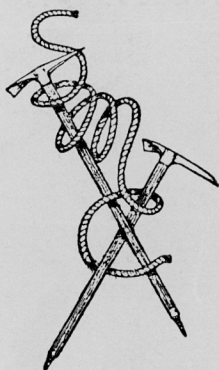


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THE LAST TWENTY-FIVE YEARS

By W. H. Murray

ONE of the foremost objects of the S.M.C., as set down for posterity in the constitution, is 'to encourage mountaineering in Scotland.' There are many ways in which we do this, through the Journal, the publication of guides under sixteen titles, the maintenance of huts and rooms, libraries and slides, and by meetings, but the prime test of success or otherwise is to look at the record of our own members' climbing during the twenty-five years since our Jubilee.

In our Jubilee year, two men who contributed most powerfully to the Club's climbing history were Dr J. H. B. Bell and Dr Graham Macphee. Their example and influence extended strongly into the next twenty-five years. Macphee's climbs on Nevis, reported in the *Journal* under Bell's editorship—especially his ice-climb on Glover's Chimney—did much to spark off hard winter climbing as a major development. It seems ironical that Macphee, a superb mountaineer, who did so much to found a rescue service in Scotland, should have been killed on so easy a mountain as the Pico de Teide on Tenerife. His recent Presidency came at the climax to a lifetime's enthusiasm for rock, snow, and ice. The Club has suffered great loss by his death.

It fell to Dr Bell to open the Club's innings in the new quarter-century. In 1940 he brought his own contributions to Scottish mountaineering to a splendid climax with his Long Climb, thus completing his Orion routes on Nevis.

The second war failed to engulf mountaineering like the first. Climbing continued and some splendid routes were made: Hamish Hamilton's South Ridge of Rosa Pinnacle, Bell's direct route on Eagle Ridge of Lochnagar, and Brian Kellet's Gardyloo Buttress and

Minus Two Buttress. Naturally, there were no big developments. The war ended. The next five years showed intense activity in Glencoe, but the climbs were not remarkable in any historical sense, being variations on a theme first played in the 'thirties. Rannoch Wall was plastered with excellent short routes, first by the J.M.C.S., then by the Creag Dhu. Climbing standards were sharply rising in 1945-50, producing such advanced routes as Guerdon Grooves by Cunningham of the Creag Dhu, but the real pay-off was still to come. The new generation was at work, but the fruits were still ripening.

Then came 1950. The next decade—call it twelve years—was among the most eventful in the whole tale of Scottish climbing, most of the work being done by our own members or by men shortly to become members.

History is made by individual men, small in number, who have ideas and the vigour to carry them into effect, often in defiance of mass opinion. So it is too in mountaineering. It seems amusing now that in the nineteen-thirties, when Mackenzie, Dunn, MacAlpine and I were trying new ice-climbs like Garrick's Shelf in winter, we were damned in official letters from the J.M.C.S. for bringing Scottish climbing into disrepute—that is, by trying climbs that were not thought justifiable. Indeed, when I first produced my slater's hammer, which we used on high-angle ice, it was denounced as exhibitionism. People had no idea what the new techniques were, or what kind of climbing we were doing. Nowadays, no such mistakes are made. To return to more recent history, I think it invidious to name names, when so many excellent climbs and climbers must be omitted from the record for clarity's sake, but I shall and must name leaders.

The first sign of great developments came in 1949 with the appearance in the north of a cloud (no bigger than a man's hand), which rose like a haar out of Aberdeen. Reclining, as yet like cherubs on its snowy lining, were Bill Brooker and Tom Patey. Brooker led off on Lochnagar with his Black Spout Pinnacle climbs and Giant's Head. Patey followed next year with his first ascent in winter of Douglas Gully. The 200-foot pitch at the top was a monster. I had thought till then that I knew all about ice-climbing, and was duly shaken.

A spate of great winter routes followed, not only by Patey and Brooker but by a growing number of fine climbers inspired by their example: Scorpion of Carn Etchachan by Patey, Nicol and Grassick, Eagle Ridge by Patey, Brooker, and Taylor, Polyphemus Gully—like two Comb Gullies of Nevis piled on top of each other—

by Ken Grassick, Parallel Buttress by Patey, Brooker and Smith, the Sticil Face of Shelter Stone Crag by Grassick and Nicol, the Labyrinth of Creag an Dubh Loch by Ron Sellars. These and a score of others were done in eight winters.

They were backed by a mass of summer routes, made all over the Cairngorms by Patey, Taylor, Hay, Grassick, Nicol, Sellars, Jerry Smith : climbs like Crimson Slabs of Etchachan, the Citadel of Shelter Stone Crag, Parallel Gully B—until there were more climbs in the Cairngorms than in Skye. Skye was not neglected. In 1951, Brooker with Mike Dixon went to the Coireachan Ruadha face of Sgùrr MhicCoinnich and made the Crack of Dawn on Fluted Buttress, which ranks with his Dawn Grooves of 1958, and with King Cobra made in 1960 by Patey and Bonington, as one of the hardest climbs in Skye.

The fine technique developed in the Cairngorms was carried to Nevis for a very great occasion—the first winter ascent of Zero Gully in 1956. Zero was a big break-through in Nevis climbing. I had often reconnoitred Point Five and Zero before the war. Mackenzie and I had felt confident that Point Five would go when conditions were right, and only the war stopped us from trying. But I never thought Zero would go. The big, green ice overhangs looked too savage. This notion seemed to me confirmed when good English parties fell out of both gullies in the early 'fifties. The ascent by Patey, McInnes, and Nicol in only five hours was a truly great achievement in the history of ice-climbing.

Patey's forays into Lochaber, when he snatched several big prizes on Creag Meaghaidh as well as Nevis, had one amusing sequel. Another cloud had appeared on Scottish skies. To Aberdonian eyes its lining was black as night, for it rose out of Auld Reekie and bore a demon named Jimmy Marshall. He had already disembarked to load cargo in Glencoe—Dalness Chasm's centre fork, a thousand-foot V.S., and others on Buachaille and Bidean. With Dougal Haston and Stenhouse, he had made winter routes of high standard on Nevis. Then, in the winter of '58, his cloud ghosted north-east. Under its cover, he and Graham Tiso plucked that great and icy plum of Lochnagar, Parallel Gully B : truly one of the great climbs of the decade. Other fine fruits fell to him in February 1959 on the Pinnacle Buttress of Creag Meaghaidh, when with Tiso he climbed Smith's Gully, a runnel of ice 550 feet high, and then with Stenhouse and Haston climbed the 1959 Face Route (nearly 1000 feet).

From 1955 onwards, the Edinburgh School had been emerging strongly as a dominant force in Scottish climbing. Their most

important product was Robin Smith. Aged 18, he first appears with new routes in 1957. His record opens with thirteen *very severes* in a row. He gave us more than thirty new climbs before his death, all hard. Outstanding among his routes in Skye was Thunder Rib, a climb of 1000 feet in Coire Tairneilear, less exacting than his better mainland routes mentioned hereafter.

Among the great winter climbs done by this group were the Orion Face, and the Tower Face of the Comb, both by Smith and Holt; Minus Two Gully by Marshall, Stenhouse, and Haston; and then, in one tremendous burst in the winter of 1960, Robin Smith and Marshall did Gardyloo Buttress, the Comb, the Orion Face, and finally, the second ascent of Point Five Gully. Point Five had been done the year before by Ian Clough and others in five days using 900 feet of rope—a *tour de force* unique in the U.K. When I wrote *Mountaineering in Scotland* in the innocent days of 1944, I had said: 'The ascent of this gully will be the most brilliant feat in the history of Scottish mountaineering.' The second ascent by Marshall and Smith in seven hours was a most astonishing demonstration of technique and pace.

In summer rock-climbing, a most important development of the last decade has been on Nevis—the finding of ways through the great overhangs and overlapping slabs of Càrn Dearg Buttress. The tremendous possibilities were revealed by Joe Brown and Don Whillans in '54 when they made Sassenach. In '56, Don Whillans followed up with Centurion and the Shield—long magnificent routes. These were of immense importance. They set examples, destined to give us many other great climbs by our own members. Equally important had been the example set by John Cunningham of the Creag Dhu, who inspired our climbers to realise the potential of rocks in the west.

The Edinburgh school had been putting up summer rock-climbs all over Scotland. Now they got to work on the Càrn Dearg climbs. In 1959, Robin Smith, Holt, Haston, and Marshall gave us The Bat, a magnificent climb running up the buttress between Sassenach and Centurion, superior to its famous neighbours in its combination of situation and severity. This work required the most modern techniques and toughness in using them. Marshall and Stenhouse followed in '61 with Bullroar, a grand route of classic V.S. standard.

The hardest climbs made in recent years are the Glencoe long routes: Robin Smith's Shibboleth on the North Buttress of Buachaille, whose formidable line goes up the centre of Slime Wall; Kneepad on the nose of Geàrr Aonach, by Haston, Moriarty, and

Marshall; Robin Smith's Yo-Yo on Aonach Dubh North Face; and on the West Face, Hee-haw by Moriarty and Haston, Big Top by Smith, and Trapeze by Marshall and Derek Leaver. These, and a few others like them such as Carnivore by the C.D.M.C., are between three and six hundred feet high and thought to be not only a grade more difficult than Sassenach and Centurion, but no less elegant.

J. R. Marshall writes: 'It is this quality which is the surprising product of the modern age, that the routes penetrate the great "impossible walls" by tenuous thread-like weaknesses, inducing the greatest concentration on route-finding and technique, with a commensurate heightening of the appreciative senses. Completion of one of these great routes is somewhat akin to the sensations of emerging from the 'engulfment' by a great piece of music or painting.'

On the fringe of this Festival, other high-spirited things were being done. Glasgow climbers had helped to open up the two-mile cliffs of Ben Lair in '51. In '54, Raven's Gully was at last done in winter by the Lone Wolf of Glencoe, Hamish McInnes, backed by a young member of the J.M.C.S., a promising lad, who has not yet felt himself ready to join the S.M.C. His name was Chris Bonington. Then came Ian Clough. Clough arrived in 1957 with a quite modest mutter of thunder over Stac Polly. Thereafter routes poured out of him like a cloudburst—at least forty in 1959, if not more—including Point Five Gully, Titan's Wall and Orgy, both on Càrn Dearg Buttress, Astronomy on North-east Buttress of Nevis: V.S. routes of great length, from a great mountaineer.

A phenomenal feature of Scottish climbing in recent years has been the deluge of new routes by Tom Patey. Nothing like his output (reminiscent of Dr Bell in his heyday), so long sustained in such volume, has before been seen in the history of this Club or of Scottish climbing.

Throughout the period reviewed, all the advances in the technique of summer rock have come into Scotland from England. That was true before the war, and has been true since. The distinctive contribution made by Scotland to British climbing is on ice and on snow- and ice-bound rock. The leading part in that work has been taken by our own members. The men who have done most to shape the recent history of Scottish climbing have been Tom Patey, Jimmy Marshall, and Robin Smith, not only for the climbs they've done themselves, but the great influence they have had on others.

Since the days when Macphee, Bell, Mackenzie, and myself were making ice-routes in West Scotland, standards have soared. This

shows at first not so much in *what* is done as in the pace at which it is done; not so much in changes of technique, of which there are several, as in confidence. All of us who have done long new routes know how greatly the times can be reduced on a second ascent. Psychological barriers are down. Hesitations gone. We know what is wanted and do it faster. The same thing applies from one generation to another—as we have seen it happen in Scottish winter climbing. It will happen again—a sobering thought. The shape of things to come has been forecast by Marshall on the Orion Face. As technique and confidence take another jump forward, we'll see the mounting of attack in winter on great faces and buttresses like the Càrn Dearg Buttress.

In the Alps after the war, members made a slow start. But from 1953 onwards, when George Ritchie and Marshall went to work, the pace quickened. Climbs ranged from the best routes on the Brenva Face, such as Pear Buttress, to the very hardest climbs in the Dolomites, where Robin Smith and Dougal Haston made the first British ascent of the Cima Ovest di Lavaredo by the Swiss route on the North Face, soon followed by Ian Clough on the Couzy. Another outstanding climb by Clough, among numerous others made shortly before he joined the Club, was the first ascent of the Central Pillar of Frêne in 1961. The list of great ascents is too long to quote, even if we keep to the *grandes courses*. Climbs ranged from the North-east Face of the Badile by Stenhouse and Ritchie to Robin Smith's climbs on the Voie Britannique of the Blaitière, the West face of the Dru (a thirteenth ascent), and his first British ascent of the Walker Spur of the Grandes Jorasses. Remarkable routes made by Neil Macniven were his first British ascent of the South Wall of Tofana (Dolomites), and his climb on the West Face of the Petit Dru to the top of the Grande Dièdre, followed by descent in storm. The loss of Neil Macniven last year through stonefall on the West Face of the Blaitière has been a severe blow to this Club and to Scottish climbing, especially following so soon after Robin Smith's death in the Pamirs. The Eiger North Wall has been climbed by our members on two successive years. First by Ian Clough with Bonington in 1962, and last year by Dougal Haston with Baillie in icy conditions. The skill, courage, and good judgment shown on these expeditions compels admiration. Last year, Dougal Haston climbed the North Face of the Plan. Tom Patey, with Joe Brown, made a new route of nearly 4000 feet on the Chamonix Face of the Aiguille Sans Nom: hard ice-pitches alternated with grade VI rock. They also made a new direct finish of 600 feet on the West Face of the Plan, grade V climbed free.

1950 saw the first Scottish expedition to the Himalaya, principally through the initiative of Douglas Scott. I joined him with Tom Weir and Tom MacKinnon. We had an effect out of proportion to climbing achievement, because we did effectively demonstrate, at a time when this was again needed, the practicability of mounting an expedition at low cost and recovering the money afterwards. Numerous other expeditions stemmed from it in this way, more especially from England. I went out twice more, to Everest in 1951 and to West Nepal in 1953. Scott, Weir, Roger, and MacKinnon went to East Nepal. Don Bennet climbed six new peaks in Kulu. Tom MacKinnon went to Kangchenjunga in 1955.

Everest, K2, and Kangchenjunga had now been climbed. Then came one of the milestones of Himalayan climbing. In 1956, John Hartog mounted his expedition to the Muztagh Tower in the Karakoram. He and Tom Patey climbed it. This was one of the leaps forward that make history. No peak of that difficulty had previously been climbed in the Himalaya. Indeed the mountain was thought to be impossible. Difficulty for its own sake had been the choice, not just height. In 1958, Tom Patey followed this up with a first ascent of Rakaposhi (25,550 feet).

Our members have been climbing all over the world: Arctic Norway, Lapland, East Greenland, Baffin Island, Rockies—Canada and U.S.A., Peruvian Andes, Patagonia, Kilimanjaro, Kenya, Ruwenzori, High Atlas, Kurdistan, the Caucasus, Pamirs, Karakoram—and that is just a sample. One choice climb, which we ought not to forget, is George Ritchie's twelve-day traverse of Schkelda—an icy and spiky ridge on starvation diet.

Dr Malcolm Slesser joined the British North Greenland expedition in 1952, and organised his own to the Staunings Alps of East Greenland in 1958, when he was joined by Don Bennet, Len Lovat, Iain Smart, Ken Bryan, and Douglas Scott. Between them they made a large number of first ascents of virgin peaks. The British-Soviet expedition of 1962 owed much to the initiative of Slesser and Bryan, who were joined there by Graeme Nicol and Robin Smith. Among other ascents, Slesser and Nicol climbed Pik Kommunizma (24,590 feet), the highest mountain in Russia.

In these last twenty-five years the Club has been more active in mountains than ever before in its history. In the last decade, all has come to a climax. Were I to be asked, 'When in the Club's whole history would you have felt most honoured by election to the Presidency?' my answer would be, 'NOW.'

EIGERWANDERING

By Dougal Haston

Now there's a wall in the Alps which some of you may have heard of. It's big and black and gobs stones at wanderers on its flanks. When not doing this it's usually pulling in all the storms that float around trying to improve its appearance with a white covering. Once in a while it's quiet. This is when you want to climb it. It's hard to guess this, though. It doesn't happen very often. The wall's called the Eiger. I had guessed wrong twice. The last time being a gripping wrong one. Retreat from the Ramp in a storm and a Wightman broken ankle near the bottom. Fortune in misfortune though. We were near the Gallery window and two Italians near us and the rescue effected without the dubious assistance of the local peasants.

This year the omens seemed right. I'd been climbing for six weeks in the Dolomites and Chamonix. Biceps were hard with limestone; calves strengthened and nerves stretched by a mushy ice ascent of the North Face of the Plan. The Droites were our last big test but you can't fight avalanches and rain, so a 1,000-foot retreat toughened the backside. So it looked as if we were ready. We? Rusty Baillie from Rhodesia and I. But was the wall ready? Grindelwald is a good place to live. A doss for a thousand in an avalanche shed. Peasant gardens and supermarkets for food. They make enough from the tourists to subsidise us. After all we provide the main local entertainment. Telescopes average thirty bob an hour. Prices go up when people are in trouble. We reived around for a week during which time the weather was playing the temperamental artist. Thunder clouds at night and fine mornings. Shouting at the tourists soon became boring. The weather was still at it so we had to have a look.

Judging by the odd furtive shaven-headed figure we wouldn't be alone. The only hope was—no idiots. A Scotsman had already paid the price of teaming-up with an Eiger-obsessed mind. The usual nervous twitterings were at work all Sunday but eventually all possible excuses were eliminated. The weather was holding. The nights were cold. The wall looked dry. So if you gotta go you gotta go. Late afternoon saw us moving. Sluggishly though, as the packs were heavy. The aim was the bivvy cave at the foot of the Difficult Crack but it was wet when we reached it, so, fed up with rubble trudging and wanting a brew, we didn't press on to the

Swallow's Nest but stopped just under the Difficult Crack Cave. The night mists closed in as the duvets were sought. It's an eerie place at that time. Clouds coming and going—the odd rock falling and terra firma calling with tinkling cow bells. I know where we wanted to be. But it wasn't to be. The Monday was cold and frosty so once again no excuses. Just as movement started two Austrians appeared, Max Friedwagner and Friedl Schicker. No friendliness from either side at this point. We muttered, they nodded and passed. They seemed competent enough on this ground. But then it was easy. On to the Difficult Crack in finger-freezing dawn. More shocks. The wall was dry all right but the rock was hidden. By what, you may ask. The Eiger's secret weapon is the answer—verglas. Rusty led the crack tiptoeing on the clear stuff. A little grip but chicken feed compared with what we subsequently had to climb. A constant process of adaption this. Harder all the time. Not to worry. The sky was blue. What was a Scottish winter training for anyway? Over the Hinterstoisser and on to the front line. Not much artillery as yet. Just 'wee heedies' with pebbles. But what the hell. . . . Rusty's talking to someone. The first descent? No. It was Bonatti trudging valleywards after a night of over-enthusiastic stonefall. He seemed happy enough, but then he was off down. Onward went the idiots. The big pitch between the icefields was hard—the next still a bit tenuous and the ice hose bypass the absolute berries. The hose itself was untouchable—a huge boss of green water ice. The Austrians were still in front here and this is where we found they could climb—and well. The pitch? A 150-foot run out over verglas-covered slabs. No pitons in and odd attempts to do so only resulted in hitting a dead end after a quarter of an inch. Friedl on his lead managed it muttering Austrian oaths, but skilfully all the same. To keep the Scottish end up I had to appear calm and whistle 'I like it' but I tell you that's not how I felt. But it gave in and we charged on. On to the Second Icefield. Hopes of lovely snow ice. No peace for the wicked though. What did we get? Black manky stone-scarred water-ice. Memories of crampon runs receded. A nasty business this. A little run. Front points thrusting, hand spike stabbing. Can't take much of it though. It was a step every few feet. Max took the first run out and fixed a rope to an ice peg. We ran up the hand rail and thrust through into the lead. This process was repeated till the upper rim was reached. Not pure you might say. But then purism is for the valleys. The Second Icefield is not the best place for a discussion on climbing ethics. Too many of these things you call rocks. The upper rim reached, we were hungry, but rest was not on the menu. The

