left on to the nose itself, and so straight up.

A. C. D. SMALL.

[*Note.*—Forefinger pinnacle not mentioned in "Northern Highlands Guide," and terminal arête as therein mentioned only applies to the terminal portion.—EDITOR.]

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#### STOB COIRE NAN LOCHAN.

In the "Central Highlands Guide" occurs a very moderate statement that the gully between the South and Central Buttresses on the North Ridge of Stob Coire nan Lochan gives a good winter climb.

It was first climbed, apparently, by two parties of Cambridge University Mountaineers at Easter 1932, the first party taking five hours or so to effect the ascent. There is about 600 feet of climbing, the main difficulties being located in the lower half of the gully. On 15th March 1936 a party consisting of Messrs C. M. Allan, Dr Beveridge, J. Dow, and the Editor, under the leadership of the first-named, ascended the gully. This was in splendid condition, with a fair surfacing of ice on the most difficult section, giving a most sporting and difficult climb.

J. H. B. B.

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#### CENTRAL BUTTRESS, BUACHAILLE ETIVE.

On 12th July 1936 C. M. Allan and J. H. B. Bell attempted to force a route up the right-hand side of the bleached and blackened vertical streak of rocks which depends from the top left corner of the Heather Ledge on Central Buttress. The route only went for 60 feet or so before merging into apparent impossibility. A subsequent inspection from above confirmed this view. However, it was found possible, by a short traverse to the right at the start of the route, to climb straight up and so get on to the July 1934 C.B. route by the same authors, thus making this much more direct. Allan and

Professor Hirst, of Bristol, revisited C.B. in August, and report a new route on the cliff above Heather Ledge. There is apparently considerable scope for variations hereabouts. J. H. B. B.

#### THE CHASM, BUACHAILLE ETIVE.

*Pitch 4.*—Climbed on the south wall. Begin under the chockstone, work out going up close to it, and then step on to its roof. Climbed by A. Anderson (J.M.C.S.).

*Pitch 7.*—Climbed on the north wall. Start up the edge of the wall, then slant left out on to the face until nearly level with the chockstone, then move almost horizontally in what is practically a hand traverse. Climbed—quite unwittingly—by A. C. D. Small (J.M.C.S.).

*Pitch 10.*—We started several feet under the roof up a couple of flakes on the south wall, then backed up to the narrowest part of the cave, straight up for some feet, and then jammed along to the chockstone, and so up. Climbed by A. Anderson (J.M.C.S.).

#### SGURR A' MHADAIDH—SLANTING GULLY.

The last difficult pitch of this gully has been climbed direct, but it is usual to turn the whole pitch on the right. The following route was taken by C. C. Gorrie and one in June this year :—

From the foot of the pitch a traverse of 40 feet was made along a ledge to the left, followed by a climb of 20 feet up the face to a small belay. From this point the gully was reached again just above the most difficult section; that is, about 15 feet from the foot. This was done by traversing over steep slabs. The traverse was rather exposed, and the slabs almost devoid of handholds, but the rock was rough enough to give a good grip to the feet. The remaining 60 feet were climbed up the gully. IAIN H. OGILVIE.

#### AONACH DUBH—WEST FACE.

To the ardent explorer the west face of Aonach Dubh offers numerous possibilities, but there is one little climb which the mountain keeps up its sleeve for the particular entertainment of those who delight in novel situations, and it might well be included as a continuation of the "b" Buttress climb, (k') in the "Guide."

At a casual glance the topmost overhanging tier of cliffs is not exactly encouraging, but closer inspection will reveal a small and interesting ledge which appears to traverse the face horizontally,

almost as far as the third gully. This ledge may be followed for a short distance with ease, and without much inducement from the grim fortress on the left to embark upon the ascent, until progress is further discouraged by a portion of the cliff which juts out over and beyond the ledge. To crawl for about 2 yards under what might well be described as the "cuff" of the mountain, it is necessary to remove even the smallest of rucksacks, but one has hardly emerged when it becomes abundantly clear what the mountain keeps up its sleeve—the obvious, and probably the only, route to the summit.

It is a fairly short but enjoyable climb, on good rock, with holds which are extremely acceptable, especially in the negotiation of the rather airy final rib which ultimately resolves itself into a small projecting block, from which one steps across to a convenient grassy platform and so to the top of the cliff.

M. B. STEWART.

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#### SOUTH TRIDENT BUTTRESS.

What is probably a new and alternative route on the lower half of the lowest tier of this buttress (first climbed by Macphee and Williams) was made by W. G. McClymont and J. H. B. Bell on 10th May 1936. We started just to the left of where a little stream comes tumbling down the very steep lower front of the buttress. We soon crossed the stream and worked up obliquely to the right on exceedingly difficult rock, well broken up but nearly vertical. Finally, a sort of level wall top was reached and crossed to a perfect stance. The next pitch was severe, a case of working up to the right on rather holdless, exposed slabs. Finally, a steep groove was reached, which led to a magnificent tombstone of a belay—near Macphee's Cairn.

J. H. B. B.

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#### FIRST-AID EQUIPMENT—APPEAL FOR DONATIONS.

The Committee desire to bring to the notice of members the fact that the Club has incurred considerable expense (about £35) within the last two years in providing three Stretchers, which are installed in Skye, at Glencoe, and at the Charles Inglis Clark Memorial Hut, Ben Nevis—expenditure which is for the benefit of climbers generally and not purely Club purposes. The Committee feel that members may wish to help to defray the cost of such equipment and to provide further First-Aid Supplies, and they accordingly make an appeal for donations for this purpose. These will be gratefully acknowledged by the Hon. Secretary or the Hon. Treasurer.

## S.M.C. ABROAD.

Harry Bell was in Tyrol at the beginning of August, using Vent as a centre. The Wildspitz (12,500 feet) was climbed from the Breslauer Hut, but there was unfortunately no view from the top owing to thick mist. The best view was from Similaun, from the Similaun Hut (now an Italian frontier-post—passports necessary), and in some ways the most interesting climb was Mutmalspitz from Samoan Hut, with its variety of glacier, snow, and rock-work (not difficult). The return from Vent to Zwiebelstein was over the ridge of Hinterspiegelkogel down into the beautiful Obergurgl Valley.

