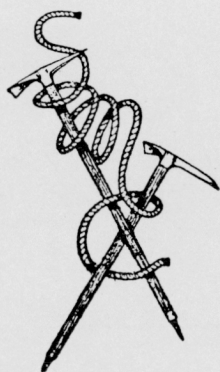


THE
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MOUNTAINEERING
CLUB JOURNAL



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No. 165

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EDITED BY R. N. CAMPBELL

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ONE BELOW THE BELT

By Colin Stead

THE winter was going badly, with only two worthwhile routes to our credit. Crocket and I, after an unfortunate incident over the key, sat in splendid isolation as the sole attenders at a C.I.C. meet. The other four, having spent a wet Friday night outside the hut, had left to seek a bed elsewhere. They took it very well and we were only mildly abused as we wandered up the track on the Saturday.

Our enjoyment of the empty hut was wrecked for ever when the Mountain Rescue crashed in at three in the morning and set up base over some poor unfortunates benighted on Observatory Ridge. Exhausted by the non-stop chat, we left the hut early in a spirit of self-preservation, to find that the inevitable thaw had remarkably changed to a freeze. The Ben was like an iced cake and it was the best day of the winter. Unfortunately, although the weather was perfect, the ice was not and our enthusiasm expired just below the Basin on Orion Direct. During the tedious retreat there was much time to ponder possibilities a little further to the left. I had never seen such a plaster of snow on the face.

We were really due to go on photographic safari for the Club 'glossy' the next weekend, but Crocket's arm was twisted, Gerry Peet was willing and so it was up to C.I.C. again on another ill-attended S.M.C. Meet (I don't know what the Club is coming to. The Thoughts of Chairman Brooker are not being followed). The alarm went at 5 but I (wisely) did not waken my partner till 6, and it is a measure of our communication problems in the morning, that he was out of the hut and away ten minutes, before I noticed his absence. A frantic scramble out and he was disappearing round the far side of the Tower Ridge. I have learnt never to try and keep up with Crocket on the hill, but it was necessary to catch him before he

Photo: K. Crocket

Opposite—Stead seems to have lost his head on Minus One Gully's crux.

started up the wrong climb, so I did move a little faster than usual, to get within shouting distance. Fortunately I had pointed out that Minus One was the last of the great Nevis gullies still unclimbed in winter. This seed had obviously germinated in his mind, because obedient to my distant roar, he altered course and entered the gully.

When I arrived, he had soloed the initial pitches and was lost to view. The gully looked tremendous. Distinct and deep in its bottom part, it rose as a slender white ribbon contained by gleaming, iced slabs, to terminate abruptly at a huge overhang. It thereafter continued as a shallow groove to a lesser roof, before disappearing among the rocks to the right of Minus One Buttress.

The snow-ice was impeccable and led without difficulty to Crocket's stance, where he announced that the first pitch was mine. This either meant that it looked too easy for him to be bothered with or that it looked nasty. It looked nasty.

■ Weighed down by all my impedimenta, I started off back and foot and then moved onto the back wall which was somewhat sugary for comfort, so much so, that large cavities had to be dug for the right hand and foot, while the left could rely on axe and points. An awkward bulge and a final wallowing mantleshef led into the cave below the overhang. The floor of the cave consisted of a pinnacle of snow of dubious stability, while at the back was a large hole disappearing down behind the pitch for at least 20 feet. An opportunity for the Yorkshire Ramblers to break new ground, perhaps.

The left wall had a great drool of green ice fringed by long frozen fingers of blue and gently overhanging. A rock peg in the undercut roof inspired confidence for a tentative sally which got nowhere. Crocket helpfully suggested I peg some terrible crack on the right wall which I could not see so I cut some ice to silence him. A loose drive-in on the left wall and some tension allowed a little upward progress. 'Clip into your waist and you can relax,' he said. Foolishly I complied and found myself back 'relaxing' on the floor of the cave, but at least the rock peg had held. Back to the drawing board! Below, the wall running out to the left edge eased to vertical but was only thinly veneered with ice. If that 10 feet could be crossed, the problem was solved. Lowered back over the bulge, I teetered over on tension, until a terrordactyl could be sunk into the solid stuff round the corner and a great heave landed me on the good ice of the bounding slab. This was accompanied by great screams from Crocket. (There were complaints from other climbers about the noise later!).

Progress was now rapid until the rope jammed, back down, up again and then bested three times by an incredibly awkward little roof, before I turned it also on the left and regained the gully bed. Suddenly the weather changed and the clouds swirled in, bringing a

fine drizzle. The promised thaw had arrived and all the icicles started dripping.

I belayed on a terrible stance to a poor dead man and all my leepers stacked hopefully together in a hole. I allowed myself to wonder how Crocket would deal with the tension traverse. 'I might swing,' he said with apparent indifference, but up he came on a tight rope, straight up the green boss on scrabbling points and flailing terrordactyls.