Flatiron had to be reached before five o'clock otherwise it was a too low bivouac or Grindelwald on the back of a stone. Slow time, you might say. But we crossed the icefield in two hours which is normal fast time. It was the eggshell tip-toes between the icefields which consumed the hours. The speed was improving, however, and three of us reached the safety of the Death Bivouac just as the sun hit the top of the wall and the Spider started spewing all hell down the sides of the Flatiron. Poor old Max got caught in the first waterfall but then they don't break bones. There was still time to push on but nowhere to go as the Third Icefield was like a battlefield. So it was out with the duvets and stoves and a long session of brewing loomed up. It was a reasonable bivouac. The evening's entertainment was provided by a stray ice avalanche descending on a bare Rusty back as he changed a sweater. Not even the Spider dared to send any more as the cursing slowly subsided ten minutes later. Sleep was sought and not attained. There was enough heat but not enough room. We kept twanging on to the ropes. Slides are okay in the park but annoying if you want to sleep. But the sun got started on its shift again—nice to look at but still two days' climbing away. However, we imagined we were warm and by seven I wasn't imagining any more as I headed out on to the sleep-chasing baldness of the Third Icefield. The Eiger said 'hello' with a rock. I wasn't feeling sociable so thumped a big ice peg into its glassy innards. A bit unsporting to send a brick so early. The hand rail was fixed again and Max came front pointing and then tension traversing through to the foot of the Ramp. Two twos again and swift progress as well. Off with the crampons. Feel like a fairy. . . . Up we go. Three pitches in all. But what the hell's this? A beautiful sight loomed up. Yellow overhanging walls with a shimmering green icicle between. Ecstasy for the romantics. There was only one thing wrong. We had to climb it. So this was the famous Waterfall Pitch. Max shook his head and said he would try the variation on the right. But this looked just as bad. Rotten yellow rock, loose pegs and old retreat slings hanging near the top. We knew that people had been misled here before so preferred to tackle the waterfall. So commenced a harrowing period of time for me. It looked hard and was. The pegs were hidden under a great bulge of ice—the walls of the chimney covered with verglas. It was a long series of front point wriggles. The exit took the lot—right crampon off, left one on—a pull and a great winter expansion bolt in sight. Two more moves and I was twisting and shouting in a great release of nervous tension. Rusty hastened up and through on a still hard-looking pitch. There was still only the odd grunt

from Max. He seemed to be having trouble. As yet no cries for a rope so I whipped up and almost fell off with fright at the sight of the ice bulge. Ice, ice and more bloody ice. But it had to be done so I launched upwards on scraping, now blunt, crampons. The bulge wasn't so bad as it looked. Straightforward ice-hacking. What an exit though. It looked easy enough. Only ten feet of slab between me and the Upper Ramp icefield. But I'll tell you a secret: I didn't like that ten feet. Holds tend to get smaller and slabs smoother as one reminisces. I couldn't be inaccurate, though. There weren't any holds. One nick in the verglas was scraped and I studied form for a long time before venturing a front left crampon point on to it. Teetering slightly, the axe dropped on to the slab to make another scrape. I couldn't swing it as any violent movement would have removed the point from its niche. This was repeated four times before I could at last grovel in the snow. Now the confidence was really building up as it was only midday and I knew that only a weather break would stop us. Summit visions sprang to mind and I started singing and shouting the odds. I was still doing it two hours later as Rusty was trying to dangle a line to some teetering Austrian bait beneath an overhang. Max had stuck at the top of the bypass pitch and, standing in an *étrier*, had brought Friedl up to stand on his head. Even then they couldn't make it so we dropped a rope. But they had trouble in getting out due to their precarious position. At last Max got a grip and managed to swarm up the rope to Rusty and then to me. Great hand shakings, etc., but the summit was lost for the day as we didn't think the Spider would be in an amiable mood at about four in the afternoon. More mankiness came in the shape of the brittle ledge. Like climbing a shale bing, man. Then on with the Cook's tour and up a fine crack to the well-named Traverse of the Gods. What a ledge this is. Only grade three but four thousand sobering feet on your right keeps the delight within bounds. Orgies of photo-taking followed as we meandered to the end of the traverse. What a wall. Four and a half thousand of vertical, and ten and a half thousand of actual, climbing done and still a hard fifteen hundred to come. Sitting brewing on our ledge the feeling of being really small crept over. Alone in a vast acreage of rock. Nowhere to go but up and the up part a heaving spewing mass of rock and ice. Invoke the freeze gods and try to sleep. More amusement with Max making a functional sacrifice on the end of a rope. What a tit-bit for the tourists! The sacrifices must have been effective as it was a fine bitterly cold morning.

Tough on the viewers though. Grindelwald was shrouded in mist. Up the Spider tiptoed the crampon-pointed flies. It was on

with the old game of run teeter and hack on the glassy water-ice. The exit cracks loomed up. No easy passage this year. Verglas-coated tentacles waiting for the puny Spider bait. Max was champing at the bit after yesterday's little failure and led a vicious pitch at the start of the cracks. I gladly took a pull on the rope. It was really cold and any waiting at all made one sluggish. Then wonder of wonders, two more climbers appeared on the Spider. Friendly greetings and thoughts that they were making fast time. They were only on their second day. The reason became apparent as the leader approached with a great smile and thanked us for our steps on the icefields. It had been freezing so hard that the steps had remained intact and all they'd had to do was meander up the icefields without lifting an arm in earnest. We muttered, but it's the luck of the game. After all, we would have welcomed steps. Another famous pitch ahead—the white quartz crack. This had been the scene of many epics of the past. It was here that Buhl pulled the 'International Rope' through to safety with a fantastic effort and only last year four exposure-crazy Swiss had to be roped up by an Austrian party. My lead again. A pleasant surprise in store this time. Still plenty of verglas but nothing like as hard as the pitches on the Ramp or between the icefields. An enjoyable piece of work. Scenes of more epics as Corti's bivouac site loomed up. He had been rescued on a steel cable. We looked up and shuddered. A tremendous feat of courage to enter into this rattling mass of wall on a thin thread of wire. A short tension, then into a long crack. Reports of many pitons sprang to mind but they were buried in the ice-choked bed. A slightly worrying long run out followed until a great original ring peg was reached. Slowly the wall was easing. But it would be unlike the Eiger to give up without a final struggle. There it was ahead—the sting in the tail, the Summit Icefield. Specially there for the unwary. The tension is easing and one tends to relax but the mind must wind up the crampon muscles for a last grinding 300 feet of effort. It was in bad condition as well. We were now in the sun but though warm were slightly unhappy as it had melted the icefield's outer cover. Mushy ice caused us to move very carefully up to the summit ridge with the thought always in mind of the Swiss team Wyss and Gonda who had come through the whole wall and fallen from this icefield. If ever the Eiger played a dirty trick that was one. The last stretches of the Mittelegi ridge and the summit was there. It was good to relax again even though temporarily. Hunger soon drove us down the manky slabs of the west ridge back to plebland and much resting.

THE UGLY SISTER

By Robin Campbell

ONE of the principal foci of development in recent years has been Aonach Dubh. For some reason, however, it has not received the attentions of the climbing world at large to the same extent as, for instance, Càrn Dearg Buttress on Ben Nevis or the Slabs of Beinn Trilleachan. This may well be due to the Club's regrettable failure to produce a guidebook to the area. In this article I hope to remedy this to some small extent. There are two cliffs whose development I intend to trace, the North Face, a classic crag, and the South Face of 'E' Buttress on the West Face, a completely new cliff which holds three routes, each as good as any in Glencoe.

For a long time the North Face was synonymous with Ossian's Cave, and if a climber braved the terrors of the path to its foot, it was for one reason and for one reason only; to visit the Cave and sign the Book in the Box. This tradition was started by Godfrey Solly in the year Dot and has since been continued by such well-known mountaineers as Kilroy, Yogi Bear *et al.* On the last occasion that I visited the Cave, the Book in the Box had disappeared, and must therefore have been stolen. Vandalism is everywhere.

However, in recent years, a few climbers have managed to resist the attractions of the Cave, and consequently some fine new routes have been made. The fall of Deep Gash Gully to Cunningham, Rowney and Smith of the Creagh Dhu M.C. in 1951, and Fingal's Chimney to the ubiquitous Mr Brown and Lovat in 1955, marked the end of the Gully-and-Chimney era on this particular pile. Neither of these routes has had a second ascent in summer, but another Creagh Dhu party, Cunningham and Noon this time, climbed Deep Gash Gully again in the winter of 1957. Apparently they climbed part of it feet-first, which is no surprise to anyone. Then in April 1959 Smith and Haston gave us a foretaste of what was to come with Stook, a 400-foot Severe corner which springs up from the right-hand end of the face. The next big route to fall was Yo-Yo, the vertical corner in the centre of the cliff which slices for 300 feet through rotten overhanging walls to Pleasant Terrace, the which must have been named in a spirit of pure sarcasm. Whillans had a stab at it in 1958, but, unaccountably, turned back after passing the first overhang. Then in 1959 Smith and Hughes climbed

it in two days. Smith spent something like four hours hanging on the bottom overhang, wiping the rock dry with a towel, before he eventually won through. To date the climb has had only three ascents, the second by Jimmy Marshall and Moriarty and the third by Macniven, Ronnie Marshall, and Holt. This route must rank with the best in the country.

The stage was now set for what must be the longest one-man siege in Scottish mountaineering history. After Yo-Yo, Smith spent most of his weekends in Glencoe trying to work out a Girdle of the cliff. In 1960, with Haston, he struggled all day long across the white wall to the right of Ossian's Cave and then up a staircase of noxious turf before escaping *via* Fingal's Chimney. Later in the same year he returned, this time with Wightman, added another staircase of turf, this one downwards, and crossed a steep loose wall to a corner, up which they retreated to Pleasant Terrace. Then, in 1961, he and Haston added two more long pitches before coming to an abrupt halt at a terrible-looking pitch, which they christened the Barrier. This impasse seemed to end all hope of making a Girdle, since it stretched throughout the entire height of the cliff. It was as if the cliff was in two parts which overlapped, with the Barrier forming the overlap. It looked like pegs and Smith didn't like pegs. It took him another year to swallow his distaste. Then, in May of 1962, the brothers Marshall repeated what had already been done, but they too could make nothing of the Barrier. When they returned to Lagangarbh, Smith had just arrived from Edinburgh, and, perhaps out of perversity, went right back to the Barrier the following day with Ronnie Marshall and climbed it in a good eight hours, using only three pegs. The Girdle was all over bar the shouting, and Smith, Haston, Macniven and myself shouted all the way across to Deep Gash Gully the very next day.

To turn now to the South Face of 'E' Buttress on the West Face, it is not altogether surprising that this cliff remained untouched until 1959, for it has the most forbidding aspect of any cliff in Glencoe, Slime Wall not excepted. Furthermore the approach to its foot is a formidable undertaking; many crags are less steep than the grass slopes beneath.

In 1959, Haston and Moriarty arrived in the bed of Number 4 Gully with that sly old man, Marshall, and his wee brother. Jimmy pointed to a 500-foot pillar on the right-hand side of the face, said what a marvellous line for a rock-climb, and moved further up the Gully to do a new route called Stickleback. Nothing daunted, Haston and Moriarty climbed the pillar by the best possible line, a real *tour de force*, for the cliff was nowhere less than vertical





throughout the first 400 feet, and the rock was rotten and scaling in parts. However, the holds turned out to be more like amphorae than jugs and Youth had scored a victory over Crabbed Age. They called the route Hee-Haw, which was a very graceless thing to do to such a graceful climb.

Still, every dog must have its day, however aged or crabbed, and Marshall got his own back in 1960 with Trapeze, which is *the* natural line on the crag, starting off up a hard corner well to the left of Hee-Haw, and crossing some pink slabs before wriggling summitswards through the overhangs. Then, in 1961, Smith put up his Big Top with the assistance of Moriarty, and Gardner of the Creagh Dhu. This route, of similar length and veriseverity to the others, follows the left-hand arête of the face for 200 feet before cutting in right and finishing *via* a monstrous object, described by Smith as a flake.

What remains to be done on these two cliffs? Well, on the North Face there are the right and left bounding walls of the Cave. Although Haston towed me up the bottom half of the right-hand wall last October, the worst is yet to come, if it is to come at all. As for the left-hand wall, apocryphally named Abortion Wall, it is a terrifying spectacle, towering sheer and ledgeless for 300 feet, and bleeding silent slime. The man who climbs it will need as much iron as courage, and he'll need plenty of that.

On 'E' Buttress there is room for two more routes or, at least, two more starts. Between the Big Top and Trapeze there is a 200-foot wall which will give someone a dreadful fight, and, between Trapeze and Hee-Haw, there is a quite feasible line of short walls and cracks leading up to the top overhangs, where a modicum of imagination might be required.

To give a somewhat distorted picture of what climbing on one of these cliffs is like, I have appended a description of the North Face Girdle. I make no apology for the imitative style in which it is written, since it dates from the time when the Maestro was still alive, and being sincerely flattered. It starts overleaf.

NORTH FACE GIRDLE

I DON'T know why it is, but I seem to do girdles all the time. Three years ago a frivolous trot round the Rosa Pinnacle, and two years ago a conducted tour across the longest, grimmest, hardest, blackest cliff in all Glencoe. Anyhow, the late Neil Macniven and I found ourselves committed to following the late Robin Smith, alias Wheech, and Dougal Haston (still extant) to the foot of Aonach Dubh on a Monday morning in May when it was far too hot to climb, when we'd run out of fags, and when all the decent hard-working men had gone back to Edinburgh.

The whole route had been done, but not in one, all except the last 500 feet, which were rumoured to be a doddle anyway. However, on a visit to the Barrier the day before, Wheech had taken all day to climb it, and the Baron, alias Ronnie Marshall, who was with him, didn't fancy climbing across it *and* taking all the gear out, all in ten minutes in the dark, so the gear was left in; a magpie's dream of glittering metal and shining white nylon. So we had to go and do the route, if only to get Wheech's gear back.

Dougal and Neil were first away, through the river and up the terrible path into the shadows, slime, and vertical rubbish which is the way up Aonach Dubh, so that Wheech and I wouldn't have to wait at belays.

We two were making little piles of gear on the grass when Wheech found he'd got no P.A.'s. I lied about the size of my feet so that he wouldn't knock mine, but he had an idea he might have left them up the mountain somewhere, so he charged off up leaving me to bring up the rear and the gear. At the foot of the Cave he reappeared with no P.A.'s and the news that Dougal and Neil had cheated and gone straight on to the Barrier by a roundabout route, leaving the first 500 feet of Ancient History to us, since somebody had to do it.

Since we were going very fast to catch up, and my memory of all but a certain pitch is indistinct, I won't bore you with the details (you can read about it in the Guidebook, if it ever comes out), but we bumbled across creaking walls and cracks, and a particularly noisome grass ledge, from the Cave to the Barrier.

The Barrier is the right-hand wall of the big corner to the left of Yo-Yo. Two monstrous overhangs with a lesser one in between about sums it up. You go swinging across the lesser one in slings or étriers, from peg to spike to peg to spike to peg, then make a last big reach to a last big spike and after that it's only desperate to a

belay right out on the edge of everything. When we got there, the others were still sweating it out so we had a seat. Dougal was at the belay, but Neil was just leaving the last peg, lurching about in his étriers and fouling the air, until eventually he grasped the big spike with a gasp of relief and staggered on to the belay.

Now, my brain was working overtime through all this, because I saw that some poor sucker was going to have to take the étriers with him, and that was going to be me, so that I would never reach that last big spike, so I got Wheech to give me a crash course in prusikking and he tied the loops on for me, one on each rope. Wheech sauntered across the pitch in his great clumsy boots, finding difficulty only in deciding what gear to leave in place for me and what to take with him. Then he fixed a huge peg belay and grinned across at me encouragingly. Off I went, grunting and sweating, to the last peg, no bother at all. Then Wheech tied a great knot in the rope behind the peg so that he wouldn't have to hold me. I took off all the gear but a tiny sling, which I threaded through the peg for a foothold and tried to reach the spike, but I'd nothing to hold on to with my left hand while I groped with my right, so I gave it up, sat in my prusik loops feeling very scared indeed, for the rope was an old one of Neil's which he'd used to tow cars and things, and jumped off.

A ghastly pendulum took place, away out and up into the sky so that I could see all the great grinning faces and the horrible drop to the screes 300 feet below. Then back and forward until I stopped swinging. The rock was still about ten feet away and I was just bracing myself for the next bit of fun and games when I started to revolve around the axis of the rope. Twist, twist, twist. Stop. Twist, twist, twist, back again. Stop. And so on *ad nauseam*! Very soon my eye-balls were twisting in sympathy. Everything merged into a dizzy swirl. Wheech's horrid prune-face, the mountain, the sky and the Glen chased each other round the rope like some sort of hellish kaleidoscope, and all the while fiendish laughter echoed from above, across, and below. Raucous bellows from Wheech, horse-laughes and screams from Macniven, and, away to the right, graveside chuckles from Haston every five seconds, when he could just see the tips of my P.A.'s on the way round.

Sooner or later it all stopped, the nausea passed and I was able to look in one direction at once. The rope was twisted all the way up, so that my loops were all useless. I took two more from the festoons round my neck and, after various failures, managed to tie the things on. Then I fought my way up to the belay. This took ages because every time my weight came off the bottom loop the rope sprang into a Gordian knot, the untying of which necessitated

all sorts of contortions ; hands below feet, head between knees, and worried sick all the time about falling all the way down to the end of the rope. I got there in the end, feeling not too bad, since it gave the boys a laugh, and some of us have got to be buffoons.

By this time Haston was having a ball *in terra incognito*, hurling down giant blocks and screaming it was in the bag and what a climb and so it was. There was only a wee move out of Yo-Yo, or so we thought until we caught them up in a recess on a terrible belay. We sat on ledges and waited. Wheech sang all the four parts of the Hallelujah Chorus at once, to pass the time and because he was chuffed, blasphemous croaks and screeches which must have loosened a big stone, because it dropped away from beneath Haston and smashed the ledge where I'd been sitting not so very long ago.

However, Dougal found the way to go across the next bit very quickly and it wasn't really at all bad. We split up and we found a better finish than they did, right across to the bottom end of Pleasant Terrace.

We ran away down the rubbish in the dark and back to Lagangarbh, where we wrote it all up in the Book, and, lo and behold, when the pitches were all added together they came to 1000 feet exactly, which made everyone very happy and we all went to bed.

THE FIRST TWENTY-FOUR MONTHS

SEVENTY-FIVE years ago the Club began, and 74 years ago, the *Journal*. As we have insisted on the essential nature of the latter's role in the appreciation of the former we ought therefore to give some kind of editorial review of the Club today. More especially as the President has already reviewed its achievements, or rather, the achievements of some of its members. How nice to see what kind of people they are who do these things and what kind the muffled herd from which they sprang ! For certainly as its achievements have altered, so has the Club. Like any social organism the S.M.C. has to dodge, parry and exploit its social environment or go under. It hasn't gone under, and the manoeuvres have been memorable.

At Lagangarbh, reek of the battle clings ; safety-binders shrill without, scrawlers and brawlers within, and covenanters gloomy on the opposing hill. The National Clubroom has its stairheid rail pulled off and the polis called in. Heads, fists and consciences are

(a)

SCOTTISH MOUNTAINEERING CLUB

SECOND
ANNUAL + DINNER

SOR HOTEL, EDIN., 11TH DECEMBER 1890

BILL OF FARE

Cock-i-leekie.
Hare.

Turbot, Hollandaise Sauce.
Filets of Soles à la Mirabeau.

Mutton Cutlets à la Soubise.
Chicken à la Marengo.
Haggis.

Saddle of Mutton.
Fillet of Beef à la Jardinière.

Roast Pheasants and Partridges.
French Beans and Fried Potatoes.

Saxon Pudding and Vanilla Cream.
Compôte of Fruit.
Cheese Soufflé

DESSERT.

Members and their friends present at
the 2nd Annual Dinner of the Club

G. Ramsay	President
A. O. Frickan	Guest
C. Darnell	Guest
G. Baldwin Brown	Guest
W. A. Heard	Guest
W. H. Alcock	Guest
J. Rennie	Member
M. W. Rennie	Member
M. McKinnon	Member
Hugh Smith	Member
M. W. Rennie	Member
C. W. Rennie	Member
W. H. Alcock	Guest
Charles H. Smith	Guest
Mark Davidson	Member
H. H. Rennie	Member
H. H. Rennie	Guest

(b)

DATE	NAME	ADDRESS	NATIONALITY
6/11/63	J. Marshall		
6/11/63	EDMUND LORD S.F.H.	EAST KIP.	(Drink again)
11/11/63	Robin Campbell	Where the bee sucks	{ Bowed again
11/11/63	Robin Campbell		
15/11/63	Robin Campbell	Here + There	Perched again
"	Andrew Wrightson	Plus encre	+ Bowed
15/11/63	Robin Campbell	Not in volume choice	Not Again.
21/11/63	J. R. Rennie		
22/11/63	H. H. Rennie	% R. Rennie	Scott
28/11/63	S. Dailly Hume	40 T.G. Brown's Discharge	France-Scott

The Moving Finger. (a) Before the Beaujolais, 1890. (T. Weir, Dinner Book)
(b) After the Chips, 1963. (J. Russell, Library Book)

shaken; blame squarely, roundedly, pointedly laid on unwisely-expanded membership, on women guests, on professional rung-scalers, on electricity, on the rising costs of the *Journal*. The most likely culprit is 1964.