A. L. Cram writes :—

I was in the Walliser Alps this summer with Dr W. Blackwood and K. D. Macdougall. We left England upon 21st July for Saas Fée, and, on arrival there, established camp in the Staffel Wald. On the 23rd we went up to the Mischabel Hut, and on the following day suffered a training walk to the top of the Ulrichshorn (12,891 feet). On the 25th we crossed the Fée Valley to the Weissmies Hut, and next morning traversed the Fletschhorn (13,127 feet) by the South-West Ridge, which was heavily corniced, descending from the Fletschjoch through the ice-fall of the Grosser Trift Glacier. On the 27th we ascended the Weissmies (13,225 feet), and thereafter returned to camp. The 29th found us at the Britannia Hut, and the 30th traversing the Allalinhorn (13,235 feet). This ascent we made by the North-East Ridge from the Hohlaub Glacier, the descent by the South Ridge to the Fée Glacier, where we encountered a heavy snowstorm. We returned to the Britannia, but in the afternoon crossed the Egginerjoch in snow and mist to Saas Fée. On 2nd August we descended to Saas Almagel and, going up to the Almagelleralp, obtained night quarters in a hay chalet. The next day afforded a good climb, although on snow-laden rocks, over the Portjengrat (12,009 feet) and the Portjenhorn. We arrived back at camp at midnight. On the 5th we traversed the Egginergrat (11,080 feet) from camp. On the 6th we made the Mischabel Hut our objective, and next morning traversed the Sudlenzspitze (14,108 feet) by the East Ridge and over the Great Gendarme to the Nadeljoch, from which we crossed the Nadelhorn (14,219 feet) in mist to the Windjoch and Saas Fée. The 9th August found us once more at the Britannia Hut and the 10th at the Bétemps Hut, having used the Adler Pass. Evil weather caused us to abandon the north face of the Rimpfischhorn in favour of the Strahlhorn (13,750 feet). The weather on the 11th was wretched, and as it was no better on the 12th we went down to Zermatt and pitched camp on the west side of the valley at the Bodmen Chalets. We returned to the Bétemps Hut on the 14th, and on the 15th traversed the Dufourspitze of Monte Rosa (15,217 feet) over the Grenz Gipfel to the Grenzsattel, the rocks being smothered in new snow. We continued the traverse over the Zumsteinspitze (15,004 feet) to the Capanna Margherita

on the Signalkuppe (14,964 feet), where we weathered a sharp snow shower before descending to the Lysjoch and the Capanna Gnifetti. Next day we traversed the Lyskamm Nase and climbed the ice-fall beneath the South-West Ridge of the Lyskamm (14,889 feet), but were driven off the ridge by a heavy snowstorm and took refuge in the Capanna Q. Sella. On the following morning we had 6 inches of new snow to contend with, and contented ourselves with Castor (13,878 feet), from which we descended the Zwillingsgletscher to the Bétemps and Zermatt. On the 19th we took the train to Randa and moved up to the Weisshorn Hut. On the 20th we attained a height of about 14,000 feet on the East Ridge of the Weisshorn, when it commenced to snow heavily. We were able, however, to complete the ridge upon the following day to the summit (14,803 feet). On the 24th we bivouacked at the Trift Alp, and on the 25th traversed the Zinal Rothorn (13,855 feet), descending by the North Ridge to the Col du Moming and the Mountet Hut. Time denied us an attempt upon the North-East Ridge of the Ober Gabelhorn, which was in good condition, and next morning we crossed the Trifthorn (12,061 feet) to Zermatt, where we struck camp and entrained that night.

G. Graham Macphee writes that he had a few days' climbing in Austria after a strenuous week spent at a congress in Vienna. In the Kaisergebirge he and Howard Somervell ascended the Totenkirchl by the Heroldweg, and descended by the Schmidtrinne and the Führerweg. The Heroldweg is rather like O. G. Jones's route in Easter Gully on Doe Crag, and, climbed in nailed boots, proved considerably harder. The Predigtstuhl and North Ridge of the Goinger Halt were climbed the following day, and the Ellmauer Halt, the highest point, was also visited by the easy route. From Ferleiten, the Grossglockner was ascended late one afternoon, and after a night in the Hofmann Hut a traverse over two peaks was made to the Mainzer Hut, and so to Ferleiten. The weather was rather unsettled, and Macphee says that he was just beginning to get into training when it was time to come home.

Mr R. Jeffrey writes:—

My wife and I were in the French Alps for nearly three weeks in July, but we were dogged by unsettled weather the whole time and got very little climbing.

We started in the Tarentaise with Pralognan as our headquarters. From the Péclat-Polset Hut we climbed, guideless, the Aig de Polset (11,608 feet) via the Col du Lac-Blanc, the Glacier and Col de Gébroulaz and the S.W. Arête, descending by the same route. It was a lovely day, and we had magnificent views of the French Alps and of the south side of Mont Blanc, the latter with new snow extending to a level much below the Gamba hut. Our only other expedition from Pralognan was an attempt on the Dome de Chasseforêt via the Chalets des Nants and the ruined Refuge des Lacs. The

weather broke, but cleared again too late to attempt the climb, so we ascended the easy Roc du Tombour and explored the Cirques of the Grand and Petit Marchet. We were accompanied on these expeditions by Miss Dorothy Thompson of the Ladies' Alpine Club.

We then moved on to La Bérarde in Dauphiné, where we were joined by our guide, Evaristo Croux, of Courmayeur. As a training walk we climbed the Tete de la Maye, and then went up to the Refuge de la Temple-Ecrins for an attempt on Les Ecrins by the Col des Avalanches. Next morning it was snowing hard so there was nothing for it but to return to La Bérarde. We then decided to try Les Ecrins from the other side, and ascended by the Glacier de la Bonne Pierre and the Col des Ecrins to the Refuge Carré. The ascent to the Col was decidedly trying, as the snow slopes were very avalanchy and the final couloir hard ice with a covering of powder snow. We were unfortunate in arriving at the hut during the National Fête holidays. Parties continued to arrive until late in the evening, and in the end forty people stayed the night where there was accommodation for only eighteen! The next morning it was snowing again, so we returned to La Bérarde via the Glacier Blanc, the Glacier Noir, and the Col de la Temple, and thereby walked right round the Ecrins.

We then motored to Chamonix, where on our first day we climbed the Doigt de Trelaporte, a short but interesting rock pinnacle on a subsidiary ridge of the Grands Charmoz. Our next climb was the Aig du Peigne, an excellent rock climb which I think is more continuously difficult than the Grépon. We were also lucky in having a good day on the Aig de Blaitiere, although the descent was trying on account of the avalanchy condition of the Glacier des Nantillons. Our last effort was an attempt on the Aig. Verte from the Couvercle Hut, but again the morning broke with heavy snow and we retreated down the Mer de Glace in pouring rain.

Mr A. Harrison writes :—

My brother and I spent the last week of March and the first week of April touring in the Silvretta and Ferwall groups. The tour was mainly ski-ing from one hut to another; amongst other things, we crossed the Fuorcla del Confin and also ascended the Dreiländer Spitz.

The huts in both these groups are excellent. Most of them have electric light and central heating.

In September, with my wife, I did a tour in Norway. From Andalsnes with a local guide I ascended the Romsdalshorn. The rock climbing is not difficult, but the route is not perfectly straightforward. It gives about 1,000 feet of rock climbing, and there were remarkable views into the Romsdal and across to the Trolindene.

We also spent three days at Turtagrö. The first day the weather was bad, and nothing better than the Dyrhugstindene could be attempted.

The second day was magnificent, but the Skagastölstindene were so plastered with snow that the local guide vetoed any attempt on them. We ascended the Store Riingstind. Owing to the lateness of the season the glacier was bare of snow and gave the maximum of amusement.

The views from the top, especially of the Skagastölstindene, were magnificent.

The third day my wife and I ascended the glacier towards the hut.

W. N. Ling was out in the Austrian Tyrol for a month in July and August with P. J. H. Unna, J. W. Brown, and R. Corry. They were not favoured by the weather. After two wet days in the Sellrainthal, at Praxmar, they crossed the Horntaler Joch to the Franz Senn Hut, whence they climbed the Fernerkogel and then crossed the Wildgratscharte to Oetzthal. From there, over the Weissmaurach Joch to the Neue Chemnitzer Hut, where they were stormbound for two days, and returned by Plangeros in Pitzthal and Imst to Oetzthal. From the Hildesheimer Hut they climbed the Stubaier Wildspitz, a pleasant scramble. Corry had gone on to Vienna from Pitzthal, and Unna was called home.

Brown and Ling went on to Zillerthal, and from the Berliner Hut climbed the Ochsner, which concluded their season. The average age of the party was distressingly high, as it included two septuagenarians.

D. Myles was at Arolla for a few days in July. The weather was execrable, the only ascent achieved being that of the Grand Dent de Veisivi and part of the Dent Perroq. The party was compelled to retreat down the Ferpècle Valley. At Ferpècle they met a guide who professed interest in hearing that a descent by their route was feasible. Myles then fled to Paris. There he attended a Communist rally, a show at the Casino de Paris, and, finally, a series of Fascist meetings, where he was chased three times by the police.

Mr W. B. Speirs writes:—

In June this year my wife and I spent three weeks in Switzerland. We arrived at Kandersteg on the 7th in bad weather, which lasted all week, and we had to confine ourselves to walks up the valleys. Fortunately it is a very fine walking centre and we were able to make a different excursion each day. On the 13th we walked through the Gemmi Pass, which was deep in snow, to Leukerbad, and made our way leisurely to Zermatt, which we reached on the 15th.

We were delighted with Zermatt, as it was very quiet at this time of year and every one was very attentive and friendly. The weather was still unsettled with a *Föhn* wind, but on the 18th, with our guide, Emil Perren, we went up the Gornergrat railway and did three climbs on the Riffelhorn. The following afternoon we

climbed to the Gandegg Hut, and in the morning ascended the Breithorn, the snow being in good condition for the first time in three weeks.

On the 22nd I went to Fluhalp with Emil, and next morning we climbed about 3,000 feet up the Findelen Glacier on ski. Unfortunately the *Föhn* was blowing again and the snow was too soft for good running. We had hoped to make the first ascent of the Matterhorn, but on the 22nd it was climbed by an Englishman with two guides. However, we went up to Belvedere the next day, and left the hut at 2 A.M. in thick mist. The rocks were slightly glazed, but the mist soon cleared, the sun came up, and conditions rapidly improved. We reached the summit of the Matterhorn at 6.15 A.M. and were rewarded by a perfect view. We left the summit at 6.40 and reached the hut at 8.55. The following day we left for home.

It was a very late season, a heavy fall of snow during the first week in June covering the mountains down to 7,000 feet, and for the next three weeks the *Föhn* prevailed and avalanches came down every day.

Professor Turnbull writes:—

J. H. B. Bell and H. W. Turnbull spent a fortnight from 28th July to 12th August at Belalp, their original plan of migrating after five or six days to Randa or Zinal having been abandoned owing to unsettled weather. In spite of many hours of ridge climbing in mist and falling snow, they explored a considerable length of the Belgrat, a fine horseshoe of rocky summits, culminating in the Unterbächhorn (11,700 feet), and enclosing a glacier and alp gently sloping southward, high up above the Rhone Valley and facing the Simplon. The Gisighorn, on the westerly curve of the horseshoe, gave a fine introductory climb, up by the south and down by the east ridge, particularly as bad weather turned to good before the top was reached. Next, the eastern section was visited by means of an obvious chimney half-way between the Sparrhorn and the Hohstock, whence the latter was traversed westwards, and the ridge was continued to the next summit, the Mauvaise Poupée. The direct way off, down a narrow lateral rib, gave an exhilarating end to the climb. After an afternoon on the Sparrhorn, a longer expedition was made, again in very unpromising weather, when the ridge was reached farther west at perhaps its easiest point in a snow-fog. After passing over the Graf and the Grossvater, the Unterbächhorn was climbed, not by the usual route on the left of the final tower, but by means of a chimney towards the right.

Between the Gross Aletsch and Oberaletsch glaciers is an intriguing ridge of peaks, the Fusshörner: there are thirteen recognised summits amongst the many spires of rock which adorn the chain. In the 1931 and latest Edition of the S.A.C. "Guide Book" No. 8 Spire was scheduled as unclimbed. The party therefore ascended this peak by its most obvious and desirable route, which

involved not much over an hour's really difficult rock climbing on good rock at the finish. This route was certainly an improvement on that described in the "Guide Book," and also speedier. Subsequent bibliographical research, however, showed that the peak was climbed in 1932, probably by our route, and again in 1933.

Two days later the Aletschhorn (13,730 feet) was traversed from the Oberaletsch Hut, on a cloudless day with an icy westerly wind, by an interesting route up the south-east and down the west ridge. The snow was in excellent condition except for one early section of the descent, when 20 yards of very steep bare ice was encountered. On 7th August bad weather and a curious error in the S.A.C. "Guide Book" conspired to make impossible the crossing of the Gredetschlücke to the Baltschiederhütte, which lay but one hour beyond. The party were forced down the wild and lonely Gredetschthal, reaching the village of Mund as darkness set in, and arriving at Belalp next day. The final expedition was on the Nesthorn (12,500 feet) in excellent conditions, with a superb view rivalling that from the Aletschhorn.

Mr E. A. M. Wedderburn writes:—

I was ski-ing in the Mont Blanc range at the end of March with Elias Julen, of Zermatt. The most interesting climb was the traverse of Mont Blanc from the Grands Mulets to the Requin Hut via Mont Blanc, Mont Maudit, and Mont Blanc de Tacul. This was pretty difficult, as it was done immediately after a very heavy snowfall, and there was also a good deal of ice about. The ski-ing was not good, but was extremely sensational. The time taken was about thirteen hours. Only one halt of five minutes was made! This is supposed to be the first traverse in that direction under winter conditions. It has been done once from the Requin Hut to the Grands Mulets on ski in 1926.

W. M. MacKenzie, J.M.C.S., writes:—

J. G. Wilson (J.M.C.S.) and myself were at Turtagrö during the last fortnight of July. We experienced very bad weather conditions; our arrival coincided with a change in the weather.

Our first day, with W. C. Burns, of London, was an unsuccessful attempt on the Pinaklene Ridge of Nordlige Midtmaradalstind, the reason for this being a very late start, 11.15 A.M., and bad weather conditions. Though we knew the climb was only moderately difficult, time beat us, and without any regret we turned and romped back to midnight dinner.

The following day Wilson and I climbed Storen, partly by Mohn's Skar and partly by a new route of considerable difficulty on the north face. We were almost defeated at the start of the climb by an immense schrund, but after some gymnastics managed to surmount the difficulty. The first half of this route, about 800 to 900 feet, is apt to be swept by stonefalls, and we did see one come down; fortunately

we were out of the danger zone. About a third of the climb is new (approximately 600 feet). Altogether we took four and a half hours to the top of Storen. No view. We took two hours to the descent, and it was pouring. An excellent day.

Wilson, Burns, and myself did St. Midtmaradalstind by the Lavskar, a most interesting day entailing interesting route finding. We were rewarded by magnificent views in every direction. The usual rain, however, drove us down the Skagadals Glacier.

This was our last expedition, as the weather broke down completely.

Altogether we had a most delightful time, and found the people at Turtagrö extremely attentive. Although somewhat difficult of access, all young climbers should make an attempt to spend a fortnight or so in this splendid playground. There are expeditions within the compass of almost anyone's ability; it is an ideal centre for guideless climbing.

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## REVIEWS.