But this *Journal* will not intentionally assess the contemporary Club. It has done so unintentionally since 1890 and, as we said in the Editorial to the last volume (and, peace, we shall not say it many times more), the study of such a selected social group through the years is fascinating to more than mere members. But the animals must not be startled, nor know they are being watched. We shall therefore make no effort at all to discuss the current situation (read you the current issues) but rather take a look at the first two volumes of this *Journal*; grazing, scratching, sniffing and prancing, we can see ourselves absurd in the zoo of the early eighteen-nineties. We are too near the bars to see the cage of the nineteen-sixties; but others will doubtless be more conveniently placed.

Therefore we can point, smirk and cheer at the Early Fathers with full right, for our successors will most certainly smirk, cheer and point at the pontificalities of X, the ego of Y, the brilliant ascents of Z; with, we hope, less blustering weather to contend with but the same charity to dispense.

The first Presidential address at the first Annual Dinner should interest every member. For every member must revere his Club; he has surely not paid 2 guineas, or 1 guinea if he is under 21, just for cheap hut dues, or for the chance of benevolent treatment if found out attempting to swindle over cheap hut dues.

December 12th 1889 is sufficiently far away to be well sterilised. No hint of a broken window or a glottal stop.

. . . Gentlemen, this is an historic occasion. It is not often that at the birth of a great man, or at the beginning of a great empire, either man or empire is conscious of the greatness that lies before them. But it is otherwise with us. In the very moment of our birth we can foresee our future. We know that our Club will live to be a famous Club. We can foresee how eagerly and how vainly, before many years have passed, distinguished men will seek for admittance—how many years they will be kept waiting—how famous will be these thirty odd names which have just been inscribed in that book as present at our first dinner. No wonder, then, that your President feels no diffidence tonight: he looks to the future of the Club, and feels proud.

How many distinguished men have at last been admitted (our stringent requirements being relaxed) may be seen in the *Journal*,

or in the Clubroom. But you shall have more of Professor Ramsay : bid demonic shades of Pickwick, Marx and Cyril Burt begone, and learn what keeps us still a Club and not a mere association of technicians.

Gentlemen, what is our great and glorious bond of union in this Club ? It is the love of nature in every form, and especially of the hills. . . . I know no glory, gentlemen, equal to that of gaining one's top ; whether it be a Ben Lomond or a Cobbler ; whether one is to reap only the senile satisfaction of one's daily climb to the heights of Gilmorhill, or such a moment of supreme elation as I remember when I first planted my foot on the needle-top of the Piz Rosegg. After hours of stiff climb, one's spectacles and veil removed—one single glance round at that glorious, ineffable pageant of peak and snow—and I remember bursting in uncontrolled delight into a wild Highland fling. The top, on which five men could scarcely squat, was about as big as the bottom of a flat bath, with impossible precipices all round ; and I shall never forget the grim humour with which that grand guide, Jacob Anderegg, banged down his hard hand on to my shoulder, and forced me to a seat, just as I was on the point of commencing the first pirouette.

Red Peak. And then the chair-liftee, the safety-man, the record-clutcher and the glory-boy are solemnly described, as clear and horrid as they are today ; until the President depicts us, gentlemen,

. . . our mountaineer must be something different from all these, though he may borrow something, in moderation, from them all. He will not despise a good novel in a day of rest ; and none like he can enjoy a good dinner and a good glass of wine in his capua when he has done good work upon his mountain. He delights in the difficulties and dangers of a new route ; and he is fully sensible of the pride of finding his legs firm beneath him, his wind sound within. But his main and great joy is in the glory of the scenery through which he climbs ; he dwells fondly on every view with a reverent humble sense of the fresh glories of creation which each discloses. He will never refuse to make a fine ascent because he has made it before, or because he has climbed a higher peak in the same district. He likes fine weather, but he will not be turned by a shower ; he likes a big hill, but will delight in a little hill when there are none other ; but, above all, whether his climb be difficult or easy, he will carry to it the same sense of joy in Nature, of love of her milder as well as of her sterner phases, of her gentle heathery slopes as well as of her heather knowes or of her Aiguilles Dru. . . .

Why, even Haston might have written it. But let us turn to the ascents recorded. It's rather unfair, perhaps, to begin with Alex. Inkson M'Connachie (Author of *Ben Muich Dhui and His Neighbours* :

a *Guide to the Cairngorm Mountains*) describing his youthful inexperience twenty or so winters before :

We got as far as the head of Coire Domhain, where the ridge between Loch Avon and Loch Morlich is very narrow and precipitous. . . . Somehow or other I slipped here, and slid down the corrie a considerable distance. I managed to stop myself by the aid of my stick, fortunately a stout one, but my thoughts may be imagined as I shot past black bits of jutting rock, contact with which would have sent a bruised, perhaps lifeless, mass into the Maghan na Banaraich. I may tell my feelings. I had no fear—perhaps there was no time ; I only said to myself, Well, if my head comes against any of these black rocks it is all over, *but I can't help it*. Judge of my horror when, after having succeeded in safely stopping my descent, I saw my companion sliding down at a fearful rate. He had thought my hurried descent was voluntary, and an easy way of getting downwards, so off he went ! I tried to catch him as he passed, but he slipped like an eel through my hands (I had on worsted gloves), and, *head first* at times, did not stop till he was about 200 feet below me. When I reached him—which it was only possible to do by turning over face downwards, and making my way step by step with toes and hands dug into the snow—he was *minus* his hat, stick, and flask, but providentially uninjured. . . .

What fine meat for an irascible compiler of today's Accident Reports ! though he might balk at the flask. The flask was treasured equipment, almost a physical appendage, its fate tenderly recorded :

My friend recovered his cap and stick at the bottom of Coire Domhain, and next summer I found the flask, full and uninjured, on the bank of the burn.

Other common misfortunes are presaged in this article. Two friends of his

. . . returned to Braemar, after making a slip on the frozen slope, the consequence of which was rather unpleasant to one of them who wore the kilt.

Patey's Birmingham Highlander has been around a long time ; so have the modern faggot boys, products of an unsettled generation :

. . . we found the snow soft, and walking necessarily very slow and stiff work, and an hour was required between the bridge and Rebhoan. I reluctantly deemed it prudent, in the circumstances, not to proceed further, and accordingly burst open the door of the bothy. Some of the furniture, including a quantity of paraffin, had to be sacrificed to make a fire. . . .

But these were juvenilia, followed immediately by Hugh Munro (later baronet of the lists) arguing calmly for Scottish winter climbing :

To the mountaineer, winter ascents offer many advantages. In the first place, the interest of the walk itself is much increased. The snow is often so hard as to present all the features of the upper part of a Swiss glacier, rendering the ice-axe almost indispensable, and even the rope sometimes necessary. If the weather happens to be fine—and there is at least as good a chance of fine weather in winter as in summer—the atmosphere is generally far clearer, and the views therefore more extensive and more distinct. Even should the day prove foggy, a climb on the mountain is of far greater interest in winter than in summer. A grass slope which ordinarily is easy often becomes perilously steep when covered with hard frozen snow, and rocks which are child's play in their normal condition are frequently quite impracticable with a coating of ice over them. In fog, the climber, being unable to see ahead, cannot pick the best ground, and often has these obstacles to encounter. He has nothing but the map, the compass, and the aneroid to steer by, and very possibly a piercing wind and a blinding snowstorm to add to his difficulties.

These difficulties, when one was a laird, were sometimes increased ; on one section, he recalls,

. . . I had a good deal of step cutting to do, with my axe at times held close up to the head, so steep was the angle. I was much hampered, too, by having an Inverness cape on, especially when, as happened two or three times, I found my progress blocked and had to descend a bit.

But such dry heroic figures, battling up the snows of yesteryear, brought forth the inevitable safety-sermon, Maylard quartering the ground so that no trace of the obvious might be missed :

. . . these winter ascents are at times by no means entirely free of danger ; and indeed it may be said they are frequently of sufficient moment to make it inexpedient for a man to go alone. So rarely does one meet a fellow-creature . . . that to meet with an accident, perhaps only slight in itself, but sufficient to totally disable, would engender possibly the gravest results. The cold is no mean item of consideration, and even a short enforced sojourn would soon tell deleteriously on a crippled or disabled climber. It must further be remembered that at this particular season of the year our days are very short, extending from about half-past eight to half-past four, and when there is no moon, the darkness at night is extreme. Hence a disabled climber would soon be benighted, and his position rendered more hopeless and trying still. The mists, too, which so frequently cap the mountains and linger on their slopes both impede vision and deaden sound,

and so minimise the chance of help to him who may have become incapable of helping himself. . . .

Such sonorous drones we have long enjoyed and—despite the sensitive who shrink at noisy degenerates like MacLennan, Marshall and their school—also we have enjoyed the whoopers and howlers from top to top. Stott and his friends admit :

Usually one feels inclined to yell and dance after conquering a good hill : but it was not so today. Hastily gloves were torn off and cards got out ; hastily the latter were crammed into a bottle and buried in the snow of the cairn. . . . we had to get much lower before it became possible to produce the flasks and indulge in the dram that had been denied us on the peak.

Despite their gentlemen's wages, early members had no easy weekends of it. Before the West Highland Railway, that dynamic link, had been forged, only men like Gilbert Thomson could achieve a Cobbler day off. Nimlin, Scrubbernut and Peaheid would understand.

The autumn holiday in last October was fixed on by some Glasgow members as a suitable opportunity for making the acquaintance of this district. As it was impossible to do much by starting in the morning from Glasgow, we found our way to Arrochar the night before, reaching it about nine o'clock, after a walk of ten miles from Garelochhead, through the gathering darkness. As we intended to reach Glasgow the following night, and as the last chance was the steamer from Tarbet at five, it was obviously necessary to make an early start, and five a.m. was the hour fixed for leaving the inn. As a matter of fact, we got off at 5.15, the delay being due to the necessity of using strong persuasive measures to get some of the party out of bed. We rued that quarter of an hour before the day was done. . . .

The same Thomson recounts his winter education on Bidean and the Buachailles, then quite undescribed :

Our climbing gear was made up of a dozen yards of light rope (window sashcord in fact, which was calculated to be sufficiently strong for a party of two), an ice axe carried by Naismith, and an alpenstock carried by the writer. The latter had its spike broken off the day before, and rejoiced now in a large nail with the head filed off.

On these more serious hills, the axe and the rope were as necessary as they were later found to be on the Club button.

Our expedition would certainly have been . . . a failure but for the axe, to which the alpenstock proved much inferior, and it is doubtful if

without the rope as well, we would have ventured on the slope which we traversed with its assistance.

Real winter climbing—which was to fill succeeding volumes—had been recorded at last, although the grind was such the pair admitted later that they lay exhausted by the road before entering Kingshouse and relieving the anxious Dr Coats. (To convince themselves that long winter excursions were possible and safe with proper food and equipment they alighted from the Glasgow train in the small hours of Easter 1892, leaving Dalwhinnie Station at 3.30 a.m., and in hard frost climbed a Ben Alder ridge, crossed to Ben Alder Lodge, forded the Gaoire, crossed the Moor in a blizzard to Gortan (no railway yet), forded the Orchy and burst into the Meet at Inveroran on the stroke of 8 p.m. after 45 miles. . . .) Even unadventurous (?) ascents were found to require an axe, and a good one, not such as the intrepid Salvationist Colin Phillip bought—one advertised as useful for the tourist to ‘cut an occasional step’:

The first fifty feet or so were all right, when we suddenly encountered hard ice. My friend tried to cut “the occasional step” with the pick, but he found it not nearly heavy enough, nor the right shape, and altogether such a poor instrument for the work, that he gave up cutting, or trying to cut, and began prodding the ice with the pointed end of the pick, and then kicking with his feet, till he got sufficient hold for the toe, but no more. Now, this was all very well for a short distance, but it did not leave enough for one to return by. . . . First one step then another was made in the same way, till . . . it dawned on us that . . . the remainder of the slope would prove to be in the same condition. We first thought of returning . . . but we decided it was weak to be done out of our hill, and that it would be more difficult to return to the col than advance under the circumstances, as . . . a slip would have sent either of us, first by a rapid glissade and then by a terrible fall, over the cliffs below. . . . If we had had a good axe with us, we could have got up the slope in a quarter the time in perfect ease and safety. . . . The next year I took an axe with me over the hills for a fortnight, and hardly cut a dozen steps the whole time. I was on the Arisaig hills and Glen Finnan hills, and the shepherds, keepers, and others thought my party was surveying for the railway! They were very polite in consequence, so the axes were not entirely useless.

Such a weighty alibi was needed on late Victorian hills: Stalking was the current big-money Tourist Industry and its necessary keepers officious, despite adherence of members to the Club ruling that the sport of mountaineering be conducted so as not to interfere with the sport of stalking, and despite the courtesy

of many landowners. With what distaste does the courteous landowner Munro recount his own reception in Glen Affric by the representatives of a notorious American tenant, and his own consequent undignified scuttlings :

The whole of this country is rented by Mr Wynans and every effort is made to prevent any deviation from the path. . . .

Halfway between this *col* and the top of Mam Sodhail is a bothy, inhabited all through the summer by two gillies, whose duty it is to keep sheep and tourists from straying. . . . From [Càrn Eige] the top of Mam Sodhail might be reached without very much risk of unpleasantness : in descending, to avoid the above-mentioned bothy, double back and cross to Glen Affric. Sgùrr Fhuaran can be ascended without much risk of interference. Beinn Fhada is more difficult of access. . . .

The latest big-money Tourist Industry threatens its like restrictions ; a geological ice-hammer may become a useful passport behind Braemar. It is sobering to read of night shelter being given fearfully, as if to secret agents,

. . . in a cottage not far from Glen Lui. [Members of the Club will be supplied with the address on application to the Editor. For satisfactory reasons publicity is not given to it here.]

No doubt, apart from private greed, dreadful visions of the Highlands in 1984 haunted the proprietors. We must not deny them public spirit. But members could easily stay at hotels ; their pay was good and prices were low : Sligachan charged 10s. a day all in, winter knocked Kinlochewe down to 7s. Some, though, were most sociable romanticists and in their primitive minds floated, dimly, a J.M.C.S. weekend and the archetypal J.M.C.S. bus :

Members desirous of meeting at any convenient centre during next year, should send their name . . . centre they desire . . . and the probable date to the Editor. . . . The groups . . . could talk the matter over . . . and arrange preliminaries as to tents &c. ; or, if in sufficient number, and the terms permit, by Tortoise Sporting Waggon. . . . There might be looked for that pleasure derivable from meeting with kindred spirits, and that romance inseparable from camping out.

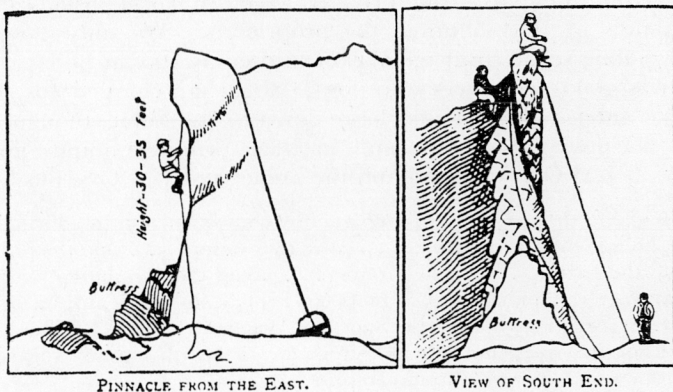
Camping out ? ! But they had no Huts in which to meet their kindred spirits. The 'meetings' agreed to, however, were less adventurous ; they were to be "Meets" on the model of the Botanical Clubs, and the first was held, dreich in weather and (forgive us) surroundings, at the Crook Inn, Peeblesshire.

Its successors grew famous into history. So did the astonishing work of Munro. As the Editor said at the end of the first volume :

The immense extent of the labour undertaken by Mr Munro will be apparent even on the most cursory survey of his "Tables." Measured merely by time, the compilation has to my knowledge—for I have been somewhat of a task-master in the matter—occupied over three hundred hours during some five months. It may be affirmed without fear of contradiction that so complete, exhaustive, and instructive a list has never before been put together, and that it forms a contribution to Scottish orography whose value it would be difficult to exaggerate.

Of the second volume ? We could go on and on, for here the serious studies begin to come in fast, classics like Naismith's Pinnacle Route of Sgùrr nan Gilleann, Lester's Black Shoot, Naismith's Snowcraft in Scotland, Douglas' Lochnagar Corrie—the curtains roll back indeed. But we will mention only three things, presages of error and straying to come.

'Practice Scrambles' introduced the outcrop literature. Against Salisbury Craigs, Glasgow erected The Whangie ; in those days, when distances were longer and Inverarnan Torridonian, The Whangie was a rendezvous after the Club Dinner. The Illustration is a good deal more informative than most of its genre today.



Nearby, on the Campsies, an historic incident occurred. From this first sin arose our separate falls :

For the sake of any uninitiated, it may be explained that skis are wooden snow-skates, 7 feet long and 3 to 4 inches wide. . . . The best are made of ash plane and cost, with fastenings, about £1, but a light serviceable pair

of pine can be had for a few shillings by writing to Messrs Hagen & Co., Bergen. On 12th March, shortly after a considerable fall of snow, M. T. G. and W. W. N. climbed the Campsies behind Milton, and followed the crest of the ridge for two miles to the Meikle Bin. . . . The skis were not of much use when ascending, but upon level ground, and especially where the snow was soft, better progress was made with them than without them, while a very slight gradient was sufficient to get up tremendous speed during the descent. When the angle was too steep to risk, the skis were slipped off and turned into an improvised toboggan. At one long slope, some 300 yards in length, and inclined at a general angle of 15° , an hour was enjoyably spent, the snow being in perfect order for ski-ing—firm underneath, with a powdering of drifted snow on the surface. This snowbed was crossed by one or two small ridges which imparted a switchback element to the sport, somewhat puzzling to inexperienced amateurs. Of course the party came to grief several times, but they returned home well pleased with their experiment. Skis might often be employed with advantage in winter ascents in Scotland, or rather descents—for although Norsemen skate up as well as down hills, few men in this country are likely to acquire such facility as to use them when going uphill, but they can easily be towed up, as they weigh only a few pounds. In the Alps it is not unlikely that the sport may eventually become popular. . . .

In the third thing, too, we hear the ring of fate. The first mention of the Tempter's Aid: on the traverse of the ridge of A' Chir during a Meet, recounted by T. Fraser S. Campbell:

On the west side, towards Glen Iorsa, the ridge is precipitous for hundreds of feet, great smooth blocks of granite leaving no foot or hand hold to the climbers; but towards Glen Rosa, the descent, though very steep, is practicable in places. What barred our progress now was a huge cleft, something like the Caim na Caillach, alluded to in former papers, but of a much more formidable nature. It is some hundred feet across, and of about the same depth, the drop from the side on which we stood being perpendicular, and, so far as we could see from above, perfectly impracticable. An attempt, however, was made to descend by means of the rope, and Gibson succeeded in getting down for about forty feet, a little to the west of this ridge; but the length of rope at our disposal did not admit of his reaching any firm ground from which further operations could be conducted. It is questionable, moreover, if the remainder of the party could all have got down; certainly for the last man the descent would have been very risky. The attempt was therefore abandoned, and Gibson returned, so to speak to the surface. No other means of descent presenting itself, we retraced our steps for some 200 feet to a narrow crack, which descended to the valley on either hand. We hesitated for a little as to which side we should drop on, but decided finally to descend towards Glen Rosa. Even this descent was attended by some difficulty, but we accomplished it by the aid of a "piton," which we fortunately had with us. This being

driven into a crevice in the rock, and the rope passed through its ring, we succeeded in overcoming any difficulty, and dropping for about a hundred feet, and skirting the base of the precipice, we reached the bottom of the great cleft. . . .

Little now remains to tell; the hour was late, and the gathering shadows began to fall upon the hills . . . we had had enough of it: so leaving to some future day the further, and perhaps more successful, exploration of A'Cir, we turned our step downward to the glen. We reached the hotel just as darkness had settled on the scene.

And we can close, put back both volumes on the shelf. In 1964, to smug swingers in étriers or to despairing trespassers on artificial snow, these things may possibly have small meaning. Peace, gentlemen; from seventy-five years higher up we, too, will all, to coin a phrase, be gobbled on.