**Over Tyrolese Hills.** By F. S. Smythe. Published by Hodder & Stoughton.

This book describes a traverse of the Tyrolese Alps from the Silvretta in the west, by the Ötztal, Stubai Tal, and Zillertal, to the Venediger in the east. The expedition was to have been completed with a traverse of the Glockner group, but bad weather intervened.

Mr Smythe had for his companion Mr Campbell Secord, a Canadian mountaineer, who had organised an attempt on Mount Waddington in British Columbia.

It is delightful that a climber like Mr Smythe, who has given us such enthralling accounts as "The Kangchenjunga Adventure" and "Kamet Conquered," can write with such charm and genuine appreciation of country which makes much smaller demands upon his powers as a mountaineer. The author has a gift for straightforward narrative, giving a lucid account of his movements that is easy to follow without the aid of a detailed map.

The expedition was governed by the holiday spirit and this is well conveyed to the reader. Though the general objective was a traverse of the Eastern Alps, each day's work was planned with plenty of scope for adjustment according to the weather conditions. The weather, which plays so large a part in one's thoughts on a day on the hills, is always with us as we cross the Tyrolese peaks with Smythe, and it plays its part in making the story live. The book is written for the general public rather than for mountaineers, and Mr Smythe is not on such sound ground when he believes he is catering for his public. His humour is sometimes a little forced, and he has thought it necessary to express his views on political subjects. One's political sympathies may be entirely in agreement with the author, and yet we cannot escape a sense of irritation and antagonism at their unnecessary projection into the course of the narrative. Mr Smythe, one feels, would have been better to have told what he heard and saw (for politics will intrude themselves into any book about Austria), and let that speak for itself. The book is illustrated with Mr Smythe's own photographs, which are well taken and beautifully produced. A general map is supplied which, if hardly adequate to those who don't know the country, is better than none at all. This is not a book we would wish to turn to again and again, but it is a most enjoyable account of a care-free climbing holiday.

E. C. T.

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**The Highlands of Scotland.** By Hugh Quigley. Illustrated by Robert M. Adam.

The publication of a book containing 118 illustrations of Scottish Highland scenery by Robert Adam is an occasion for rejoicing among

members of the S.M.C. This is a book to possess and to browse over of a winter's evening. It will set many trains of thought wandering, and recall many happy days on the hills all over the country. The book is not easily readable throughout, but it is not meant for such treatment, and in any case it is the photographs that appeal so much to the lover of hills. One is bound to note that the amount of sunlight in the photographs is, of course, out of all proportion compared with actual experience. Mr Adam has so much time for photography that he has had perfect days in every part of the Highlands. Mist hardly ever appears in his pictures, and in only one—of Sgurr Alasdair—by no means one of his best, does it form the principal element in the picture. It is instructive to examine the foregrounds in his portraits of mountains and to cover them with a piece of paper and note the loss of effect. Of outstanding beauty in a wonderful collection are "Winter in Atholl," a study of Càrn Liath of Beinn a' Ghlo, "A Hilltop Panorama from the Summit of Bidean nam Bian," and "The Northern Corries of Ben Alder."

E. C. T.

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**The Collected Poems of Geoffrey Winthrop Young.**  
Methuen. 12s. 6d.

Many poets have been influenced profoundly by mountain scenery and grandeur and, indeed, it is difficult to understand why this is not universally the case. Whatever the reason, few readers of this *Journal* will question that true mountain love, Ruskin to the contrary notwithstanding, can only grow out of true mountain knowledge. And Mr Young is not only a poet but a skilled mountaineer of the most adventurous kind. His poetry is therefore especially precious to us. Most mountaineers will have read—in fact, will probably possess—"Wind and Hill," "Freedom," and "April and Rain," but these volumes have been out of print for too long, and this collected edition, in which there are a few more recent poems and one or two published for the first time, is very welcome.

Not all the poems are about the mountains, and of these that are not all are about mountaineering. But throughout the whole book there is the same spirit of communion with Nature, of youthful enthusiasm, and of a conviction of the ultimate good, which is very refreshing to the reader.

And who is there that will not find reassurance and comfort in the last stanza of the book :

"What if I live no more those kingly days ?  
Their night sleeps with me still.  
I dream my feet upon the starry ways ;  
My heart rests in the hill.  
I may not grudge the little left undone ;  
I hold the heights, I keep the dreams I won."

E. A. M. W.

**Rock-climbing and Mountaineering.** By Carl Brunning. Open Air Publications Ltd. 2s. 6d.

This little book prints the word "mountaineering" in smaller letters, and the emphasis is laid on rock climbing. Mountaineering cannot be treated successfully in this way, and the book would have been better if it had confined itself to rock climbing. Nevertheless, it should prove useful to beginners in intensive rock climbing of the Lake District type. One must comment on the unfortunate reference to the J.M.C.S. as the Junior Section of the S.M.C., and to the unintentional improvement in the title of the L.S.C.C.!

E. C. T.

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**Everest the Challenge.** By Sir Francis Younghusband. Published by Thomas Nelson & Sons Ltd. 12s. 6d. net.

Although the name implies that this book is only about Mount Everest, it also deals with general climbing in the Himalayas and the various expeditions which have been made. It is rather surprising to think that it was only in the nineties that expeditions to the tops of the Himalayan peaks were first considered, and that previous to that no one had thought of aspiring any higher than the passes.

Probably no author could have been found with such a long experience of the subject as Sir Francis Younghusband, President of the Geographical Society and formerly of the Mount Everest Committee, which is composed of representatives of that Society and of the Alpine Club.

A. H.

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**Wayfaring Round Scotland.** By B. H. Humble. Pp. 224, 8 illustrations. Herbert Jenkins. 2s. 6d.

This is essentially a book for the purpose of initiating the youth hosteler into the glorious hill country of Scotland. It shows him how to plan his journeys so as to link up the youth hostels by the most attractive hill routes. Occasionally, as in the chapters on the Isle of Mull, the hill country of Sutherland and the Shetlands, the author wanders into regions beyond reach of the present hostels. The book is simply and pleasantly written, and recalls many delightful days of wandering amongst the hills and glens. Some readers may wax critical over the author's interpretation of place names, and it is a pity that the text has not been more carefully revised in several matters of detail, as the heights of mountains and certain compass directions.

J. H. B. B.

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**Voyage de Saussure hors des Alpes,** par Charles Gos.

This is a chatty book commenting on those portions of Saussure's travels which took him via the Mont Cenis Pass to the Italian and

French Rivas, and later to the extinct volcanos of Provence. Climbers who have already taken an interest in the journeys of Saussure will appreciate this opportunity to follow him to the plains.  
E. C. T.

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**The Rucksack Club Journal, 1936, Vol. VIII., No. 2, Issue 30.**

This is a good number. There is a charming variety in the subjects dealt with, which range from a fantasy on moorland memories ("The Golden Journey," by F. M. Little) to the grimness of exploration in old mine workings ("Further Scratchings Underground," by S. F. Forrester). Besides an informative and useful article on the use of the rope by A. S. Pigott, there is another, "After the Accident," by Wilson Hey. Of special interest to northern readers is an essay on that Scottish *malaise* Munrovis by John Wilding, who also contributes some remarks on Liathach and the Cheviots. A lighter touch is provided in "Alpine Scholar" (P. E. Brockbank), in "Aneroids" (J. H. Doughty), and in "A Short Cut to Glen Brittle" (J. G. Dent) via Mallaig, Soay, and Rudh'an Dunain, which only took some thirty hours. The Club Portrait Gallery of personalities in their appropriate setting is a good feature. There are also numerous notes on new climbs in Wales. The photographs are on a very high standard.  
J. L. A.