THE OLD MAN AND THE MOUNTAINS

By Robin Smith

[We will never have another tale from Robin Smith, whose masterpiece, *The Bat and the Wicked*, we were privileged to publish in 1960. That article (*S.M.C.J.* (1960), xxvii, 12) inspired not only climbing, but writing on climbing, throughout Scotland; Smith can never be forgotten, as this, and every subsequent, issue will testify. The following story, though printed first in the *Edinburgh University M.C. Journal*, and then elsewhere, was never offered to these pages. Smith was a perfectionist; his personal letters to the Editor, marvellous reading, were full of his search for a new form in mountaineering literature, and he doubtless did not consider this piece worthy of further refinement. But it is Smith, and we must have it. It deals with those wonderful seven days when Marshall and he opened up in winter the big routes on Ben Nevis (*S.M.C.J.* (1960), xxvii, 61); they have been already described by Marshall (*S.M.C.J.* (1961), xxvii, 112-117) in an article itself a classic, and here we have the other side, from Wheech in 1961.]

OLD MAN JAMES and I on a Friday night in February went to the hut halfway up the mountain. Stackalee and Typhoo came as well because Typhoo has a car and needed someone to climb with. All nine days long the moon grew big and round and all the big black Ben was shining white. On Saturday we had breakfast for lunch and went and climbed the Great Chimney on Tower Ridge. We shambled up soft snow slabs, then I went up a pitch of Chimney

with my eyes on the crux, only the rope just sort of stuck when I was just below it, so I made a belay and the Old Man went and fought it out sitting in a sling under an overhanging chockstone and pressed on to the crest of the Ridge below the Little Tower. I dropped my ice axe, so when I reached the top I fixed a sling and abseiled back down the Chimney into the gathering night. I was right at the end of the rope and had to let go with my bottom hand and the ends were just sliding over my shoulder when I came upon my axe. The Old Man, who is very bold, went solo down the crest of the ridge and came upon terrible difficulties in the moonlight, but in the end we got to the hut for a big brew.

On Sunday we made an early start in the wee sma' hours of the afternoon, only I forgot my axe and had to go back for it and we were quite late starting up Minus Three Gully. I was scheming for the crux, so I took a belay and James went up in nice ice grooves into a great ice cave. I climbed halfway up the back of the cave and through a hole in the curtain of ice and out on to the face of a terrible icicle, but here there were great jugs ready to be cut and places to bridge and you went up no bother at all and the next pitch was longer and harder and I had to sit and gnash my teeth while the Old Man led through. We came out on to the North East Buttress ridge and wandered up to the Plateau and down by diverse routes screeching at the moon.

By then our transport had left for the big city but chosen men of the Mountain Rescue came up to the Hut to train for a week with lots of food. The next day we were really late because I was hunting my ice axe while the Old Man squatted at the foot of Tower Gully hurling oaths at the Hut. In the end I thought, we won't climb two at a time if it gets steep, and I went up the hill without it. We went to Gardyloo Buttress. The top half is split by a couloir which was pouring vast waves of ice down the middle of the steep bottom half. James went up an ice groove on the right and made a peculiar piton belay, and settled down for a real deep freeze. I hacked away up and left over the icefield for 90 feet till I came upon a bit of rock probably on the line of Kellett's summer route. By then it was going dark and I couldn't think whether to go straight up or go to the right or look for a runner or look for a belay. I tried all four and picked on the last and put in two pitons so that they didn't fall straight out and threaded a sling round a bit of snow in a crack and said I had a belay. But the Old Man is very wise and analysed my tone of noise and decided I was shattered and using a manky belay to pass the buck so he sat tight. Then I dropped the axe. It stuck in the ice on top of an overhang five feet below and I crept

down to pick it up in a sweating terror of kicking a bit of snow on it. At least you might say I had a runner now, and so I decided to go up and right across a great barrel of snow-ice strangely shaped and leading nowhere evident. The top six inches were crusted snow and no use to anyone. I had to use our monster ice piton, knocking it in as high as I could and using it for balance while I cut steps and pressing on until it was down about my knees and pulling it out and putting it in again. Then I dropped it at the biggest bulge and it disappeared into the night. That meant I couldn't go back, unless (as it were) out of control. Then I lost my grip of the axe and it started somersaulting in the air with both my arms windmilling trying to grab it and my feet scarting about in crumbly holds. Somehow all was well and I came to an ice arête below where it still cut away into vast overhangs but above the angle fell back one or two degrees and I went up till the rope ran out just as I came into moonlight on the snow at the foot of the couloir. The Old Man was moaning in throes of misery, but he came up on his knees groping for steps in the moon-shade and led through easily to the plateau while I took a piton hammer belay. We shambled down Number Four Gully and I found my axe.

I was still exhausted the next afternoon so we went up a wiggly line of snow and ice grooves on Observatory Buttress for about 600 feet until it gets very easy where Good Friday Climb comes in from Tower Gully. Nothing very exciting happened except that Old James got the crux. We slid round into Tower Gully up to our stomachs in powder snow and we got back to the Hut almost in daylight.

On Wednesday we were monstrously early; we were up by half-past eight, but the weather was manky and thawing at the Hut with bits of rain and sleet. But around ten it faired up, so we struggled out of the Hut with stacks of gear and this time wearing Duvets and went to Point Five Gully and here conditions were great. The first pitch was a doddle on snow-ice; what took time was finding cracks for piton belays. James led pitch Two, an ice wall very steep for twenty feet. Then I went up a groove to a great boss of ice, but here you could stick your hands under the boss and away up behind it and clear the gap running round it on the right and semi-layback on to the snow above. I pressed on up a chimney full of evil crusted snow and took an axe belay at the side of the gully. Then the spindrift started drooling down, and just as the Old Man spread himself halfway over the boss of ice it grew to a hissing torrent and piled up on his great stomach and pushed him out from the ice while he clawed away for the holds and through

the tips of his gloves. It seemed half an hour before it ran dry. The next pitch was beautiful, a long funnel of ice, mostly vertical but just curved enough to let you bridge. Then the gully opened out and we charged on whooping through swirling clouds and pools of moonlight to the plateau.

In the morning there was mist and a big wind. Around mid-day we attacked the slopes of Càrn Mòr Dearg, with lots of pounds in our pockets and no map, whistle or compass. We went into the fangs of the wind over Aonach Beag and all the Grey Corries to Stob Choire Claurigh and round to the Spean Bridge Hotel. Shortly we took a bus to Fort William for fish suppers, only Hell's Kitchen was shut, so we had to turn to drink. They threw us out at nine o'clock and we walked a bit and thumbed a wee car and here it stopped and two great policemen leaped out and arrested us. They took us away to the Station and put us under a bright light for interrogation by a grim circle of sergeants, but it was all a mistake, something about dominoes, and they let us out for the last bus past the Distillery. We beetled up the path and entered the Hut on the stroke of midnight.

The next day it was foul and cold and we were feeling ill, but in so far as it was the Ben it was good weather and about two o'clock in a state of disgust we felt obliged to heave our way up the mountain. We went up Pigott's route on the Comb, from bottom left away up right to the end of a tapering shelf of snow, then up a short fierce chimney and long ice grooves, and along the crenellated crest to the Plateau. We tossed a coin for the chimney; Old James won.

Overnight the wind died and Saturday was so fabulous that one o'clock found us under the Orion Face. Between Slav Route and Beta Route a great tumble of ice fell out of the Basin to the foot of Zero Gully. Even the Old Man recognised he had had his shares of cruxes, so he offered me the choice and I chose the first because the third looked terrible, but here the second turned quite hard and the third was a wee doddle. It was all fabulous climbing, 500 feet of ice to the Basin, then over the snow-field and out on the right by iced slabs, and next thing I found myself belayed below the Second Slab Rib of the Long Climb and the Old Man was turning it by a great pitch on the right. Then I went by iced slabs and he went by iced slabs and I went over a snow-field and we found ourselves into the night with the moon hidden in clouds, below the final towers at the crest of North East Buttress with 1400 feet of climbing behind us and the perishing Old Man in the lead again. Above it looked drastic; I just saw murky white overhangy shapes and a shadow

sidling very slowly through them. He couldn't really see more than ten feet, and he hadn't a clue what way to go or even if there was a way. First he wandered leftish, but 100 feet without any runners he came back right and sent all his rubbish thundering down on my head while I froze from cold and terror and thought about the twenty-four points of his crampons. When he got up I had to follow through a maze of grooves and bulges and icicles groping for holds that had all filled up again and taking double-handed pulls on the rope. We battered up snows to the Plateau and back to the Hut for a final feed.

Late in the Sunday afternoon I ran my pack over the C.M.D. arête and the lowest pass in the Mamores for a lift on the J.M.C.S. bus from Glencoe to Edinburgh. James went down the Allt a' Mhuillin and round by the road on his thumb, but then he's getting old.

PRESERVATION OF SCOTTISH MOUNTAIN LAND FOR THE NATION

P. J. H. UNNA was one of the most perceptive of men. This perception is nowhere better seen than in the following letter, written when Dalness Forest (in upper Glen Etive and upper Glencoe) had been acquired (largely by his own means) and was being handed over to the National Trust for Scotland.

It is exciting to read this positive and outright statement of what 'preservation of mountain land' really requires. This is modern thinking and, though first written in 1937 and reprinted in 1945, we agree with the President that it should again be printed in 1964, when reactionary forces under so many plausible disguises are gathering for the attack. Unna's principles are adhered to by some other, civilised, countries; here, after our diet of antiquated commercial pap, they may sound strange and thrilling. They certainly leave little excuse for the uncontrolled 'development,' fun parks and 'safety measures' envisaged by those anxious to push their exploitation northwards and, for their own profit, to deprive the public of its last great biological resource.

From the *S.M.C. Journal* (1945), xxiii, 261 :

The acquisition of Kintail by the National Trust for Scotland, through the generosity of an anonymous donor, will be welcomed by all hill-walkers. One of the conditions of the gift was that it should be administered in

accordance with the general principles expressed by the members of the Scottish Mountaineering Club at the time when Dalness was acquired by the Trust.

There is appended a copy of a letter which sets out the principles which the Scottish Mountaineering Club consider should be followed in the management of mountainous country acquired for the use of the public.

Letter from P. J. H. Unna, Esq., President of the Scottish Mountaineering Club, to the Chairman and Council of the National Trust for Scotland, dated 23rd November 1937.

DEAR SIRs—As the movement initiated by a group of members of the Scottish Mountaineering Club to acquire Dalness Forest and hand it over to the National Trust for Scotland, to be held for the use of the nation, so that the public may have unrestricted access at all times, has now materialised; as subscriptions to that end were invited not only from the members of the Scottish Mountaineering Club, but also from the members of all the other mountaineering clubs in Great Britain; and as the fund so subscribed enables the forest to be handed over free of cost to the Trust, together with a surplus to be used as an endowment fund—it is considered desirable that what are believed to be the views of the subscribers as to the future of the estate should be expressed in writing, and recorded in the Minutes of the Trust. This is all the more necessary, as in the circular issued for the purpose of inviting these subscriptions it was stated that the land “would be held on behalf of the public and preserved for their use,” and that the Trust would “be asked to undertake that the land be maintained in its primitive condition for all time with unrestricted access to the public.” The views of the subscribers are:

1. That “primitive” means not less primitive than the existing state.
2. That sheep farming and cattle grazing may continue, but that deer stalking must cease, and no sport of any kind be carried on, or sporting rights sold or let; any use of the property for sport being wholly incompatible with the intention that the public should have unrestricted access and use. It is understood, however, that deer may have to be shot, as that may be necessary to keep down numbers and so prevent damage, but for that purpose alone.
3. That the word “unrestricted” does not exclude regulations, but implies that regulations, if any, should be limited to such as may in future be found absolutely necessary, and be in sympathy with the views expressed herein.
4. That the hills should not be made easier or safer to climb.
5. That no facilities should be introduced for mechanical transport; that paths should not be extended or improved; and that new paths should not be made.
6. That no directional or other signs, whether signposts, paint, marks, cairns or any other kind whatsoever, should be allowed: with the exception of such signs as may be necessary to indicate that the land is

the property of the Trust, and to give effect to the requirement in the Provisional Order of 1935 that by-laws must be exhibited.

7. That should a demand spring up for hotels or hostels, it is possible that it may have to be satisfied to a limited extent. If so, they should only be built alongside the public roads, and should be subject to control by the Trust; and it is suggested that no hotels or hostels should be built in Glencoe itself, or on any other part of the property, except, perhaps, in the lower reaches of the Trust property in Glen Etive. It is hoped that the Trust may be able to come to an understanding with neighbouring proprietors as to corresponding restrictions being maintained in regard to land near to that held by the Trust.

8. That no other facilities should be afforded for obtaining lodging, shelter, food, or drink: and especially, that no shelter of any kind be built on the hills.

9. It is hoped that the design of any buildings which may be necessary will be carefully considered by the Trust; and that, where possible, trees will be planted in their vicinity.

10. In conclusion, it is suggested that the whole question of the management of the Trust properties in Glen Etive and Glencoe should receive special attention, in view of the possibility that the policy adopted by the National Trust for Scotland in the present instance may create a precedent for similar areas in other mountainous districts, not only in Scotland, but also in England and Wales.

Yours faithfully,

P. J. H. UNNA.

NEW CLIMBS

ARRAN

Goatfell: South Slabs.—*Blank.* 400 ft. Severe. B. Kennelly & A. McKeith (J.M.C.S). 13th September 1963.

Starts at the centre of the base of the slabs (arrow), 60 ft. left of Route II.

Climb straight up smooth slab, then slightly right to peg belay; poor stance (100 ft.). Follow line of holes diagonally left across the steep slab, then a line of cracks to heather ledge and block belay (100 ft.). Or, alternatively and more interestingly, descend a few feet, traverse steep slab left, then climb thin layback crack to gain line of crack (V.S.). Traverse right round a rib into a steepening scoop, at the top traverse right (10 ft.), surmount a bulge and follow a line of holds upwards to stance and peg belay (100 ft.). Finish more easily by slabs to top (100 ft.).

Cir Mhòr.—Rosa Pinnacle.—*West Flank Route.* 500 ft. Very Severe. W. Skidmore, R. Richardson, J. Crawford & J. Madden (G.M.C.). 3rd August 1963.

The route follows a natural line of chimneys, cracks and grooves between Sou-wester Slabs and Hammer and starts in a very obvious tapering two-tier chimney which leads obliquely up to the left, a few feet uphill from Hammer.

Climb the first tier of the chimney to good stance and belay; strenuous (60 ft.). Climb the second tier of the chimney to reach ledge and belay (shared with pitch I of Hammer) (45 ft.). Follow the long shallow crack in the slab above to its end at the big overlap (piton runner used here). Move round right to take a piton belay in a niche tucked in the bottom of a big corner (bottom unclimbed half of the layback crack—South Ridge Direct) (90 ft.). Step left from niche round edge into groove and crack which are followed over a crack, and go for the obvious small spike and flake by a rather rounded layback. The crack branches; take the right until a move left across the slab can be made. Climb to a horizontal crack for a piton runner, then descend left to foot of grassy groove leading directly to thread belay at top of flake crack pitch of Sou-wester Slabs route (90 ft.).

Climb corner above (crossing Sou-wester Slabs) and step left to an obvious ledge with block on edge of slab, belay (30 ft.). Climb directly by slab edge to crouch below large overhang. Hand traverse 6 ft. left to gain wall and continue leftwards round bulge, climb up to less steep rocks with flake or piton belay at small stance (80 ft.). Climb straight up broken slabs by pleasant climbing to short wall, belay (55 ft.). Climb recess behind belay, move up a crack to finish on the terrace very close to the start of the upper pinnacle of the South Ridge Direct, an obvious continuation if desired (50 ft.). All pitons removed.

SKYE

Sgùrr an Fheadain: West Face.—*Moon Raker*. 200 ft. Very Severe. I. A. MacEacheran & I. Kennedy. 28th July 1963.

The line is easily seen from Foxes Rake on Sgùrr a'Mhadaidh. It follows an obvious boomerang-shaped corner well right of Waterpipe Gully. There are three pitches, 100 ft., 50 ft., and 50 ft. respectively, the second being the crux.

Sròn na Ciche: Cioch Upper Buttress.—*Desire*. 320 ft. Severe. J. R. Houston & W. Torrens. 15th July 1963.

Starts above Cioch in shallow gully near the Left Edge Route.

Climb the right side of the gully 120 ft., belay. Go up a few feet to a ledge; traverse this to the right, round an easy corner just beyond which a steep slab is climbed direct to a tiny recess. At 105 ft. move left a little to a flake belay. Climb the rib where the gully forks for 6 ft. then traverse left (crux) over loose rocks into the left fork, then straight up to the top at 105 ft.

Cioch Buttress.—*Sarcophagus*. 430 ft. Mild Very Severe. J. R. Houston & W. Bailie. 17th July 1963.

Starts in a crack left of Cioch West, and between rocks marked V.S. and X.S.

Climb crack to overhung recess; surmount this on left to reach easier ground and belay at 120 ft. Climb right hand of two cracks in steep wall above, then move up past very large flake to belay (120 ft.). Climb easy nail-marked slabs to an overhanging groove, traverse right below overhangs to another steep groove. Climb this to very loose shattered flake near the top, and step on to the arête on the left (there is a runner a few feet up). Climb up and right to another groove with slab on right; this groove involves a mantelshelf (crux) near the top. Traverse, difficultly, across the top of the slab below overhangs, then round the corner to easier ground and belay. Climb the broken fault above to easy slabs leading to the Cioch.

Sgùrr nan Gillean: Pinnacle Ridge, Sligachan face of First Pinnacle.—*Thor*. 140 ft. Mild Severe. A. James (J.M.C.S.) & G. Reid. 11th July 1963.

Starts up a conspicuous chimney leading from steep scree-covered ledge some 50 yards left of start of Pinnacle Ridge.

Climb chimney to level of large ledge on left at 55 ft. From this ledge climb a thin crack at left end of ledge, 25 ft. (crux), to good stance and belay. Finish by continuing up to join Pinnacle Ridge route, 60 ft.

2/3 Gully face of Third Pinnacle.—*Fria*. 300 ft. Very Difficult. A. James (J.M.C.S.) & G. Reid. 12th July 1963.

Starts with a traverse on small holds out of 2/3 Gully to foot of steep rocks some 200 ft. from the base of the Third Pinnacle (50 ft.).

Climb obvious fault on small holds (steep rocks) overlooking 2/3 Gully for 200 ft. (2 pitches) to reach large square cup with sloping floor falling into gully. Reach top right-hand corner of the cup by a long crack. Leave by a short chimney and climb up for another 50 ft. to reach the top of the Third Pinnacle.

CENTRAL HIGHLANDS

Creag Meaghaidh: The Inner Corrie.—The cliffs of the main corrie may be described as extending from the Pinnacle Buttress on the left to the prominent Corner well to the right of the Posts. These cliffs all overlook Loch Coire Ardair.

Beyond the corner the cliffs recede in height, but continue as far as the Window. These are the cliffs of the Inner Corrie. They are cleft by numerous gullies, which hold a lot of snow and are usually in good condition. These climbs are less serious undertakings than the Posts and may have been visited before, as they are all within the scope of an average party. Some details, however, may be of value for they are all good routes and deserve

to become more popular. The heights of the climbs vary between 500 ft. and 700 ft. and the routes are most easily described by reference to the accompanying Sketches I and II.

The Corner is on the extreme left and the main face (which would be seen in profile further left on Sketch I) is not shown on the illustrations. All the routes described are winter climbs only and the gradings used are comparable to those in current use in the Cairngorms Area rock climbers' guides. All FIRST WINTER ASCENTS.

—*The Sash*.—Grade III. T. W.

Patey, R. W. P. Barclay, M. Laverty & E. Attfield. March 1963.

Marked C C, this route resulted from an attempt on Diadem. The party abandoned the gully below the high ice flume and continued leftwards by an easier line of snow shelves. A good mountaineering route, usually in condition.

—*Diadem*.—Unclimbed. Marked

C C a.

Probably the best route in the corrie. At about mid-height the gully steepens and narrows to a 300-ft. ice hose. On the ice-draped wall to the left of the hose, there was throughout the winter of 1963 an extraordinary cupola of ice, overhanging 20 ft. or more, perhaps a regular winter feature. This route needs a very hard frost.

NOTE: This route has had two ascents in the 1964 winter; but information on the first ascenders not yet received.

—*Will o' the Wisp*.—Grade III.

T. W. Patey & E. Attfield. March 1963.

The large snowfield at mid-height is an obvious feature. Marked D D, the route includes an exposed leftward traverse at 150 ft. across the top of a vertical chimney; then easy snow slopes to the upper cliffs, which are breached by a straight narrow trough which was filled with good cutting snow.