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**Cambridge Mountaineering, 1936.**

This is a bright little journal, well printed and laid out. The illustrations mostly take the top-half of a page, the remainder of the page being left blank. The effect is very pleasing. There is an interesting article on the little-known Balkan Mountains, and our member, P. D. Baird, gives an account of the ascent of a rock peak in Greenland.  
E. C. T.

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**Ski Notes and Queries, No. 59, Vol. VII. (6), May 1936.**

This little journal is so full of ski-ing information from all over the world that it is bound to interest keen ski-ers and equally bound to bore anyone else.  
E. C. T.

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**Blodig's Alpine Calendar, 1937.** By Dr Karl Blodig. Blackwells, Oxford. 4s.

A collection of over 90 delightful Alpine photographs beautifully reproduced. This year five Scottish photographs are included of Loch Leven, Glencoe, Glenfinnan, and Skye. The composition and lighting of most of the photographs are really splendid.

J. H. B. B.

**The Cairngorm Journal, June 1936, Vol. XIV., No. 77.**

An enforced day of idleness provided the opportunity to read this number, and it says a lot for its readableness that I was kept interested throughout the best part of the day. The article by Mr McCoss on the Swiss ridge of the Matterhorn proved to be the most interesting contribution to a good number. It was noticeable that his unforced style and careful habit of observation conveyed a much more effective picture of mountain scenery than the more flowery and poetic wording of some of the other contributors. One must note with regret the passing of Mr Henry C. Dugan, whose beautiful photographs have brightened the pages of past numbers of *The Cairngorm Journal*. No review of this number would be complete without a word of special praise for the striking and effective picture entitled "Glen Derry," by G. R. Symmers. E. C. T.

**The Alpine Journal, May 1936.**

It is pleasant to find that the Zillerthal is not despised, and that two articles deal with this delightful district. Longland's description of the British East Greenland Expedition in the Watkins Mountains, and the ascent of Mount Steele by members of the Wood-Yukon Expedition are the most important articles, and "A Second Caucasian Tramp" is the most entertaining. Shipton's article on the Mount Everest Reconnaissance 1935, and Lawder's attempt on Istor-o-Nal should both rather be read in the versions appearing in *The Himalayan Journal, 1936*, which supplies good sketch maps of both districts. The "In Memoriam" notices invariably form one of the most interesting sections of *The Alpine Journal*, and in this issue the notices on Naismith and Henry Cockburn are of special interest to members of the S.M.C. E. C. T.

**Mountaineering Journal.**

This Journal is technically a professional journal, but in criticising it one should remember that in actual fact it is a labour of love to its enthusiastic and, at heart, very amateur editors. They keep an open mind to all aspects of mountaineering from mountain botany to summer ski-ing, and the most modern manifestations of the Bavarian mechanical acrobats. This being so, it is to be regretted that in Vol. IV., No. 2, they should have produced a whole number consisting of six articles all of the trekking tourist type. The Cairngorm article has been very carelessly edited. The article on the mountains of Basutoland is the only one that manages to convey a sense of enthusiasm to the reader. The latter article is further

helped by photographs which, though inartistic, give a good constructive idea of the country.

No. 3 of the same volume is well varied in its subject-matter. There is a good little article on summer ski-ing, and an interesting and well-illustrated one on the mountains of Greece. A guide-book article on Almscliff Crag should be of use to local rock scramblers. "The Wind's Will" and "Rock Climbing: How I took it up," however, introduce an element of cheap journalism. The article on the first winter ascent of the South-East Schuessel Kar Wall is interesting in spite of careless editing and its sensational style. It is noteworthy that these gymnasts found the "far easier descent on the west side of the mountain" quite impassable, and had to descend by the way they had come up, "with the same difficulties, the same dangers at every turn!"

E. C. T.

**Yorkshire Ramblers' Club Journal, Vol. VI., No. 22.**

This pleasant number has several articles of interest to Scottish climbers, especially one on Sutherland by the Editor. As caving is the favourite pursuit of the Ramblers, it is interesting to notice that the Cambrian limestone of Sutherland furnishes the Cave of Smoo' at Durness and five others near Inchnadamph, all of them awaiting thorough exploration. The Gingling Hole accident is a thrilling story of cave rescue work. Other articles of interest are on the Lepontine Alps, the Yorkshire Hills, Irish and other Caves.

J. H. B. B.

**Journal of the Fell and Rock C.C., Vol. X., No. 29.**

This is a beautifully illustrated volume of about 120 pages. The articles range from the Lakes and Wales to Scotland, the Alps, and the Himalaya. John Hunt writes interestingly of the Karakoram. Miss Brenda Ritchie tells of an exciting holiday in the Dauphiné. C. F. Holland is reminiscent of rock climbing in the Dolomites. A. D. B. Side gives a useful account of a Pyrenean tour. There is a long article by E. W. Hodge on the Historical Attitude towards Mountains and Rocks. On the technical side A. T. Hargreaves treats of Rope Management and Wilson Hey of Mountain Rescue Work. The Club is very active, and the Journal concludes with a portfolio of excellent photographs of the Arolla Meet.

J. H. B. B.

## THE JUNIOR MOUNTAINEERING CLUB OF SCOTLAND.

### THE FIRST TEN YEARS.

AT the New Year Meet at Killin in 1936 the J.M.C.S. may be said to have celebrated its tenth birthday, so that it is fitting that we should have a record of these years. The founding of the Club has already been described, and there has also been a resumé of its activities during the first five years.\*

Now for statistics—the original membership was: Glasgow 9, Edinburgh 34, and Perth 11 (though Perth Section was formed later than the other two). The present figures are 72, 48, and 31. During the ten-year period the number of J.M.C.S. members who have qualified for the S.M.C. is 87, made up of 48 from Glasgow, 32 from Edinburgh, and 7 from Perth, and these constitute approximately two-thirds of the new members who have joined the S.M.C. over that period. It is worth quoting the words of the late George Sang in 1929: “So long as we have the J.M.C.S. feeding the senior body with such excellent material, we may face the future with confidence that our traditions will be capably upheld.” †

The three sections meet together at New Year time, the largest attendance being 58 at Loch Awe in 1931. To members who have never attended our Joint Meet we say: “Is it fair to receive all the privileges of the Club and fail to support this, the Club’s chief meeting?” If you cannot afford a hotel then stay at a cottage or a hostel nearby. But do attend, and as soon after your election as possible; you will come again.

Each section has its own Easter and Autumn Meets and informal monthly Meets throughout the year. The main training-ground for the Glasgow Section is at Arrochar, though the rocks of the Whangie have often

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\* *S.M.C. Journal*, Vol. XIX., No. 110, p. 197.

† *S.M.C. Journal*, Vol. XIX., No. 109, p. 93.



*April 1936*

THE SUNLIT RIDGE, NA GRUAGAICHEAN

*B. H. Humble*

been scratched by the hob-nailed boots of certain enthusiasts. Edinburgh has the Salisbury Crags at its doorstep, but, as no climbing is permitted after 8 A.M., it is only a place for early risers. Perth has discovered a new climbing ground on Meall Dubh in Glen Almond.