Variation: J. Knight & I. A. MacEacheran. March 1964. The vertical chimney was climbed (two ice pitches) then the upper half of the route followed (Time: 3½ hrs.).

—*Cinderella*.—Grade II. T. W.

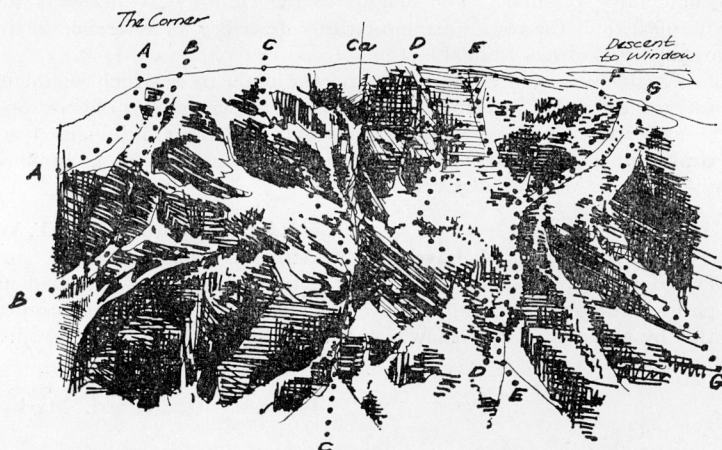
Patey & W. Tout. February 1963.

Lying well back in the corner of the Inner Corrie, it is the most obvious gully and one likely to become classic. Two easy-angled ice pitches possibly ironed out in a good winter.

—*The Prow*.—Grade III. D.

Pyper & M. Main. March 1963.

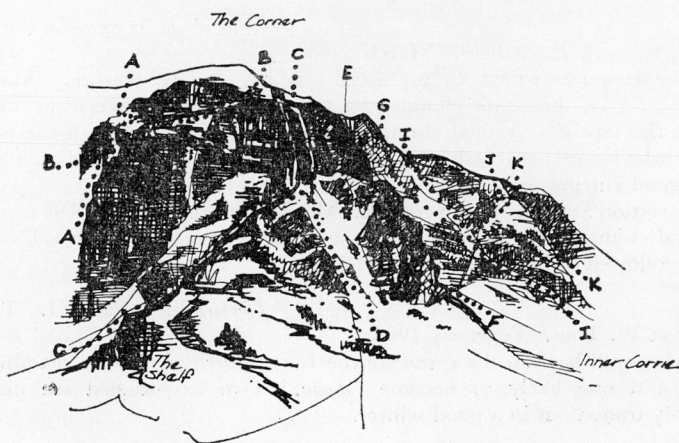
Marked E F this route leaves the Cinderella Gully below mid-height, slants steeply up the side of the spur on the right, then follows the crest to the cornice fringe which is very pronounced hereabouts, and may—as on the first ascent—present considerable technical difficulty.



SKETCH I

Upper cliffs of Coire Ardair, Creag Meaghaidh (Inner Corrie).

AA, Finish of Post Horn Gallop (*S.M.C.J.* (1963) xxvii, 375) ; BB, Stag-horn Gully (*S.M.C.J.* (1960) xxvii, 27) ; CC, The Sash ; CCa, climbed 1964, no information yet ; DD, Will o' the Wisp ; EE, Cinderella ; EF, The Prow ; GG, Crescent Gully.



SKETCH II

The Corner, between the main face overlooking lower Coire Ardair and the crags of the Inner Corrie (partly in profile).

AA, The North Post ; BB, Post Horn Gallop ; CC, Staghorn Gully via the long shelf ; DD, Staghorn Gully starting from Inner Corrie ; E, Top of unclimbed gully (Diadem) ; F, start of The Sash on unclimbed gully ; IG, Will o' the Wisp ; II, Cinderella ; IJ, The Prow ; KK, Crescent Gully.

—*Crescent Gully*.—Grade III.

J. Clarkson & R. J. Tanton. February 1958. *S.M.C.J.* (1958), xxvi, 272.

The gully in the middle of the cliffs next to the Window. It starts as a diminishing snow shelf slanting slightly leftwards. A steep ice pitch of 50 ft. leads up to a large upper snowy amphitheatre. Marked G . . . G.

Creag Dubh (Newtonmore).—*Slanting Groove*. 310 ft. Very Severe. M. Owen & D. Gregory. August 1962.

Above and to the right of the buttress containing the climbs described in *S.M.C.J.* (1960), xxvii, 57-8, is a buttress with an obvious overhung groove, the line of which continues to the foot of the buttress. The climb starts mid-way between the foot of this line and a similar one under an obvious overhang on its left, in a small bay (cairn).

Climb diagonally left and then up to a ledge; traverse this rightwards then climb wall to tree belay, 70 ft. Move right into the groove and continue up this to a grass ledge. Continue left across the broken black wall to a good ledge beneath an overhang; Tree belay above, 90 ft. Follow the groove past several awkward bulges to an overhang which is climbed direct, followed by a small wall to a tree belay, 90 ft. Climb small steep walls behind the tree then scramble to finish, 60 ft.

BEN NEVIS

No. 3 Gully Buttress.—*Thompson's Route*. (FIRST WINTER ASCENT.) 500 ft. R. Marshall, J. R. Marshall & J. Stenhouse. December 1963.

The introductory chimneys were plentifully iced and severe in standard. The route presented a climb of considerable character and interest occupying some 3 hours.

—(FIRST WINTER ASCENT.) 350 ft. D. Haston & D. Gray (Rock & Ice). March 1963.

This ascent took the line of the narrow chimney gully to the right of Gargoyle Wall. The route presented several ice pitches and occupied 4 hours.

South Trident Buttress.—*Jubilation*. (FIRST WINTER ASCENT.) 700 ft. R. Marshall, J. R. Marshall & J. Stenhouse. December 1963.

Climb the Jubilee Route to the awkward 10-ft. pitch. Traverse left into twin chimneys; a 60-ft. ice pitch in the right-hand branch leads to a snow bay. Regain the left chimney and climb 80 ft. on steep ice to the easier upper chimneys. Climb these for several hundred feet to the final arête of the Buttress. The standard was at least Severe; the climb took 4 hours.

Polldubh Crags: Cavalry Crack Buttress.—*Fang*. 140 ft. Severe. W. Skidmore, P. McKenzie & J. Crawford (G.M.C.). July 1963.

This is a piton climb on the front of the buttress starting a few feet right of Vampire at small overhang beneath a tall steep wall (arrow). Climb the wall by an open groove (pitons) to a big hold (55 ft.). Traverse left by

an oblique crack and gain a small ledge beneath another groove, piton belay. Climb the groove (2 pitons) and surmount an overhang on its right to reach an upper groove which is followed to a large grass ledge at the top (70 ft.).

CAIRNGORMS

Ben Macdhui: Coire Sputan Dearg.—*Terminal Wall.* 230 ft. Very Severe. B. T. Lawrie & J. McCartney (Etchachan C.). 8th September 1963.

On the big wall right of Terminal Buttress; follows the obvious fault on the left edge of the wall. Starts 10 ft. right of Terminal Buttress with cairn and arrow.

Climb up and over an overhang, then left to stance on edge. Climb cracks above, then a fault to a sloping ledge leading right. From its end, step up, then stride left and up to stance. Go immediately round corner on hidden foot hold; then by cracks and split blocks to plateau.

Grey Man's Crag.—*Grey Slab.* 450 ft. Very Severe. M. Higgins (C.C.). J. C. Innes & B. T. Lawrie (Etchachan C.). 14th September 1963.

Follows conspicuous dièdre trending left up the middle of the face between the Lucifer Route and Hanging Dyke, and joins the former immediately before its crux.

From the lowest rocks scramble up broken rocks to last prominent platform below dièdre, 80 ft., arrow and cairn. Continue up shallow depression and move right to a stance at foot of dièdre, flake belay. Climb the dièdre to grass platform and piton belay. Climb corner to the left by bridging to an overhang which is turned on the left, then rightwards to finish at grass platform and belay. Continue by a corner at the right-hand edge of the large slab above, until forced to move left by a traverse across flake cracks which lead to Lucifer Route. Finish by this route.

—*Janus.* (FIRST WINTER ASCENT.)

Grade II. J. McCartney, T. Mackie & B. T. Lawrie. 2nd March 1963.

The start was made to the right of the normal route at a big ice pitch. The summer route was then followed until it branches left above Glissade Gully. Here, due to unsuitable conditions, a gully on the right was followed to a snow arête abutting against a short iced groove; whence by snow slopes to the plateau.

Cairn Gorm: Hell's Lum Crag.—*Girdle Traverse.* 1000 ft. Severe. M. George (C.C.) & D. Pyper. 1st June 1963.

Climb 100 ft. of Escalator then start the traverse left under the overlaps. Move along about 100 ft. to a small corner, peg belay. Friction across slab for 25 ft. and descend diagonally to a point on Kiwi Slabs. Continue horizontally until a tricky descent is made to the foot of the dièdre of the Wee Devil. A further 100 ft. of broken slabs lead just below the 'Haven,'

to enter the Hell Fire Corner below pitch 3. Climb this route for 100 ft. and strike out left by a series of very small ledges until below a very black roof. Climb to the right of the roof and continue left crossing Deep Cut Chimney at a little over half-height. Finish up Hell's Lump.

Sgòr an Lochan Uaine.—*The Shroud.* (FIRST WINTER ASCENT.) 500 ft. 3 hours, Grade IV. I. A. MacEacheran & J. Knight. 9th February 1964.

A first-class climb, it follows the obvious narrow gully to the left of Chockstone Gully.

Climb over ice-covered rocks to the foot of the gully proper, which was followed throughout. There were three ice pitches, the first being the most difficult.

GLENCOE

Aonach Dubh: North Face.—*Kuf.* 400 ft. Very Severe. D. Haston & R. Campbell. October 1963.

Goes up the white wall to the right of Ossian's Cave.

Climb the steep wall to a large flake (peg runner). Traverse right, then up the steep crack on the edge of the buttress (2 peg runners). Climb easier cracks to Pleasant Terrace.

West Face, 'D' Buttress.—*The Lid.* 200 ft. Severe (pitons). B. W. Robertson. 14th February 1964.

Just right of the black gully separating Buttresses 'C' and 'D' there is a large roof; cairn and arrow mark the start.

Climb a short steep wall to a ledge at 15 ft. (rocks on first ascent were iced). Continue up and out for 20 ft., climbing three roofs; pitons; belay at 60 ft. Follow a brown fault to finish.

NOTES

Skye Notes

Sgùrr an Fheadain, Fluted Buttress: King Cobra, Variation.—On the first pitch climb the dièdre passing the rusty piton (where the first party traversed right) and belay at the abseil sling. This avoids the 'precarious' belay. Climb up and right, obviously, into the crucial dièdre at the piton runner and finish the climb. (I. A. MacEacheran & M. Anderson, August 1963.)

Central Highland Notes

Creag Meaghaidh: Centre Post Direct.—Brian Robertson sends this account of the first complete ascent of this route by himself, with E. Cairn, and F. Harper on the 22nd February 1964:—

'We left the Squirrels' hut in Glencoe just after 11.30 on Friday night, and drove up to the farmhouse, 4 miles from the cliffs on Creag Meaghaidh.

After walking for an hour, we pitched our tent at the bottom of the cliffs at about 3 a.m. In the morning, a large breakfast was eaten in preparation for an assault on one of the last great problems of Scottish mountaineering. We were in no doubt that, if ripe, it would be picked like a plum from under the very eye of the S.M.C. and C.D.M.C. hard men.

It took us just under an hour to cover the lower 1000 ft. to the great unclimbed pillar of green ice: the lower section consisted of snow-ice and water-ice set at a moderate angle of 45 degrees. On this section we found traces of steps, only to hear from the farmer the following day that none other than Tom Patey and Joe Brown had made an attempt on the Centre Post Direct the previous weekend. They had told him that they had climbed to within 10 ft. of the top of the central section. However, when we did make an assault on this section, the steps (a great many of them) continued on the right edge of the ice, which we considered a "wee bit cheating." Our line was approximately 30 ft. to the left of that "holy ladder," which involved cutting steps on vertical water-ice, but luckily enough it eased off to 80 degrees higher up. It took the leader 4 hours to overcome the pitch, and a combined time of 2 hours for the second and third men. Five ice-pegs were used for protection.

Creag Meaghaidh, The South Post.—I. A. MacEacheran and J. Knight report an ascent of this gully on which they climbed both the first and third pitches. This is the first ascent of the third pitch, the biggest in the gully. It was very steep and was climbed from bottom left to top right. Four ice screws were used for aid while holds were cut on the crucial section vertical for 20 ft. It took 2½ hours to climb and is the hardest pitch on the South Post.

Glencoe Notes

Buachaille Etive Mòr; East Face, North Buttress.—B. W. Robertson reports a free ascent of **White Wall Crack** and considers the route climbed thus harder than the crux pitch of **Carnivore**.

The Gallows Route Variation.—reported by B. W. Robertson (*S.M.C.J.* (1963) xxvii, 387) is NOT the upper part of BLUEBELL GROOVE but is indeed a variation of **Gallows Route** made by D. D. Stewart and J. R. Marshall about 1950.

Southern Highland Notes

Craig-y-Barns, Dunkeld.—Since our last notes on the subject (*S.M.C.J.* (1960) xxvii, 69) many new routes have been made. They are detailed in the entertaining Edinburgh University M.C. Guide to **Craig-y-Barns**, edited by Campbell and Macniven. A few of the new ones are described below by Neil Macniven.

On **Lover's Leap Crag**, the 'unclimbed overhanging crack' of the above reference makes a better start to the route (40 ft., Severe); the curving crack 30 ft. to the left has also been climbed.

On **Polney Crag** or **West Buttress** (beside the road) a 600 ft. Severe girdle traverse has been made. Also, **Kestrel Crack**, 120 ft., Severe: climb slabs right of Consolation Corner and follow slanting crack with awkward start. Behind the dead tree, the large continuous piece of rock has: **The Groove**, 100 ft., Very Severe: climb initial overhang at obvious break, go up left into clean-cut groove to top. **The Wriggle**, 100 ft., Very Severe, starts as the previous, but goes right and up an undercut crack. Above Duncan Hogg's Hole is **Hogg's Hindquarters**, 80 ft., V.D.; there are many lesser routes.

On **Cave Crag**, the easternmost, visible through trees, are 2 tiers. On the **Lower Tier** there is a Severe girdle and: **The Hood**, 100 ft., Severe: starts directly beneath hooded overhang at top; up, hand-traverse right and up grooves to hood, then by exposed left traverse to rib and to top. The **Upper Tier** is very steep: one abseil finishes 20 ft. out from the base. At the left end are 2 ramps with an awkward wall at the top (120 ft., Severe). To the right are 3 routes: **The Squirm**, 110 ft., Very Severe: climb rightward then back left to smooth overhung slab; climb this with peg, traverse left and up exposed wall to overhung ledge by a contortioning mantleshelf and so to top. **The Harrow**, 100 ft., Very Severe and A.2, starts 15 ft. right of previous; climb to and up steep corner on to a sloping ledge; then climb the overhang (2 pitons, etrier) to spike and pull up to finish; this is the hardest route so far. **The Corner**, 90 ft., Very Severe, is the obvious corner to right of the previous. A good 100 ft. Severe lies round the corner, and further right still are slabs with 2 good routes, the left edge (a good descent) and the right corner.

These climbs, in an area certainly the best for day trips from Edinburgh, were all first led by Robin Campbell except the Groove (Robin Smith) and The Squirm and The Harrow (Neil Macniven).

There is also a new route, **The Rat Race**, 140 ft., Very Severe, climbed by B. W. Robertson & J. McLean (C.D.M.C.) in October 1963; but the description of location is inadequate and we will leave it until next issue.

Fife, Bishop Hill.—Macniven pointed out that there are some 20 good 30-40 ft. practice climbs behind Carlin Maggie and elsewhere, including the outside face of Carlin Maggie. He found some 30 routes of up to 90 ft. on the sea cliffs of **Aberdour**, and a girdle (exciting if the tide is in). In **Ravenscraig Park, Kirkcaldy**, there are minor routes on the sandstone cliffs (explored by himself and the Kirkcaldy M.C.).

Miscellaneous Notes

Office-Bearers.—**James R. Marshall** needs no introduction, except as the new **Assistant Editor**, particularly responsible for organising the New Climbs Section of the *Journal*, one of the most time-consuming tasks the Club can offer and one of the most useful to the community: for it is from these annual accounts that mountains and men are measured, and the Scottish Mountaineering Trust derives its *Guides* and its profits.

Gall Inglis has taken over Distribution of the *Journal*, and Coats the organisation of **Meets**. To all of these pillars the Editor does, and the Club should, record grateful thanks.

A Matter of Trust.—That body, the **Scottish Mountaineering Trust**, has been mentioned often in these pages, but usually obliquely and with no good grace. Himself an unwilling and *in officio* Trustee, the Hon. Editor has for the past two years endeavoured to coax a more enthusiastic member of the S.M.T. to uncover in these pages, as truthfully as possible, the reasons for its existence, and the progress it has made; and the future it may offer us. But no. J. K. W. Dunn, for example, has twice retreated from the edge; and he remains, for most of us, 'draped disconsolate over a chair' (*S.M.C.J.* (1961) xxvii, 192) despite the subsequent splendour of his triumph at the 1962 A.G.M. So we must conclude with MacLennan (quoting Elton on that same page) that 'the *actual* purpose of the Trust, he pointed out with devastating candour, was to avoid liability for tax.'

Hence the embarrassed silence? Surely there are more positive aims for this body? May we be enlightened soon, by their *publication*.

Munros, Beards and Weather was the title of a very amusing article by John Dow long ago (*S.M.C.J.* (1933) xx, 113). Although it is only a short time since we first invited news from Munroists (*S.M.C.J.* (1961) xxvii, 174) the Achievement is now so commonplace that Mr. P. A. Larder, himself a secure No. 44, has written to suggest that, since over 50 souls have made their great ascent, the 'publishing of completers' names should be terminated' unless news value is attained by 'some unusual feat, fact or record' . . . unless 'anything of outstanding rather than routine interest appears.' Dow found interest outstanding in unusual combinations of Beards, Munros and Weather; and Mr Larder, loth to stop at 3000 ft., has scraped out other coincidentals for the names already published. We cannot, alas, make space for this latest sorting of Weather, Beards and Munros, but here are some fascinating glimpses from Larder's record (neither can we, dare we, vouch for its accuracy!):—

'Fastest Munro completer—P. A. LARDER—in 16 months (8/5/60 to 3/9/61—although a 5½ months' "rest" halfway through makes this really only 10½ months' "work").

'Fastest completer of all 294 mountains over 3000 ft. in G.B. and Ireland—P. A. LARDER—in 17½ months (15/4/60 to 1/10/61—again 5½ months' "rest" makes this 12 months' "work").

'Most solo—Miss L. TICEHURST—all but 10 solo (3 on mainland and 7 on Skye).

'Most completely alone (meeting nobody or being with nobody)—Miss L. TICEHURST—all but 17 (10 on mainland, 7 on Skye).

'Most mist-free tops—234 by K. M. ANDREW.

'Most in a Calendar Year—144 by P. A. LARDER (actually in only 6½ months).

'Most in a year (day to day)—178 by P. A. LARDER (really only 6½ months).

'Shortest number of outings required—120 by P. A. LARDER.

'First Husband and Wife—Mr & Mrs J. HIRST, 1947.

'First and Only Father and Son—J. Y. & C. G. MACDONALD, 1958. . . .

The torments of a walk to Seana Bhraigh might be pleasantly aggravated by thinking not only of one's predecessors, the cloud dispelling Mr Andrew or the solitary Miss Ticehurst, but also of future conjunctions of outstanding interest, showing Daring ('First ever in crampons (summer and winter)') . . . Stamina ('First to drink a bottle of Glenlivet at every cairn over 3900 ft. and a half-bottle at every cairn under 3200 ft.') . . . or Perinatal Determination ('Longest-lived female completer under 2 years of age') . . .

Larder, whilst suggesting that good places for the 'Record bag within 24 hours' would be the Cuillin ridge and Blaven (12) or Glen Shiel for the mainland (10), nobly and properly protests against conscious record-breaking and notes innocently that 'the above facts seem just to have happened.' We are much indebted to him; he has brought Beards and Weather back to the remorseless and inhuman *Lists*.