There are more cars in the Club now than formerly, so that members go farther afield at week-ends. The "Central Highlands Guide Book" proved a great incentive, and most of the climbs therein have been done, including the Church Door Buttress, the Chasm, and the Rannoch Wall. Even in midwinter the upper ice couloir of Stob Ghabhar has been done in one day from Glasgow. The C.I.C. Hut has been very popular, and some members shared pioneer climbs with G. G. MacPhee. Skye sees many of us in the summer months, and most of the climbs in the "Guide Book" have been done. In June 1935 J. F. Hamilton was one of a party who did the Coolin Main Ridge from Glen Brittle back to Glen Brittle in 22½ hours.

The Cairngorms have not been so popular as Glencoe, but J.M.C.S. men took part in the first ascent of the Mitre Ridge of Beinn a' Bhuid, and made a new route up the Braeriach Pinnacle, while certain stalwarts brought in the New Year in 1935 and 1936 under the Shelter Stone of Loch Avon. Very many good expeditions go unnoted, but the records show that all climbing areas in Scotland have been explored, not a week-end passing from January to December without some of our members going to the hills.

Abroad, our members have climbed in the Alps—the Bernese Oberland, the Pyrenees, and the Jotunheim of Norway, while Marjoribanks of the Edinburgh Section claims to have started the J.M.C.S. (Pekin Branch), doing his climbing in Upper Mongolia at week-ends!

During the winter months the Edinburgh and Glasgow Sections each hold monthly indoor meetings. Edinburgh has the privilege of using the S.M.C. club-rooms for these meetings, while Glasgow relies on the generosity of individual members (though special occasions involve the booking of a small hall). Some of us think that it would

be well worth while to have a small club-room for use of Glasgow J.M.C.S. and Glasgow members of S.M.C., whose combined membership will be around 200.

Let us record our thanks to the S.M.C., who have never failed us when in search of speakers. The late W. W. Naismith and Gilbert Thomson have told us of pioneering days. H. MacRobert's cinema films have often enthralled us. J. A. Parker and A. E. Robertson, conquerors of all the Munros, have told us their stories and shown us their slides, while G. G. MacPhee has come from Liverpool to be of service to us. Apart from those on Scottish districts, other talks (all illustrated) included Development of Climbing Technique from Scottish to Alpine Peaks (J. H. B. Bell), Bernese Oberland (A. G. Hutchison), Austrian Tyrol and Dolomites (E. C. Thomson), Psychology of Climbing (Thouless), Austria-Bavarian Alps (Dr Waldman Ernst), Jotunheim of Norway (G. R. Roxburgh), and lectures on the Arctic Expedition to Spitzbergen and on Mountaineering in South Africa. A good many of our talks have been given by members or former members. Maybe the time will come when some one trained in our Club will tell us of the conquest of Everest!

The J.M.C.S. might well claim that no Mountaineering Club in all the world can provide such facilities for such a modest sum as 7s. 6d. per year. In 1936 the Glasgow Section made a precedent by printing a syllabus of the year's activities. For a 7s. 6d. subscription each member obtains the joy of attending Club Meets (often including a lift to the hills), comradeship on the hills, and, where necessary, the advice and leadership of experienced members (J.M.C.S. or S.M.C.), two issues of the *S.M.C. Journal* (which would cost 2s. 6d. each if bought in a shop), the privilege of using the C.I.C. Hut at reduced terms, the right to attend six winter lectures (with a free tea thrown in), access to their own library of all the latest mountaineering books, to say nothing of such side lines as the Photographic Competition and the weekly luncheon meeting (this lunch is not free). Edinburgh has similar activities, but does not run a photo-

graphic competition, and does not require a library as they can consult books in S.M.C. library during meetings. The Perth Section, bar their annual meeting, have no winter lectures, and have no library except a set of S.M.C. "Guide Books."

What of the future? Up till now men have joined our Club, and then one of three things happens. They stay with us for a year or two and then go up to the S.M.C. They drop out either from lack of enthusiasm (some have even degenerated into golfers) or from business taking them abroad.

Now the membership requirements of the S.M.C. have been much stiffened, and last year out of 11 applying for membership only 5 had good enough qualifications. This must inevitably lead to men staying in the J.M.C.S. for a longer time, and will certainly result in a higher standard of climbing in our Club. That is all to the good, and will foster the Club spirit. Already some members who have gone up to the S.M.C. have asked to be allowed to attend our meetings and receive our literature, so that we have admitted them as "adherents of the J.M.C.S." for a nominal yearly subscription.

A club such as ours includes members from the veriest novices to those with very extensive qualifications, but at the present moment we are proud to state that the J.M.C.S. can, and does, provide the opportunity and the comrades for summer or winter climbs of any standard in Scotland.

When members can leave business at 1 P.M. on a Saturday and be fit and ready to start again on the Monday morning after such climbs as the Gardyloo Gully of Ben Nevis, Crowberry Gully of Buachaille Etive Mor and even the more distant Braeriach Pinnacle and the Braeriach-Cairn Toul Ridge walk (all done under winter conditions this year); when members can make a new route up the Rannoch Wall, and when a new member who had just started rock climbing and was on his first visit to Skye, can leave Glasgow at 4 P.M. on a Friday night, reach a climbing camp at Glen Brittle before midnight, rest for an hour or two, and be on the top of A' Cioch by 5 A.M. on the Saturday, there can be no doubt whatever

as to the health of the J.M.C.S. nor of the quality of the recruits it attracts.

Let us record our thanks to the founders, Rusk, Hutchison, Rutherford, and Bartholomew, and to the S.M.C., who have at all times given us help and encouragement, and have allowed us so much space in their *Journal* to record our doings.

## THE JUNIOR MOUNTAINEERING CLUB OF SCOTLAND.

### EDINBURGH SECTION.

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#### EASTER MEET, 18TH TO 20TH APRIL 1936, AT LOCH OSSIAN YOUTH HOSTEL.

*Present.*—J. K. Annand, D. R. Kilgour, F. A. W. Kohler, G. Peat, R. Stalker, and F. C. Yeaman.

The weather throughout the week-end was favourable for climbing, being cold and clear, with occasional snow showers. The clear atmosphere made the views from the tops the most noteworthy feature of the Meet. The hostel is delightfully situated, but is rather far from the chief mountains of the district. Unfortunately the attendance was rather disappointing.

*Saturday, 18th April.*—Kohler and Peat travelled from Edinburgh by the early morning train. At Corroun they were joined by Stalker, who had arrived the previous evening. All three did Stob Coire Easain and Stob a' Choire Mheadhoin, finding the route round the head of Loch Trieg considerably lengthened since the raising of the water-level of the loch. Yeaman, Annand, and Kilgour arrived by the evening train, the last two having climbed Clachlet *en route* to the Meet.

*Sunday, 19th April.*—This was another fine day, and a mass attack was made on the Ben Alder group. Kilgour, Peat, and Yeaman proceeded up the glen of the Uisge Labhrach and thence up the south-westerly slopes of Ben Alder. Some difficulty was experienced in locating the cairn on the summit plateau owing to a short but severe snowstorm. After descending to the Bealach Dubh the party climbed Geal Charn, continued along the ridge over Aonach Beag and Beinn Eibhinn, and down to Corroun Lodge. Stalker and Kohler did the same tops in the reverse direction, and in addition visited the top of Lancet Edge. Both parties found the glen of the Uisge Labhrach very rough going. Annand climbed Sgor Gaibhre and Carn Dearg.

*Monday, 20th April.*—After the previous day's strenuous efforts the morning was spent in disposing of the surplus food. Every one went home by the afternoon train. A. F. DOWN.

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INFORMAL MEET, 15TH TO 18TH MAY, AT  
CLACHAIG INN.

*Present.*—I. H. Ogilvie (S.M.C.), Hon. Pres., A. F. Down, J. B. Home, J. W. Glen, C. C. Gorrie, T. N. Ritchie, R. Stalker, and G. Poole and R. Down (guests).

*Friday, 15th May.*—Ogilvie and Gorrie arrived at Coupal Bridge at 12 noon, and succeeded in floating their tent between showers. They then proceeded to climb Buachaille Etive Mor by "D" Gully Buttress, a short but enjoyable climb. They descended amid showers of presidential stones by the Curved Ridge.

*Saturday, 16th May,* dawned exceedingly wet. Ogilvie and Gorrie were eventually driven out of their tent by hunger. Having fed, they set off and established Camp II.—at Clachaig. There they were joined in the evening by Poole, Home, Glen, Ritchie, Stalker, and the brothers Down.

*Sunday, 17th May.*—After a dreadful night Sunday dawned wet and windy. Poole and Gorrie set off first, and made for the west face of Aonach Dubh. When the rest of the Meet had panted up the steep slopes, they were on the Dinner-Time Buttress, having scaled "B" Buttress and descended the gully between the two. Home, Glen, Alastair Down, and Ritchie tackled "B" Buttress on two ropes. This buttress is, apart from two good pitches, loose and messy. Ogilvie and Ronald Down climbed "C" Buttress, and were followed, for the lower pitches only, by Poole and Gorrie, who had picked up Stalker. The rain had by this time reduced to a glutinous mass the shorts of the gentleman who is so famous for his swimming tactics on wet pitches. The Honorary President cleaned up the Meet by going home.

*Monday, 18th May.*—The rain was as bad as ever, and the Downs' car providentially refusing to start, the morning was spent playing a strenuous game of "Peggy." The afternoon was spent by the entire Meet doing some excellent gymnastics on a fine buttress about 100 feet high to the north of the main road at the Study. This buttress is worth remembering as a stop-gap when the weather is impossible, and it provides excellent practice with a rope from above.

Everybody returned to Edinburgh in the evening, and, in spite of the foul weather, the week-end was voted highly successful. A word of praise for the Clachaig Inn, which is now in the hands of Mr Fairlie, of Dalmally Hotel. It is improved beyond all recognition, and is to be thoroughly recommended as a clean, comfortable climbing centre.

A. F. DOWN.

GLASGOW SECTION.

EASTER MEET AT KINLOCHLEVEN, 11TH TO 13TH APRIL.

*Members.*—D. L. Campbell, J. K. W. Dunn, R. S. Higgins, B. H. Humble, J. N. Ledingham, C. K. Lewis, S. W. Laidlaw, A. M. Macalpine, W. M. Mackenzie, T. D. Mackinnon, W. MacLellan, J. J. Murray, W. H. Murray, A. M. Smith, R. D. Walton.  
*S.M.C.*—K. K. Hunter.

*Guest.*—J. B. Russell.

*Saturday, 11th.*—A glorious day. Dunn, W. C. Murray, Walton, Hunter, and Russell climbed Binnein Mor, Na Gruagaichean, and Stob Coire a' Chairn. Lewis and Murray arrived in the evening, having climbed the twin tops of Beinn a' Bheithir. Laidlaw was on Am Bodach after walking across from Glencoe, where he had been exploring Buachaille Etive the previous day. Campbell and Smith arrived from Mull where they had had a week of clear air and sunshine. Their bronzed faces caused a stir and not a little envy. Humble travelled north with the early morning train and spent the day on Nevis. This mountain was busy, there being sixteen tents at Lochan Meall an t' Suidhe, one by the Allt a' Mhuillin, and one on the summit. At the same time he saw one party finishing the Tower Ridge climb, another crossing the Tower Gap, another on the Eastern Traverse, and yet another at the foot of the Great Tower. At 4.30 there were thirty-six people on the plateau, and parties were still arriving, or, to put it briefly, climbers, mostly English, were constantly popping over the Tower Ridge like corks out of a bottle.

*Sunday.*—Dull in early morning, but cleared up afterwards with magnificent views of snow-capped ridges and skylines to attract photographers. All parties made for the Mamores and were constantly encountering each other; at one time there was almost a section meeting on the slopes of Am Bodach.

Campbell, Laidlaw, Lewis, M'Lellan, J. J. Murray, and Smith climbed Stob Coire a' Chairn, going up past Mamore Lodge. They continued to Am Bodach to join Walton at the cairn, where Humble was found asleep in the glorious sunshine awaiting the arrival of Mackinnon and Mackenzie, with whom he was travelling in the opposite direction. On the way to Sgor an Iubhair some time was spent practising standing glissades and contouring steep snow slopes. The Devil's Ridge led over Stob Coire a' Mhail to Sgurr a' Mhaim. Here Dunn, MacAlpine, and Russell were resting and enjoying extensive views. They had already climbed Stob Ban. The first party had a glissade of about 1,000 feet on the south-west slope and then proceeded round to the steep rocks of Stob Ban. Campbell and Murray descended on steep hard snow to the foot of the broad gully west of the Central Buttress. The angle was easy, but steps had to be

cut throughout. The exit gave uncomfortable climbing on loose stones and frozen mud. The party reassembled on the top and descended the south slopes to the private road.

Ledingham arrived late, set out after the above party, but in the wrong direction. He climbed Na Gruagaichean and Stob Coire a' Chairn where he met Mackenzie, Mackinnon, and Humble, and devoured some of their sandwiches. He then had energy to go over the two tops of An Garbhanach with the first two.

Higgins and W. H. Murray did Stob Ban, Am Bodach, Stob Coire a' Chairn, Na Gruagaichean, and Binnein Mor. Descending to the road they found the job of starting their motor cycle more difficult than climbing the mountains. Ultimately the problem was solved by the arrival of the President and others, who helped to push the much-abused machine.

Mackenzie and Mackinnon travelled to Fort William on the Saturday night and joined Humble there. The greatest feat of the Meet was achieved when this party induced the Commercial Hotel to serve breakfast at 4.30 A.M. on the Sunday morning. Starting up Glen Nevis at 5 A.M. in driving sleet they reached Mullach nan Coirean by 8 A.M. and continued along the ridge. Humble, after climbing Stob Ban twice (the second time to recover a camera left on the summit), could not be induced to leave the main ridge for Sgurr a' Mhaim, but acted as traffic director to the numerous parties traversing the ridges till Binnein Mor was reached.

Mackinnon and Mackenzie indulged in an orgy of peak bagging by covering the entire sixteen tops of the Mamore range, finishing at Kinlochleven at 9.45 P.M.

*Monday, 13th.*—The glass had fallen a little and the east wind brought flurries of snow.

Ledingham, Lewis, and Murray climbed Na Gruagaichean and found the ridge to Binnein Mor very impressive in mist. Fortunately, it cleared when the summit was reached, and a very fast glissade was experienced, not without using all methods, standing, sitting, and head first. Contouring left to the Saddle Ledingham continued to Binnein Beg, and later joined Lewis and Murray on Sgurr Eilde Mor.