Munroists continue to arrive panting at the top. Here are the latest batch, most of them shepherded into these pages by the indefatigable Mr Eric Maxwell; the conventions are as in previous issues, *q.v.*: (52) G. M. Smith, 1963; (53) W. L. Wood, 1963; (54) I. A. Robertson, 1963; (55) J. Cosgrove, 1963.

Maxwell records an anecdote well worthy of the Beards-and-Weather school: 'I was with Mr Cosgrove on his last, Ben Wyvis. We drove golf balls along the top ridge and lost them in the mist—perhaps a surprise in store for some future walker. . . .' First ever? Peanuts to Mecca. . . .

Naismith's Formula goes marching on—1 hour for every 3 miles flat plus 1 hour for each 1500 ft. of ascent. This summer members of Kelvinside Academy Cobbler Club did the round of the Five Munros of Arrochar. Merely as an illustration of how actual times can measure up to the Formula over a long day of some eleven miles and 9500 vertical feet, with a party aged from 14 years upwards, we give the following (observed times first, theoretical in parentheses): Loch Restil, 8.46 a.m. (8.46 a.m.); Beinn an Lochain, 9.46 (10.06); Loch Restil, 10.20 (10.26); Beinn Narnain, 12.20 (12.33); Beinn Ime, 1.44 (1.41); Ben Vane, 3.50 (2.59); Loch Sloy, 4.50 (3.29); Ben Vorlich, 6.25 (4.57); Loch Sloy, 7.25 (5.19).

Kindred Clubs.—We are not publishing in this issue another full account in the series, but the following information on a very active group, THE SQUIRRELS, came to us in the course of correspondence with a member thereof. The member's name appeared on some new climbs (sent in *after* our time limit, end of February, so kept until next issue), and the name was 'Bugs.' He writes: 'I would prefer to be known as Bugs since nobody knows who Alasdair McKeith is, anyway. I know the matter is trivial but I quote something I read recently—that, legally, a person's name is what he is normally called.

'Also—the **Squirrels**: as a climber's club it was formed on 1st January 1963 by a group from Edinburgh and Fife. Membership is restricted; new members may join only through invitation. Normal qualifications are a reasonable standard on rock and ice and at least one Alpine season. Test climbs are 0·5 Gully solo, Shibboleth in the wet, and all the Himalayan 8000's in 24 hours. . . . Members have put up at least 14 new routes in Glencoe, on Ben Nevis, Creag Meaghaidh and Braceriach. The *President* is George Anderson, *Treasurer*, D. Bathgate and *Secretary*, J. Renny, 17 Parkside Street, Rosyth, Fife.

BUGS.'

Occupational Therapy.—Though counterpane, or fringe, activities are not usually publicised in this *Journal*, the Editor has sympathy with the following note sent in by a member; for, whilst looking at the N.E. ridge of Aonach Beag, he fell off a roadside wa' and soothed some of the ensuing chair-ridden months with, by a strange coincidence, this very narcotic; and can recommend its adoption by all those caged to furious inactivity. Certainly, the shrewder Expedition leaders, or deputy leaders, are alive to the lower, more commercial, advantages of the fancy.

MOUNTAIN SCENERY ON POSTAGE STAMPS

The portrayal of mountain scenery and of individual mountains, as the main feature in the design on postage stamps, has been in vogue for some 70 years. This practice has increased in popularity, many of the mountains of the world now being displayed in this way.

An attempt to form a collection of these stamps, entailing as it does some considerable research and planning of the most effective method of display, is no bad way of spending a period of inaction imposed by a fall or by some illness requiring rest.

Perhaps the best way to begin is to list all the stamps covered by the theme. For this the *Simplified Catalogue*, published by Messrs Stanley Gibbons and covering the whole world, is adequate. Most of the stamps required are illustrated and the names of the series shown are given.

The search will reveal the fact that some countries such as Austria and Switzerland favour these views much more than others, even though these last, such as Italy and Spain, may contain mountain scenery inviting reproduction. In the British Commonwealth, New Zealand and Tasmania show many such views; whilst of non-European countries Japan, Mexico, and several South American republics have all displayed some of their mountains.

The arrangement of the collection requires consideration. Perhaps the clearest method is to do this by continents.

The name of the country will head each page, and the notes on each stamp may perhaps consist of the name of the scene or mountain shown; its location; altitude; date of issue of the stamp; type of printing. For

clarity it is advisable not to over-crowd the page; some 8 to 10 stamps give the best result.

In addition to the stamps themselves, the field of collection may comprise other items. Covers (envelopes) and postcards bearing cachets impressed by club huts, or expedition leaders; special labels printed privately, with designs appropriate to their purpose, for placing on such items. An example of these latter is the one showing Mount Everest and the Rongbuk Glacier used by the Expedition in 1924.

Yet another section may be devoted to mountain flora and fauna. Stamps showing these are now very numerous, especially from Austria, Germany, Jugoslavia, and Bulgaria.

The collection may be completed with a series of outline maps by continents, showing the ranges and peaks exhibited in the album. These should be arranged so as to open free of the pages to which they refer.

Perhaps enough has been suggested here to make this gentle form of mountain research commend itself to those temporarily debarred from active mountaineering.

ROGER NORTH.

1963 Scottish East Greenland Expedition.—The following members of the mountaineering clubs of St Andrews University—Dr Phil. Gribbon (Leader), Ian Wasson, John Wedderburn, Ian Wilkinson—and of the Royal College of Science and Technology, Glasgow—Jock Anderson (Deputy Leader), Jack Bryceland, John Thorley and Adrian Todd—spent nine weeks in King Christian IX's Land at the Caledonia group of the southern Staunings Alps, East Greenland. Dr Gribbon writes:

'On 3rd July we flew by chartered aircraft to the air strip at Cape Dan on a small island off the mainland. We sailed 50 miles, first by schooner through thick pack ice and then by motor boat, to establish base camp at the head of the Tassissarsik inlet of Angmagssalik fiord. Our objectives were the unclimbed Quervains Bjoerg (8550 ft.) and Pointe de Harpon (8970 ft.), 90 miles inland, and close to Mont Forel (10,250 ft.), the second highest mountain in Greenland. We hired two dog teams and drivers but after one night's work at 3000 ft. on the ice field they retired due to dangerous snow conditions. It was impracticable, even by hauling the minimum of gear on our pulka sledges, to continue to the objectives. A successful attempt would require an expedition to drive its own dog teams, or have an advanced air drop.

'Four perfect weeks were spent in the spectacular Caledonia group, west of the Knud Rasmussen glacier, and south of the area in which Hans Gsellmann's 1959 Austrian expedition operated. We made 21 first ascents, the routes chosen being normally long, sustained and in the upper grades of technical difficulty. Most ascents were clean steep rock ridges, the finest being Grugagach (5370 ft.), Igitur (5770 ft.), Trident de Neptune (5980 ft.) and Obelisk (6200 ft.). A four-man party ascended the rock and ice north ridge route of our highest peak, Rytterknoegten (7020 ft.) on the same day as two members of the Schweizerische-Deutsche Gronland expedition

re-ascended André Roch's 1938 west ridge route, and bivouacked on the summit.

The final week was spent at the largest settlement, Angmagssalik, assessing the results of the subsidiary scientific programme. Both expeditions left Greenland on 6th September by charter plane to Iceland.

Access to Hills, 1964.—Quite apart from the doleful prophecies of *Inflator*, we remarked earlier (*S.M.C.J.* (1962) xxvii, 291) that access to winter hills would, as mushrooming Development Companies cashed in, become increasingly restricted. We warned that 'impertinent skiing or walking over the Company's pistes or corries could be construed as POACHING.' Particular attention should be paid to recent developments in the southern Cairngorms where efforts have been made this year to justify the blurb's claim of a 'Spectacular New Ski Resort' with 'continental amenities.' To this end large parts of Ben MacDhui, Braeriach, Cairntoul and Beinn a' Bhùird are pressed into the pamphlets, though one may doubt whether the type of person attracted to Fun lodges would enjoy the terrain or weather of the Higher Cairngorms. More helpfully, the 'continental amenities' provide '20 acres of artificial snow,' fed to the paying inmates. What worries us is where the fences will be put, and where the patrols; especially as the Scottish climate is approaching normality again after a sequence of ski-happy winters, and dismayed financiers hungry after God's own snow will not lightly wish to share it.

Keep your eyes open: this is how the process starts.

Uniquely Scottish.—The frontispiece, last issue, was not Loch Cluanie, as the photographer thought, but one of the Unmentionable New Lochs mentioned earlier (*S.M.C.J.* (1962) xxvii, 288): the new extension of Loch Loyne, recently opened by the Hydro Board. Scott Johnstone found it out.

ADDITIONS TO THE LIBRARY—1963

Section numbers in parentheses—(26) *Alpine Journal*, Index to Vols. 33-58; (8) *Annapurna II* (Grant, 1961); (9) *Artist among the Mountains* (Price, 1957); (7A) *Climbing with Josef Georges* (Thomson, 1963); (26) *Clogwyn du'r Arddu* (Climbers Club, 1962); (26) *Dolomites, Selected Climbs in* (Alpine Club, 1963); (8) *Himalayan Journal*, Index to Vols. 1-21; (8) *High in the Thin Cold Air* (Hillary & Doig, 1963); (15) *Highways and Byways in the Central Highlands* (Seton Gordon, 1949); (15) *Land of Lorne & Isles of Rest* (Barnett, 1933); (10) *Memoirs of a Mountaineer* (Chapman, 1951); (7) *Mont Blanc, Le Massif, Vallées et Sommets* (Laulaynet, 1947); (8) *Mount Everest, Formation, Population and Exploration of the Region* (Hagen and others, 1963); (24) *Mountain World 1960-61*; (26) *Norway, Rock Climbing Guides to Jotunheim, Nordmore, Romsdal, Arctic Norway Sunnmore, Lofoten* (all 1953); (26) *Norway, Mountain Holidays in* (the above in one vol.) (Norway Travel Association, 1963); (24) *Picture History of Mountaineering* (Clark, 1956); (1) *Pyrenees, The* (Belloc, 1909); (9A) *Rock Climbing* (Knock, 1963); (5) *Safety in the New Zealand Mountains* (Federation of Mountain Clubs of N.Z., 1963); (7) *Tyrol, The* (in German) (Haushofer, 1899).

Scottish Mountain Accidents, 1963

THERE seems to be a total of 30 incidents this last year, a welcome decline from previous figures; 7 were benightments and 3 were fatal. A large proportion of those involved were under 25 years of age.

The accidents occurred in Skye (2), Nevis (6, and 2 benightments), Glencoe (4, and 2 benightments) and Cairngorm area (4, and 1 benightment). The increasing popularity of the far north-west is shown by the occurrence of 5 accidents there. The Arrochar hills had 4—all in winter conditions.

Hard underfoot conditions were almost certainly the cause of most of the accidents and benightments during the first four months. Similar conditions were also responsible for the accidents in December. Several of them are known to have occurred through slips on iced rocks; one party was avalanched and one young boy lost his life glissading.

The distribution of these accidents, which comes almost entirely in the two periods when ice and snow were present on the hills, underlines the necessity for those who climb or traverse Scottish mountains between late November and early May to have proper equipment and knowledge for snow and ice conditions.

We wish again to pay tribute to the R.A.F. Mountain Rescue Service and all the other voluntary workers who have given their time and energy so willingly to bring help to those injured on the hills.

A. I. L. M.

1ST JANUARY.—? from Liverpool. Fatal, Lochnagar.

6TH JANUARY.—Bruce Baxter, Paul Easton (R.A.F.). Injuries, Liathach.

6TH JANUARY.—Miss Leitch (Scottish Ski Club). Benightment, Cairnwell.

2ND FEBRUARY.—David Muircroft (20). Injuries, Cobbler.

13TH FEBRUARY.—Donald Stobbie (24), R.A.F., Leuchars. Injuries, Ben Nevis.

17TH FEBRUARY.—Roy S. Allan (30). Fractured ankle, Beinn an Lochain.

23RD FEBRUARY.—Miss B. Wicks (26). Injuries, Ben Nevis.

24TH FEBRUARY.—Carl Hannigan (20). Fractured ankle, Cobbler.

17TH MARCH.—Alasdair McKeith (17) and Howard Friedman (40). Benightment, Tower Ridge, Ben Nevis.

30TH MARCH.—Elizabeth Welsh (19) (Ferranti M.C.). Injuries, Ben Nevis.

14TH APRIL.—Derek Parker (40). Benighted, Cairngorm.

14TH APRIL.—? from Dundee. Injuries to legs, Aonach Eagach.

18TH MAY.—Alfred Jeffries (51). Injuries, Ben Starav.

17th JUNE.—Brenda Boyce (25). Experienced. Injuries, Window Buttress, Sgùrr Dearg.

20TH JULY.—Joseph Rafferty (19). Head injuries, Flake Route, Red Craig.

- 16TH AUGUST.—J. B. Shepherd (22). Injuries, Cruach Tuirc, Glen Fyne.
 21ST AUGUST.—John Ogden (16). Injuries, A'Chioch, Coire Lagan.
 15TH SEPTEMBER.—D. S. Redman. Injured ankle, Coire Lochain.
 15TH SEPTEMBER.—Philip Marden (23). Injuries, Coire Cas.
 20TH SEPTEMBER.—Harold Lawton (19) and Kenneth Hall (18).
 Benightment on Stob Coire an Lochain.
 22ND SEPTEMBER.—Albert Hancock (28). Head injuries, Liathach.
 28TH SEPTEMBER.—J. D. Brownlow (48). Fatal, Liathach.
 1ST DECEMBER.—Allan Blades (16). Fatal, glissading, An Teallach.
 17TH DECEMBER.—Ian McConnell (22). Injuries, Central Buttress,
 Cobbler.
 23RD DECEMBER.—A. MacInnes. Benightment, Loch Carron area.
 24TH DECEMBER.—M. D. Taylor (17) and J. P. Charlesworth (25).
 Injuries, avalanched, Ben Nevis.

IN MEMORIAM

GEORGE GRAHAM MACPHEE

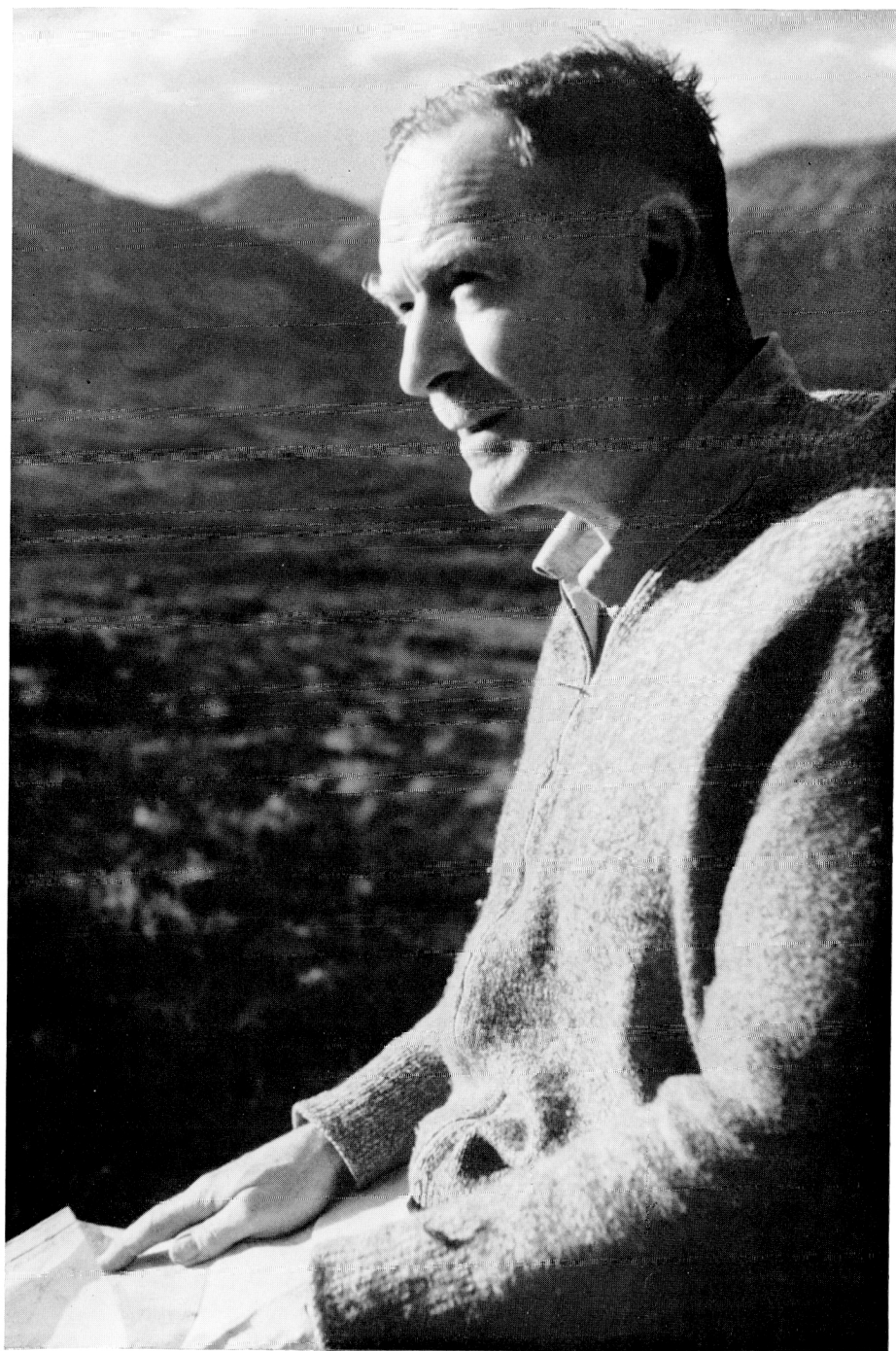
1898-1963

GRAHAM MACPHEE was killed in February 1963 in the Canary Islands while descending the summit cone of El Tide, normally a walk, but on this occasion covered by an unusual amount of ice and snow, and we have lost a great mountaineer and an outstanding personality. We extend our deepest sympathy to his wife and family.

He was born and educated in Glasgow, and in 1915 he joined the H.L.I. at the age of 17. He was then transferred to the Royal Flying Corps and served as a pilot in France until he was shot down and made prisoner. After the war he graduated in medicine at Glasgow University and after further studies in Vienna he moved to Liverpool where he settled.

He started mountaineering in 1924 and although he did a great deal of climbing in the Lake District, Wales and the Alps, most of his climbing was done in Scotland. He joined the S.M.C. in 1926 and did much to advance mountaineering in Scotland, in his work for the Mountain Rescue Committee and as President of the S.M.C. from 1952 to 1954, but undoubtedly his greatest efforts went towards the editing of the Rock Climbing Guide to Ben Nevis. Everything he did was done with enthusiasm, and he set himself the task of climbing and classifying every route, motoring from Liverpool to Ben Nevis weekend after weekend. This was probably one of the few self-imposed tasks in which he failed, as a new generation of mountaineers were opening up new routes faster than even he could climb them. There remain to his name, however, no fewer than twenty first ascents on Ben Nevis, and in 1954, while President, he made his hundredth ascent.

In 1955 he completed the ascent of all the Munros, a remarkable feat,



Dr G. Graham Macphee.

D. Scott

as many of his annual holidays were spent in the Alps. I remember meeting him returning after a weekend trip from Liverpool to climb the Fannichs, which was typical of the kind of expeditions he did. He was complaining bitterly that if one of the party had not slept in (the only other member of the party was with him) they would have climbed all the tops, but they had to descend before reaching the last top, as it would never do for the President of the S.M.C. to be benighted, and he would now have to do another 800 miles of motoring to climb the last top.

He was always reticent about his achievements. In *S.M.C.J.* (1933) xx, 219, under *S.M.C. Abroad*, he states shortly 'He ascended the Aiguille Noire de Peuterey by what appears to be a new route up the south face, and descended by the ordinary route. This climb was done alone as his companion turned back at the start.' It was eventually learnt that his companion, an expert rock climber, had refused to cross an easy glacier at the foot, and enraged, he had continued alone, but further details of what must have been a magnificent climb were not forthcoming.

His last visit to the Alps was in 1958 when he was 60 years old. He climbed eleven peaks of over 4000 metres, then went to the Centenary Meet of the Alpine Club at Zermatt. His first expedition there was the ascent of the Dent d'Hérens. The party left the Schönbühl Hut at 1.30 a.m. and got back at 5 p.m. in a snowstorm, and after a stop of half an hour for a meal, went on to Zermatt, which was reached at 9 p.m. The next evening the President of the Alpine Club in his speech at the dinner, described this feat by a 'remarkable elderly gentlemen,' which Graham afterwards said was uncalled for, as he was neither remarkable nor old. The next day the party went up to the Betemps Hut, and the following morning he led up the Nordend of Monte Rosa. The going was heavy most of the way in soft snow, and the other members of the party offered to take the lead from time to time, but were told that he had asked them to climb with him not to pull him up.