MacLellan and Lewis reported a good day on the Aonach Eagach ridge.

Campbell, Humble, Mackenzie, Mackinnon, and Smith had a delightful day on Beinn a' Bheithir, where the views of sparkling lochs and western seas contrasted with the surfeit of Munros of the previous day.

A. D. Stewart had a quiet holiday at lower levels, and enjoyed walking the numerous hill paths.

All left for Glasgow in the evening except Walton, who intended exploring some of the hill paths for a few days.

Kinlochleven was a new base for the Section. Climbing conditions and the number of members present were easily the best for many years.

T. D. M.

FAIR MEET AT C.I.C. HUT, 17TH TO 20TH JULY.

*Members.*—Alex. Laidlaw and W. H. Murray.

Rumour had it that six members had arranged to attend, but Laidlaw, who arrived on the Friday, held solitary state till the Sunday. He climbed Carn Mor Dearg on the Saturday and enjoyed magnificent weather.

*Sunday.*—Under the most adverse conditions of rain, mist, and utter darkness, Murray succeeded in forcing a new route from the Distillery to the Hut. Although no beckoning light shone from its windows the snores of its occupant provided a sure and sufficient guide for the final few hundred feet.

The Meet was a small one. Nevertheless, it was resolved that the best traditions of the Club should be rigidly upheld, and no move was therefore made until noon. By this time thick mist had reinforced the notorious Nevis drizzle; yet, somehow or other, the Meet awoke to find itself struggling in the initial chimney on the north-west face of the Douglas Boulder. The subsequent march up the Tower Ridge was devoid of incident, and some time later the Meet consumed a sodden lunch in the observatory.

*Monday.*—Murray returned to Glasgow while Laidlaw made a second ascent of the Tower Ridge in company of Wood (Tricouni Club), and then set off over the sea to Skye. W. H. M.

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INFORMAL MEETS.

ARROCHAR, 24TH FEBRUARY.

A magnificent day—some say the best they have ever had at Arrochar. About twenty-five members were present, and the iced condition of the rocks and hard, frozen snow slopes made usually easy places quite difficult. Two parties traversed the South Peak of the Cobbler and recorded their climb on a cine-camera. Another party had a hard struggle in the Jammed-Block chimney of Narnain, where it seemed as if they might be frozen into the narrow exit, while others disported themselves on Ben Ime.

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KINGSHOUSE, GLENCOE, 8TH MARCH.

Twelve members and one guest were present. Scott, Anderson, and Bennett did a first-rate climb in the Crowberry Gully.

The President and Lewis ascended the centre gully of Sron na Creise, while a party of eight had a long day on the Aonach Eagach ridge. They will not forget the supper (or was it breakfast?) in Kingshouse Inn at 1 A.M. the next morning.

## COUPAL BRIDGE, GLENCOE, 16TH TO 18TH MAY.

This was a Meet of records: first, a record number of tents were sprinkled down Glen Etive like a growth of mushrooms appearing overnight; second, the rainfall was a record for the year, being continuous for two days and two nights; third, the amount of climbing done which mainly consisted of crawling in and out of tents.

Two members arrived on the Friday night and attended a clay pigeon shoot on the Saturday. By that night ten tents had taken root, and the Meet adjourned to Kingshouse Inn to make plans for the morrow.

*Sunday.*—Heavy rain continued and washed in the President. Various reconnoitring parties reported all still present, and all determined to stay as they were. Latterly the President took a party to Ben Nevis, having the strange idea that there would be better weather up there. Most members returned home that night. On the Monday the President's search for better weather led him all alone up Beinn Dubhcraig, while the Honorary President closed the Meet by taking a party up the Curved Ridge of Buachaille Etive Mor.

The large attendance gives promise that camping Meets will be a great success in better weather.

## ARROCHAR, 14TH JUNE.

A large party preferred the C.I.C. Hut, so that this Meet was poorly attended. Five climbed Narnain in drenching rain and high wind. The President and Houston did the Spearhead Arête. The other three ventured into the Jammed-Block chimney, where they were met with great blasts of sheeted rain. They promptly came out again.

T. D. M.

AUTUMN MEET—KINGSHOUSE, 26TH TO 28TH  
SEPTEMBER 1936.

*Members.*—The President, W. Bennett, H. Hamilton, C. Henderson, B. Humble, —. Laidlaw, A. MacAlpine, T. D. Mackinnon, W. Murray, D. Scott, A. D. Stewart, Walton.

*Saturday.*—Bennett and Stewart ascended the Curved Ridge and descended in the vicinity of the Chasm. Walton had a pleasant journey over Sron na Creise, Stob a' Ghlais Coire, Creise, Meall a' Bhuiridh.

The camping-ground situation was excellent, due to the proximity of the hotel. Henderson, Humble, and Mackinnon, who arrived in rain and darkness, intruded into the privacy of the residents, who each occupied a tent, and insisted on sleeping room.

*Sunday.*—Dawn broke wet, and a strong biting wind was experienced on the ridges until the late afternoon. Stewart had a solo walk over all the tops of Buachaille Etive Bheag, returning by the Glen Etive road.

Three parties, J. J. Murray and Laidlaw, Bennett and Walton, and Mackinnon and Humble, had a windy passage up the Crowberry Ridge by the easy variation. Bennett, Laidlaw, and Murray then inspected the Chasm, while Humble, Mackinnon, and Walton wandered along the ridge to Stob na Doire, basking in the sunshine of the late afternoon and admiring the attractive skylscapes to the west.

Scott, Murray, MacAlpine, and Henderson forced a new route on Central Buttress. Not content with this they finished with the Crowberry Ridge direct.

*Monday.*—Hard frost was the cause of a comparatively early start. J. J. Murray, Laidlaw, Walton, and Bennett climbed “D” Gully Buttress. Humble and Stewart sported themselves half-way up the Curved Ridge and brightened the depths of the Rannoch Wall with encouraging remarks for Mackinnon, W. Murray, and Henderson, who had a marvellous climb on Agag’s Groove, which they heartily agreed was the best on the Buachaille.

The President’s party left early for home, while Bennett and Humble made two ascents to Abraham’s Ledge for photographic purposes and practice in “abseiling.”

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## PERTH SECTION.

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Mr J. S. Kilpatrick writes:—

“There is not much to report, unfortunately. We were out on 19th January on Ben More and Stobinian. *Present*—Andrews and Cram (S.M.C.), Baxter, Dickson, Gardiner, Grant, Kilpatrick, and Penny. The ascent was made from Glen Dochart in rain and mist above 1,500 feet.

“On 17th May there was a Meet at Glen Isla. *Present*—Barker, Cram, M’Intyre (S.M.C.), and Gardiner, Grant, and Kilpatrick. The day was wet, with sleet on the higher ground. There was some scrambling in a gully at the top of the glen, the ascent of the pinnacle, and then progress to Tombuie and Tolmount. All but the last two made a difficult gully descent, finishing in darkness.

“More activity is expected this winter.”

# Scottish Mountaineering Club.

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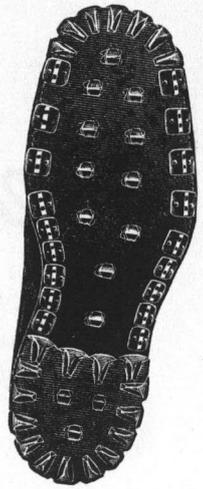
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