He was a regular attender at our Annual Meetings and his opinions were clear cut and put in a forthright manner. It was always a pleasure to meet him and to hear his latest news or his comments on whatever matter was concerning him at the time given with his pawky humour and poker face. By all who knew him he is greatly missed.

W. B. S.

ALLAN ARTHUR

THERE must be but few members alive who knew Allan Arthur, and fewer still who ever climbed, or rather raced with him; for he seemed to be possessed by some demon, and while the party with which he had started was reaching its first top, Allan had long since passed it and was racing ahead for the next and the next again.

And this demon seemed to follow him into his business, till, at last, it brought on a nervous breakdown from which he never recovered.

He joined the Club in 1909, was a V.P. in 1935-37, and before his

illness he was a regular attender at the Meets and ever a lover of our Scottish hills.

J. S. M. J.

NEIL H. MACNIVEN

ANOTHER good man has gone. Neil Macniven had just turned 21 when he went out to Chamonix with me for his third Alpine season. I don't think it would offend anyone to say that he was the most promising of up-and-coming Scottish mountaineers. Since coming to Edinburgh University in 1960, drawn, as I was, by the prospect of climbing beside such heroes as Robin Smith rather than by any academic considerations, he had knocked off almost every major Scottish rock-climb and a good few English and Welsh ones too, without much apparent difficulty.

I had the good fortune to accompany him on many of these climbs. He was a very good friend to me, tolerant of my frequent cowardice in high places, and refusing to remark on it afterwards. Instances which spring to mind are his indifference to my obvious relief when the coin fell heads to him on the second pitch of Sassenach on Ben Nevis and on the last pitch of North Crag Eliminate on Castle Rock of Triermain.

Neil never seemed to get much done in the winter. The weather had a lot to do with this, since there hasn't been a good winter season since 1960. He had a number of somewhat hilarious escapades on Ben Nevis. On one occasion an unkind little avalanche swept us out of the upper reaches of Comb Gully to drop us after numerous bounces down at the foot of the snowfield grinning wryly at each other, nursing sprained ankles and crampon wounds, but otherwise unhurt.

He was injured last year when a Frenchman knocked a stone on to his head on the West Face of the Blaitière, which fractured his skull. And despite being rescued brilliantly and quickly under appalling conditions he died a week later in hospital without regaining consciousness.

His death was a tragedy for his parents, for those of us who knew him and climbed with him in Edinburgh and for the Club, who can ill afford to lose men like him, since there are so few.

R. N. C.

No detailed obituary is available, as we go to Press, for the following members, whose deaths we record with great regret: **J. Currie Henderson, R. R. Macdonald, and R. C. Paterson.**

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB

Easter Meet 1963—Kinlochewe

For this Meet we have the accidental luxury of two independent reports:

The advance guard (2) arrived on Tuesday evening and spent Wednesday walking to A'Mhaighdean and back in warm sunshine and over almost snowless hills. Next day they had an easier but colder day on Fionn Bheinn and experienced the fringe of some snow showers which swept across Loch Torridon. The majority of members arrived that evening and awoke next morning to find even their cars well blanketed in snow. A high wind and intermittent snow showers persisted throughout the day but there were on some hills prolonged clear spells with rewarding views—a not unsatisfactory day. Saturday plastered the tops with much soft snow but at lower levels it was incessant driving rain. The only climbing recorded was some rock scrambling on the cliffs at Diabeg. Others preferred to do their exploration by car. On Sunday the weather relented and everyone was out again on the hills but the going was heavy in places and several parties who visited the Mullach Coire Mhic Fhearchair group had a fairly long day. For those who were still free to climb, Monday provided the best day of the Meet with a foretaste of summer weather.

A feature of the Meet for some was a game of General Post between the hotel, the annexe and a sumptuous caravan, one member having sampled all three in the course of the weekend. His verdict is still awaited as to whether the comfort and privacy of the latter outweighed the inconvenience of crossing open country for a bath.

W. L. C.

A short but heavy snowstorm in the Central Highlands on Good Friday delayed, or deterred, some members attending the Meet, the Hon. Meets Secretary being one of the non-arrivals. The weekend began with deep soft snow on the high ground, and unpleasant conditions over all, but the weather progressively improved, until those departing on Easter Monday had the best weather of the weekend.

The weather on Saturday forenoon was so uninviting that a few members who remained in the hotel, hoping for an improvement, were moved to draw the curtains! The hotel put us up very comfortably, but a midnight intruder disturbed some members the first night. The Ling Hut had a few occupants, and there were some members camping further down Glen Torridon.

On the road leading to the Heights of Kinlochewe, a notice read 'Beware of Snakes.'

At a meeting held to decide the place of the Easter Meet 1964 it was decided to go to Loch Laggan Inn, where the proprietor hoped to offer both accommodation as well as rooms in the hotel. The hotel was, however, subsequently burnt down and the second choice, Inchnadamph, substituted.

W. C. C.

Climbs included : A'Mhaighdean, Beinn Tarsuinn, Mullach Coire Mhic Fhearchair, Sgùrr Bànn, Fionn Bheinn, Moruisg, Maol Chean Dearg, Sgòrr Ruadh, Beinn Liath Mhòr, Beinn Damph, Beinn Alligin, Liathach and Slioch. Present were : **Kinlochewe Hotel and Merlinwood** : The President, I. M. Campbell, W. C. Carmichael, W. L. Coats, M. H. Cooke, J. C. Donaldson, R. R. Elton, R. M. G. Inglis, J. N. Ledingham, D. McArthur, R. W. Martin, I. M. M. McPhail, M. Morrison, T. Nicholson, H. Stirling, T. E. Thomson, J. Wood (Guest), and F. R. Wylie. **Ling Hut** : G. S. Johnstone, G. S. Roger, J. S. Stewart, J. Harradine (J.M.C.S.) and G. T. White (Guest).

Reception

THE speaker was Don Whillans and the subject the Towers of Paine and how those graceless conquistadores surmounted every obstacle including 700 bottles of Guinness, natural indolence, howling winds and inconsiderate Italians ; perfectly delivered with a studied flatness contrasting agreeably with the phallic self-importance of the peaks themselves.

Annual General Meeting

There is no space for an objective report, so we may be briefly subjective after studying the sparse notes of our correspondent. Various Office-Bearers exhibited their burdens and their skill, heroism or mere ineptitude in carrying them ; the Editor referred to his plan for easing the financial load of the *Journal* on the Club by making the Trust pay for the first publication of that information which it later profitably stole ; various gentlemen like Smart and Weir endeavoured to convince members how foolish they would be to allow last year's wife-mad decision to stand ; various other gentlemen explained it was a *fait accompli* with agreements implemented, and how much expense had already been incurred in starting the Improvements consequent on female admission to Lagangarbh ; and nobody, apparently, asked why upwards of £1000 of good *Journal*-money was cheerfully to be decked out on the weekend residence of so self-confessedly very few members : but then, since so very few go to Lagangarbh, so very few could be entitled to query. Q.E.D.

Apart from this still tender spot, our correspondent reports no other interest.

Dinner

Here, though, our correspondent, inspired, writes : ' This Dinner will be remembered for the spectacle of the Top Table forming two's in the corridor and shambling to their seats with the enthusiasm of aristocrats queueing for the guillotine. The President made his theme a review of the past quarter century of S.M.C. endeavour, which in no way undermined Dr Bell's subsequent discourse as the Club's honoured guest. Bell's humour flowed like an underground burn, seldom overt but bubbling

delightfully beneath it all. The meal was good and the arrangements a triumph for the Western District organisers' [our correspondent is an organiser, of the Western District].

New Year Meet 1964—Glencoe

What has become of the bravado much vaunted in the Club Song? As with the New Year Meet at Fort William four years ago, so it was again this year. Far from mounting attack and foray on mountain peak and corrie, many big hobnailers appeared reluctant to attempt the crossing of the main watershed. Or are we to suppose that they have secret contacts with the Met. Office? For in truth, the real hazard was not the watershed but the water spouts of Glencoe which opened up on the night of 1st January and did not cease for two days.

For the previous two days conditions had been reasonably good, marred only by some cloud on the tops and practically no snow below 3000 ft.

Meall a'Bhùiridh and Bidean nam Bian were visited on Tuesday by early arrivals. The majority arrived at Lagangarbh and Glencoe Hotel on Tuesday evening (it is not quite clear at which Turnbull qualified for residence) and everyone enjoyed good climbing on Wednesday. The objectives achieved included Beinn a'Bheithir, Pap of Glencoe and Sgòr nam Fiannaidh, Buachaille Etive Mòr (including the Serpentine) and Ben Starav. Two members who arrived that evening were unfortunately balked of any climbing.

The official headquarters of the Meet being Lagangarbh, the hierarchy were there in residence but they were cajoled into partaking of their New Year dinner at Glencoe Hotel. In consequence the meeting to decide on next year's rendezvous was held there in the warmth of a very comfortable lounge much to the gratification of resident members. The vote was in favour of Crianlarich, failing which, Kenmore.

Next morning the Presidential entourage at Lagangarbh, after a late breakfast, decided to pack up and go home. Most of the camp followers at the hotel had already preceded them. Three optimists stayed on till next day; of these two ventured forth on Friday morning just in case the day might improve, but it didn't and they too departed after lunch.

Having effected such a summary dispatch of the main body of the Meet, Glencoe then produced some good weather over the next three days including two days of glorious sunshine. These were enjoyed by a small resurgence of the Meet which arrived on Saturday morning, some staying at Lagangarbh while others sought more primeval quarters. Climbs included Buachaille Etive Beag and Mòr ('D' Gully Buttress), Bidean nam Bian from Coire Gabhail, Ben Sguilard and Beinn a' Bheithir.

Those present: **Lagangarbh** (1) **Hut**: The President, G. S. Roger, D. Scott, J. S. Stewart and, later, I. H. Ogilvie and C. Warren (Guest). (2) **Camping**: E. S. Chapman, B. S. Fraser, and later C. C. Corrie, G. M. Smith and W. T. Taylor (J.M.C.S.). **Glencoe Hotel**: J. H. B. Bell,

I. G. Charleson, W. L. Coats, A. H. Hendry, J. N. Ledingham, J. E. McEwen, G. Peat, D. G. Turnbull and F. R. Wylie.

W. L. C.

J.M.C.S. REPORTS

Edinburgh Section.—The present membership stands at 53, with 8 associate members. Twelve new members were admitted during the year and 5 have either resigned or been removed from the list for arrears of subscriptions.

Outdoor meets were held at Arran, Ben Nevis, Arrochar, Lochnagar, Langdale, Braemar (Linn of Dee), Kinlochleven, Forest Lodge, Glen Lyon, Roy Bridge, Loch Morlich, Glen Doll, Buttermere, and Glencoe (5 times). Buses were run jointly with the Edinburgh Mountaineering Club. Average attendance was about 26. Mid-week evening meets were held in the summer at Aberdour and Traprain Law. During the summer our members climbed in Austria, Chamonix, The Dolomites, Norway and Skye.

Office-Bearers.—*Hon. President*, D. Leaver; *President*, R. Philips; *Treasurer and Bus Convener*, J. Hall, 4 Woodside Terrace, Edinburgh 15; *Secretary*, R. McDonald, 113 Waverley Crescent, Bonnyrigg, Midlothian.

Lochaber Section (Lochaber Mountaineering Club).—Membership has been maintained at 37. Once again more climbing has been done privately than on meets. One enthusiast was able to vouch for the atrocious Alpine weather last summer.

A most successful dinner was held in the Alexandra Hotel on 19th January 1963, after which 74 members and guests enjoyed two films by Hamish McInnes.

The pool of mountain rescue equipment and clothing has been extended and now includes a lightweight McInnes stretcher. Club members have continued to help in the instruction of police and civilian mountain rescue volunteers in the course of evening lectures and practical training.

Office-Bearers.—*Hon. President*, P. L. J. Heron; *Hon. Vice-President*, D. G. Duff; *President and Secretary*, Miles Hutchinson, 'Craigmore,' Wades Road, Kinlochleven; *Treasurer and Custodian of Steall Hut*, J. A. Sutherland, British Linen Bank, Fort William.

Glasgow Section.—At the end of the year the membership total of the Glasgow Section stood at 145, although some of these will doubtless fall to the Treasurer's secateurs when the spring pruning takes place. Enquiries from prospective members seem to reach a higher level than ever, and as the year's working resulted in a slight financial profit, the Section seems to be in good shape.

Eighteen climbing meets were held during the year at approximately one per fortnight and, apart from some falling off in the summer holiday months and minor difficulties over transport, they were well supported. Loch Hour, Skye and Torridon were visited, apart from the more familiar

haunts, and enthusiasm for a weekend in Rhum was so great that the party totalled 42.

A number of members were abroad during the summer, the most notable expedition being the visit to South-East Turkey by a party of 8. It is understood that their successful ascent of Demir Kezic owed much to the ferocious attacks of the local sheep dogs.

Attendance at the winter meetings, held jointly with the S.M.C., seems ever to increase although the number attending the Annual Dinner at Tyndrum was slightly less than usual. This select band heard the President exhort them to keep a wine diary, in addition to a record of climbing activities; entries in some diaries were made in golden letters under the President's able direction later in the year.

Office-Bearers.—Hon. President, C. G. M. Slessor; Hon. Vice-President, K. Bryan; President, N. S. Tennent. Vice-President, W. M. Thom; Treasurer, T. B. Fleming, 134 Kenmure Street, Glasgow S.1; Secretary and Hut Convener, A. A. Thrippleton, 14 Portland Park, Hamilton, Lanarkshire.

Perth Section.—The last year has seen an upward trend in our membership, now at 35, and also in our funds.

We continue with our monthly meets and have held a few in conjunction with the Kirkcaldy Club to help them run a bus. Apart from the monthly meets we have held several weekend meets and our members have spent holidays at the various climbing centres abroad.

We regret that we have just heard that we are to lose our Hon. President, J. Anton, S.M.C., who is to emigrate to New Zealand.

Office-Bearers.—Hon. President, J. Anton; Hon. Vice-President, J. Broom; Hon. Member, J. Miller; President, R. Milne; Vice-President, A. Rae; Secretary, J. Grant, 37 Burghmuir Road, Perth.

London Section.—Seventeen meets were held in all during 1963, together with an unofficial one in North Wales during February when there was a great deal of snow and some good climbing.

Most of the meets were held in North Wales, but there was one in Cornwall at Whitsun, where the sea cliffs are excellent for rock climbing. One meet was held in Derbyshire.

There was an unofficial meet in Glencoe at Easter which was a skiing occasion, and despite some cold winds on the Friday and Saturday, there was some good skiing, and the snow was excellent. The sun shone fitfully on the Monday, the day for departure.

A small party went to Chamonix in August (see *J.M.C.S. Abroad*).

Meets were held at sandstone outcrops in Sussex and Kent, which is the only way to maintain contact with rock in the South of England.

Membership now stands at 66 members, and one Hon. Member. Much time has been spent of late attempting to find some suitable building for use as a Club Hut and before long we expect to report success in this direction.

The A.G.M. and Dinner took place at 'The Feathers,' Tudor Street, and was much enlivened by the presence of members from the North of England, whom those who live in or around London were more than pleased to see, the Club members being scattered throughout England—and do not often have opportunity or occasion to meet together.

Office-Bearers.—*Hon. President*, E. Zenthon; *Hon. Vice-President*, W. Wallace; *Hon. Member*, K. Reed; *President*, H. W. L. Jordan; *Vice-President*, D. McLoughlin; *Treasurer*, J. Della Porta, 18 Stratton Road, Merton Park, London, S.W.19. *Meets Secretary*, P. J. Whitechurch, 89 Allington Road, Paddock Wood, Tonbridge, Kent. *Secretary*, Richard Purslow, 252A Kew Road, Richmond, Surrey.

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

Norway

DOUGLAS and BARCLAY FRASER stole away now and then from a Clan Fraser gathering of all ages and both sexes held in August in the Sunnmøre district—ideal for family camping holidays—and climbed the following peaks: Urkedalstind (5035 ft.) from Urke by the S.W. face; over 3500 ft. continuous climbing on easy-angled slabby rock direct to the highest point of the narrow ridge; descent S.E. along ridge (Priestman's map calls this peak Regndalstind). Slogen (5210 ft.) from Oye by S.E. ridge—a slog up the tourist route to the top of the monolith dominating the Norangfjord and providing an impressive view of it; descent *via* Patchellhytte. Kolastind (4800 ft.) from Store Standal, up and down by E. glacier. Brekketind (5150 ft.) from Strandadal, spending a night at the Patchellhytte (c. 3000 ft., beds for 5, no food provided) and thence, in mist by a varied and circuitous route over glacier and rock, from S.E. corrie by N. glacier to N.W. ridge; descent direct from gap between main and lesser summit to S.E. glacier; an interestingly complex expedition.

Sunnmøre climbing can be strenuous as one generally starts from sea level and encounters birch scrub on the lower slopes. But, as maps and guide books are delightfully vague and the many fine peaks almost empty of climbers, one enjoys all the pleasures and frustrations of route-finding. The fjord scenery is impressive and the inhabitants, in the intervals of making a good living in their wild and remote country, have time to be most friendly to their guests.

In July GEORGE ALLAN, JAMES CLARKSON, and 3 members of the Edinburgh J.M.C.S., JIM HALL, ALLISTER WRIGHT and ROBERT McDONALD, together with some members of their families, were in Norway for 3 weeks. McDonald writes:

'The first day was spent swimming and canoeing in the Sognefjord with a temperature over 90° F. In the evening we drove up to Turtegrö in the West Jotunheimen where we had a week's perfect weather and managed

to climb the Dyrhaugstind, Steindalsnosi, Store Skagastölstind and the Ringstindadn.

Our next place of activity was the Romsdal district. The drive to the Romsdal was quite an experience, especially down the Trollsteg pass. We camped just outside Andalsnes. The weather was not as good as the first week, but we managed to climb the Bispen, Kongen, Romsdalshorn, Trolltind, Venjadtindane, and Nesjellet.'

The Alps

DEREK PYPER was in Chamonix over July, spending the first fortnight mostly at the Plage, except for two days on the M and the Petit Charmoz with Miss Lesley Webster and Edward Brown. With Peter Noble he went up the south couloir of the Aiguille du Peigne, and down in a thunderstorm. With fellow-Aberdonian David Reid he did the N.N.E. arête of the M, S. arête of the Grand Charmoz, the Voie de Plaque on the E. face of the Réquin, and the E. face of the Grépon finishing by the Knubel Crack. They sheltered for the last few days in the National Bar.

J. H. B. BELL writes: 'My wife and I were in the Engadine region, Maloja-Forno, at the end of August. During an interlude between spells of bad weather we trained on two small peaks and then went to the Forno hut, where, after a reconnaissance, we traversed the magnificent north ridge of Lo Scalino. Fortunately we knew the way down the short south face and got to the *révé* when a violent rain-hail-snowstorm caught us on the return to the hut. Much new snow fell and further bad weather later prevented us from doing the Piz Kesch from Val Tuors above Bergun. CHARLESON later joined us and we went to Cresta Avers and had delightful expeditions on minor peaks in clear weather. This is a good centre when snow spoils the big peaks. After Charleson left, we finished off with the Piz Platta (c. 3400 m.), the main peak of the district; it still held much snow, but nothing compared with the Bernina, Disgracia and some of the Bregaglia peaks. At Maloja and the Forno we were accompanied on one or two expeditions by LOUIS HILL and EDWARD CHAPMAN. After leaving us they climbed Piz Corvatsch from Fuorcla Surlej.'

HAMISH BROWN was with student friends in July; a late season gave some struggles as on the first day in the Dauphiné when the Col des Bas alone was possible. It snowed going up a Scottish gully on Pic Coolidge. A long day began in La Bérarde, over the Col des Ecrins and up knee-deep snow to make the Ecrins—the Dôme de Neige. The ridge to the Barre des Ecrins kept its season's virginity, the first quarter mile taking an hour to reject the party. Next day they traversed the Pic de Neige Cordier before a return over the Col de la Temple. They shifted to Zermatt with a list of 130 Alpine flowers.

From a Gandegg howff they traversed the Breithorn and Klein Matterhorn, followed by the first traverse of the season of the Matterhorn—

from Hornli hut to Breuil—the descent, in thunder and heavy snow, taking 12 hours. From the Täsch hut a delightful traverse of the Alphübel was made over the Rotgrat. The diminishing party added Monte Rosa from the Bétemps hut and the fine S. ridge, direct, of the Dent Blanche from the Schoenbühl hut.

DOUGAL HASTON, climbing in the Dolomites, did the S.E. ridge of the Torre Stabeler and the S. face of Torre Winkeler of the Vajolet Towers with D. Gray and D. Hadlum (Rock & Ice Club). With IAN CLOUGH, he climbed the E. face of the Catinnacio, via Steger (7 hours); S. face of Punta di Emma; the 'Bühlweg' on Roda di Vael in 10 hours, the 1st British ascent; the N. face of the second Sella tower. In the Brenta group, with Clough, he did the Crozzon di Brenta—Aste dièdre, in 16 hours, the 6th ascent and 1st British; and the Brenta Alta-Oggioni-Aiazzi dièdre, in 10 hours, the 1st British ascent. At Chamonix, with Rusty Baillie, the N. face of the Aiguille du Plan in 10 hours and bad conditions; in the Oberland, the N. face of the Eiger over 28th-31st July, in icy conditions, also with Baillie.

ALASDAIR McKEITH (J.M.C.S.) had good weather in Chamonix from 16th July-3rd August, his first Alpine season. With D. Hutchison of Currie (home of hard men) he did the N.E. arête of the M; then the W. face of the Albert and the Mer de Glace face of the Grépon, by the Knubel Crack, with an Englishman; with another Englishman, the N.W. arête of the Blaitière—rather a disappointing climb. After getting wet at the National and the Plage, he, Dave Bathgate and yet another Englishman, topped Mt Blanc from the Goûter hut, with a fantastic view. With Bathgate he finished off with the N. arête of the Peigne.

W. SPROUL went to the Dauphiné but the weather was very poor and he ended up at the Calanque, by Marseilles. He did a few climbs there, and much underwater fishing—a good holiday.

GEORGE CHISHOLM writes: 'FRED MANTZ (J.M.C.S.) and I were again in the Pennine Alps for 3 weeks from 8th July; Mantz led all the climbs and I am indebted to him for a fine holiday. From Arolla we traversed the Petite Dent de Veisivi in perfect weather; peculiarly satisfying after our being forced off the ridge in 1960 by a thunderstorm. The next day, a long rock climb, the face of the Aiguille de la Za from Arolla, descending to the Bertol hut. From the Mountet hut we did Lo Besso by the S.W. arête and traversed to Mont Blanc de Moming—a very fine day. High climbs being still out of condition, we crossed to Zermatt by the Triftjoch—not recommended: I narrowly escaped a stonefall. Then the traverse of the Leiterspitz, an excellent rock climb, from the Täsch Alp; and from the Täsch hut the Rotgrat of the Alphübel, descending by the ordinary route to Zermatt. We went into Italy over the Furgjoch, to the Riondet hut and to the Italian hut of the Matterhorn; the next day over the Italian ridge, well plastered high up, and down by the Hörnli ridge. In Zermatt next day, Tom Patey who, starting from the lower hut, had been 2 hours

behind us on the traverse, remarked it would have been a magnificent climb without the fixed ropes. For us lesser mortals it was still a magnificent climb. We hope to return, as there is still so much to do.'

A party from the London Section, J.M.C.S., comprising IAN HOLLIDAY, STEVE HITCHCOCK, BRIAN SLEE and PETER WHITECHURCH were in the Chamonix area during August. The sharing of loyalties between families and the mountains made it difficult to get really fit before the weather broke and the members of the party were forced to devote most of their time to strenuous walking rather than climbing, carrying overweight infants on their backs instead of rucksacks; to the amusement of the French who apparently never think of taking their children to the Alps until they are old enough to walk to the huts unaided.

A successful excursion was made from the Albert I hut to the glorious viewpoint, but minor summit, of the Aiguille du Tour, although a later attempt to climb the Moine by the S.W. ridge had to be abandoned after several slithering hours on ice-covered rock.

There was unfortunately no time left for a further attempt and the party departed after 48 hours' torrential rain for home and kindlier climates.

BOOKS

Red Peak. By Malcolm Slesser. (1964: Hodder & Stoughton, London. 256 pp., many illustrations, some colour plates. 30s.)

This long-awaited bombshell turns out to be a fascinating book and an astonishingly sensible one. It resembles the session in the pub where the 'hard men' invited to drink with the departing lecturer are favoured with the 'real story' after the polite applause for 'All the chaps were simply splendid' has been forgotten. It is therefore a milestone in mountaineering literature since it must represent quite an advance towards the real 'real story.'

There's no question about its interest. It's fatally easy to read at a single sitting. Ignore the three soggy paragraphs at the beginning where Slesser has ambitions towards becoming the poor man's W. H. Murray. Thereafter you will find the style is unaffected and the narrative goes like a spy story. This disarming buttonholing prose even begins to feel like an evening with Calum himself (no mean literary achievement) so that those who enjoy the author's acquaintanceship will probably find it difficult to repress certain familiar defence mechanisms. ('What's all this bland stuff leading up to, eh? Have I agreed to anything yet? etc.)

It is of course a personalised story as the foreword promises. This could be confirmed right away by Ritchie and Weir who in the first two pages find themselves polished off with the urbane malice they must certainly have expected from this formidable quarter.

But the candour though subjective is dispassionate and impartial. If none are spared few can say they have been less kindly treated than the author. Even his critics can hardly cavil at the presentation of his own

personality in these pages. In fact on page 221 he offers for their delight a comment by his friend Anatole Ovchinikov which is likely to do yeoman service in S.M.C. disputations yet to come. It is 'Me no like Slessor. Me no like.'

Candour of the sort found in this book is new in mountaineering but, like debunking in biography, it plainly had to come. Its purpose is neither entertainment nor mischief. 'Eighteen players,' says the author, 'their vastly differing characters, each one a delight, make up the story. I hope they will forgive me exposing them . . . to public gaze.' As the story is often one of mismanagement, lifemanship and the inability to meet ill-fortune with dignity, it isn't always a very ennobling chronicle. So some will say this sort of book should never be written; or if written never published. We would then be the poorer for that certain validity that only the truth brings. It may be Slessor's truth as against Brown's or Bryan's or Malachov's, but for the reader it's a closer walk with the actual experience than any regard for 'loyalty' would permit. Those whose expeditions have been confined to the Alps or the Cuillins will find these doings of their betters not only illuminating but drastically familiar.

In dealing with the Russians Slessor sets out to be objective and succeeds in being perhaps more than fair. The dice are certainly somewhat loaded. The Russians, it seems, were selected volunteers, rigorously trained, meticulously self-disciplined; and they had a logical urge to put getting there above all else. The British were apparently more or less self-chosen, out of condition and determinedly anarchistic. So the uncommitted reader can easily find himself becoming more and more sympathetic to those dedicated Soviet cordées. He may well finish up in a sort of self-identification with them—especially in such matters as early rising and 'spoiling the air' in tents and ice caves. The latter is Eugene Gippenreiter's euphemism for that malodorous ritual beloved of the virile British camper. (In the decadent West, *Tovarich*, the non-flatulent are gey low in the pecking order.) There are also regrettable incidents like the destruction of surplus gas canisters and the corner-boy flippancies at the expense of earnest wee lassies guiding the party round the Kremlin museum.

Not that Russian manners are shown to be faultless—particularly official manners—but criticism in these instances is appropriately that of a tactful guest.

This is in fact no book for Blimps—British or Russian—intent on bolstering national prestige. It is factual and enquiring. There is a wealth of evidence on the differences between mountaineering over here and over there and it is helpful to see these examined and evaluated without much consideration for ideologies. Many of them look to be not so much Communist as Russian. Others are attitudes which exist equally here but can be more easily neglected because of our independent club structure and our very different geography. On such matters the book has data for dozens of discussions and nearly as many opinions. The British party themselves for instance were by no means unanimous in their final summing up.

As regards men, however, the only conclusion to be drawn is a not unexpected and wholly welcome one—that in the U.S.S.R. all the familiar climbing fauna presently observed in the S.M.C. may be confidently suspected also—from Grand Old Member right down to Juvenile Delinquent.

From brither Scots, the author deserves a special accolade for a work in which the provincial cringe is happily absent. Here is one-sixth of the world independently observed by an inhabitant of the less insular half of this island. Irrelevant regions beyond the Tweed intrude when appropriate as local colour or comic relief, their inhabitants being expected to stomach a salutary pill of Dr Iain Smart's (page 37) with the aid of that humour considered to be lacking in nationalists other than English.

There are adequate photographs and a useful if excruciating 'oil painting' by the author to show routes of ascent. There are also several misprints, but given the bold Calum's cavalier attitude to spelling and the enigma of his handwriting one can only speculate on the tribulations of the inadequate army of proof readers presumably recruited for this publication.

R. W. McL.

Conquistadors of the Useless. By Lionel Terray. Translated by Geoffrey Sutton. (1963: Gollancz, London. 351 pp., 80 photographs, 10 maps and diagrams. 30s.)

The apparently bad title to a splendid book derives from the stern parental opposition that Lionel Terray had to overcome as a boy before he could learn to climb. His father thought mountaineering sheer folly. His opening sentence, 'I have given my whole life to the mountains,' explains why he none the less became one of the world's great mountaineers—and why his autobiography, save for the last chapter, never comes off the boil: it bubbles over the fire of enthusiasm.

The story begins at Grenoble, 'in a sort of chateau covered with virginia creeper built on the side of a hill above the town. There I was born, and one of my first sights must have been the shining barrier of the snow peaks of the Belledonne range opposite our large, comfortable family seat.' An attractive feature of the tale is the wealth of detail with which he paints his boyhood at Grenoble and Chamonix. For one so young he enjoyed unusual strength of body and spirit, yet it seems that he was not naturally a good rock-climber.

When war broke out he became instructor at a mountain school, where with Rébuffat and Lachenal he did many of his greater climbs, including the north faces of the Col du Caiman and the Aiguille des Pélerins. Knowing the deep satisfaction of introducing beginners to mountains, he became after the war a professional guide. In all leisure time he was off with Lachenal to the *grandes courses*: the north walls of the Grandes Jorasses, the Piz Badile, the Eiger (of which they made the second ascent), and scores of others, often completed in foul weather in record times. In all these tales his writing shows keen sense of drama, lightened by abounding joy in the climb.

He damns the feverish spirit of competition. He would have us rejoice that in mountaineering the contest is between man and the forces of nature, and not (in principle) between man and man, nor for any renown. Like ourselves in this *Journal*, however, he is made aware that 'mountaineers are far from being angels, even if they do frequent a world of light and beauty.'

The book comes to its climax on Annapurna in 1950—a well-told tale. Thereafter, in the last chapter, the author loses steam and the writing falls off. The stories of Jannu and Makalu, Fitzroy, and Chararaju in Peru, are condensations written to complete the record. They ought to have been the subject of another book, and not been scamped to diminish this one.

At the end he says, 'In a few days' time I shall be 40 years old. . . . So many years of trial and danger change a man in spite of himself. . . . My own scope must now go back down the scale. My strength and courage will not cease to diminish. It will not be long before the Alps become again the terrible mountains of my youth.'

W. H. M.

The North Face in Winter. By Toni Hiebeler. (1962: Barrie & Rockcliff, London. 121 pp., 14 plates. 16s.)

'The North Face in Winter' is written mainly for those who aspire to climbs of this calibre. The epic nature of Kinshofer's wonderful lead and the spell of the Eigerwand will bring many to read this book. What they will find, though, is not an adventure story but a highly technical account of the toughest Alpine ascent to date punctuated with spasms of Hiebeler metaphysics and an overlong introduction by Hugh Merrick—the translator.

D. H.

On Snow and Ice. By Gaston Rébuffat. (1963: Kaye, London. 192 pp. 15 col. plates. 42s.)

As far as instructional books are concerned this must be considered the finest to date. It is hard to stomach Rébuffat's romantic idealism about the mountains in general. He seems to regard himself as a mountain mystic. The writing is for beginners. The superb illustrations can be enjoyed by all.

D. H.

Hillwalking in Arran. By Ronald Meek. (1963: Chambers, Edinburgh. 60 pp., 18 photographs, 2 maps. 4s. 6d.)

This little guide book has been written, according to the author, for the 'very large group' lying between the strollers along well-marked upland paths and rock climbers. When Dr Meek began to explore the Arran hills, he seems to have been distressed and inconvenienced by the lack of continuous paths from the glens to the tops. He was compelled, therefore, to find his way about by using his eyes, an Ordnance Survey map

and scraps of information laboriously gleaned from various books. Fearing that kindred path followers might not be so daring and restrict themselves to Goat Fell, he provides step-by-step directions on what to do when the path runs out. The book is pleasantly written in a somewhat chatty style and is illustrated by numerous photographs and diagrams.

The need for such a guide is surely not so widespread as the writer claims, and one guesses that it will appeal mainly to members of organisations like the Holiday Fellowship who become smitten with the desire to venture guideless among the Arran hills. The budding mountaineer will not wish to be taken by the hand to this extent.

J. M. J.

The Welsh Peaks. By W. A. Poucher. (1962: Constable, London. 405 pp., 235 photographs, 14 maps. 18s.)

An invaluable guide for the hill walker and scrambler, with the tourist routes clearly marked on the many excellent photographs. A bargain for the amount of information given, and number and quality of the illustrations.

R. G. I.

Clogwyn Du'r Arddu. By H. I. Banner and P. Crew. (1963: Climbers' Club. ix+112 pp., 7 diagrams, 2 endpaper maps. 12s. 6d.)

This is a book for Tigers who can speak the language. 'Shrike' is 190 ft. and extremely severe, but this description 'A fine steep route on good holds' is meant for those who are accustomed to no holds at all. This is Joe Brown's country, with only an odd D. to S. among the HVS's and XS's. Geological and Natural History notes are unexpected in this book for the hard men. It is beautifully printed and arranged with several blank pages left for new climbs.

T. W.

Mountain Holidays in Norway. By Per Prag. (Norway Travel Association. 200 pp., many illustrations. 7s. 6d.)

I used this book on a long trip north of the Arctic Circle last year and found it most useful for giving quick descriptions of the principal ranges. In a country of so many mountains this pocket guide is useful, especially as it merely outlines the main features and best approach to any range, with a list of available lodges, hostels and hotels. I recommend it to anyone going to Norway. The route descriptions are all the better for being rough!

T. W.

Rock Climbing. By Peter Nock. (1963: W. G. Foyle Ltd. 96 pp., illustration and diagram. 4s.)

This is a book to be avoided, and Aberdeen climbers will be incensed to read that 'The Cairngorms cover a large area with much of the climbing of a low standard.' No high standard routes are quoted. Torridon is

given as being in Sutherland and described as being 'probably the least-known part of Scotland, where good climbing is possible on the sandstone peaks.' On the Island of Arran we read that the climbing is 'mainly of moderate difficulty.' The writing is undistinguished as well as inaccurate and rock climbers are likely to writhe reading it.

T. W.

Selected Climbs in the Dolomites. Edited by P. Crew. (1963: Alpine Club. xii+214 pp., 54 maps and diagrams. 21s.)

This is the third volume dealing with popular areas in the Alps, and the important point about the book is that it is a selection of good steep routes with notes on transport and huts. It does not attempt to be exhaustive, but picks the plum routes and gives them rough gradings so that the British visitor can equate them with his own performance. Useful maps and diagrams.

T. W.

The Supplement to a Selection of 900 British and Irish Mountain Tops, and a Selection of 1000 Tops under 2500 ft. By Wm. McKnight Docherty. VOL. 1: THE PROLOGUE AND THE LISTS; VOL. 2: THE EPILOGUE AND THE PANORAMAS. 260 pp., 33 photographs, 18 panoramas. Private Circulation only. Presented to the Club.

The first edition of our member's *Tables* was reviewed in the 1959 *Journal*. The Lists in Vol. 1 of this second edition are a part duplicate of these, but include the Independent Mountains in the British Isles which stand between 2000 ft. and 2499 ft., and certain other mountains under 2000 ft. which by virtue of their isolated position or individuality are also recorded.

The Prologue is couched in historical and tributary vein, happily blended with memories of objectives attained in consequence thereof; the Epilogue, appropriately headed 'Your old men shall dream dreams . . .' introduces 24 paragraphs of reminiscences of our friend's many 'joyous days upon the mountain-side' at home and abroad: a footnote interestingly recording that in the course of his homeland wanderings he has undertaken 541 excursions, covered 5300 miles afoot, made 1,954,000 ft. of ascent, and attained the summits of 1628 different mountain tops.

The volumes contain 18 magnificent mountain panorama photographs, and 33 photographs scattered throughout the text, and, with the first edition, constitute a record of achievement that is unlikely to be surpassed.

R. G. I.

Journals of Kindred Clubs. Last year's review of these was short but this is even shorter. A good energetic review was compiled indeed, but the hack to whom the job was entrusted reported at the last minute that the MS. had been eaten by his children. From this feast we can only salvage: *Appalachia*, 1963, with interesting notes on bad weather in the

White Mountains, N.H., and the Forest Rangers' turning back of inexperienced ill-clad or ill-disciplined (. . .) camp parties; the use of warning notices (Turn Back Now if Weather Bad) and Snow Rangers with loudhailers in the Tuckerman Ravine. A salutary taste of the future. But here and now we are yet spared this, and Harrison, in *Oxford Mountaineering*, 1963, can record the perils of a Southron Munro-bent in winter; over-written, perhaps, but a joyfully masochistic account of Ben Lawers shaking its prey. *The Alpine Journal*, 1963 (1) has a fine and restrained article, with no preaching, on the Eigerwand, by Clough; *more* on that Chinese Photograph; Hunt on the Pamirs; Indians civilised on Everest. The hack had the rest; and his children ate them.

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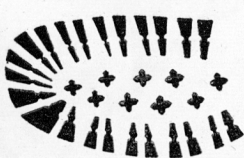
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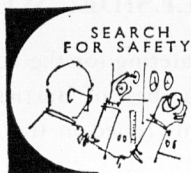
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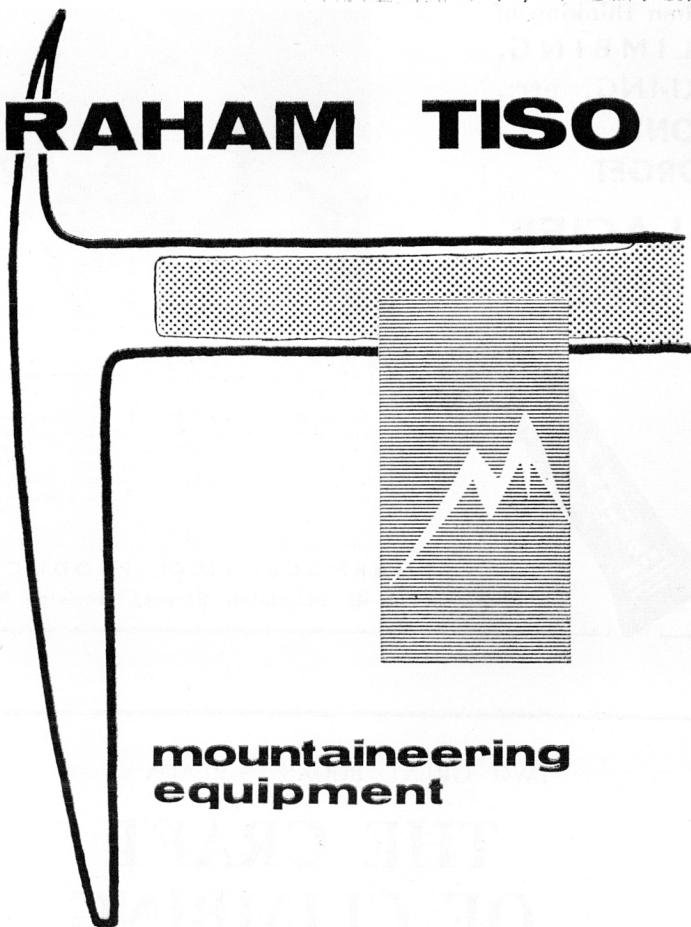
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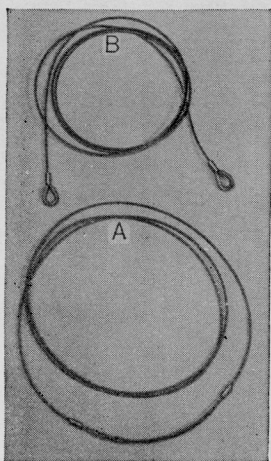


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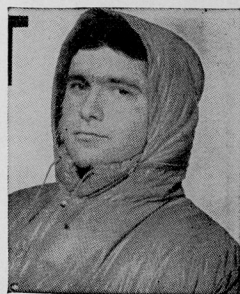


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