Above, was another overhang, but a reasonable left traverse took him out of sight. Time passed and great chunks of ice flew by. It was apparent that his purity of purpose had come up against something overpowering and front-pointing had given way to step-cutting. When I came to follow, I found an impressively steep ice wall, which was pointed up from one resting place to another, with blood-drained arms and bruised knuckles, removing his one protection screw on the way. It was a good pitch. A chocolate bar was thrust into my hand.

'Next pitch is your kind of climbing,' he said, 'quite straightforward!'

I did not quite know how to take that remark, so I pushed on up a splendid slabby corner which ran out onto a snow bay, level with the bristling summit crags of the Butress.

The gully now divided into two grooves, so he followed the left to its conclusion. I wanted to go left onto the Butress, but his wiser counsel prevailed and I went right, under the overhanging rocks, finding two solid runners on the way, until a long stride led into the parallel groove. A few feet up and another screaming session—the way was clear!

There was no cornice, just a semicircular rim of rock, gained by a mantleshelf. What a position! Perched on the knife-edge arête of Minus One Butress with great gullies dropping away into the driving snows. The final pitch along the arête was a delightful series of pinnacle-embracings and crest-balancings until the junction with North East Butress was gained.

We had intended to descend N.E.B. rather than face the Mantrap, but after finding ourselves descending Minus Two Butress by mistake, we turned tail and went for the summit, finding the right traverse from the Mantrap so plastered that it could be walked round.

It has been quite a day. As we went down the mushy snows of Number Four Gully, Crocket conceded that well he supposed it was quite a good climb and anyway, it kept it in Scotland!

HADRIAN'S WALL DIRECT

By Neil Quinn

LANG and I enjoy a beautiful walk up to the hut in moonlight, snow on the track all the way, ice drooling down cliffs very bare for mid-February but the best we've seen for many a day. Next day, we get up reluctantly at half past six. Surprisingly, several others join us for breakfast—Iain Rowe, for instance, who looks about as cheery and eager as a hibernating grizzly who's just been disturbed.

Daylight draws us from the hut about quarter to eight. We have won the waiting game and Iain is thrashing out a track in the soft snow towards Observatory Gully. As we catch up with him floundering among thigh-deep snows at the foot of the long slope up to Point Five he shouts nastily at us so we take to the easy-angled rocks below Observatory Ridge and contour round the foot of the cliff where the snow is old and hard and much easier going. We want to climb Hadrian's Wall Direct, sometimes known as Point Two Five, which is the large ice-fall descending the west flank of the ridge. We were beaten to the first ascent of it two years ago by Mike Geddes and partner, but now we hope to make the second ascent.

I lead off up the first pitch, straight up to take a belay in seventy-five feet where the ice steepens into the wall proper. Doug joins me and heads off straight up and over a steep bulge. The ice, of the concrete variety, requires a great deal of time and effort to fashion a single hold. A hundred and fifty feet and three hours later Doug takes a belay and I move up his ladder of ice.

There's a choice of three exits from the ice-fall—up a long groove on the right leading to the foot of the upper chimney, or left across to a break in the final wall and straight up from there, or straight up from where we are. The first is too much like cheating, the second too thin and bare and not really feasible, so straight up it is. Sounds easy. Thirty-five feet and the steepest part of the wall will be over. Cutting steps in near-vertical ice is difficult enough, but when the ice is like this stuff life becomes a bit difficult, each step requiring dozens of blows to form even the smallest hold. After twenty feet the angle eases then it rears up in a nasty ten foot bulging section. I cut holds up this final section in several sorties and at last make a move up the wall but reaching the top holds I can't let go to cut any more, not even to plant a screw or a Chouinard hammer. So down again and I put a screw just below on the right for tension. This results in dinner-plating of the right hand holds. Oh well, try the left and once again the hand-holds are very effectively removed. I go back down the wall to the halfway stance to think The

only idea I have is to traverse ten feet left below the final bulge and try it at its lowest point. Time is wearing on, so holds are scanty as I scratch across the wall. The wall drops in a single sweep nearly three hundred feet to Observatory Gully and then on down—not something to be thought about in great detail. The bulge is still as steep but slightly shorter and the ice of a different consistency. I hack small but jug-type holds, move up, plant a Salewa screw and rest. I then repeat this performance and can now reach over the top of the wall and thump my hammer thankfully into good *nevé* and then walk my feet over the bulge till I'm touching my toes, poised on the edge of nothing unable to get the damned hammer out. Thirty feet of comparatively easy snow-ice brings me to a belay and Doug comes up on a hope and a prayer having removed the screws beforehand. By now we're into top gear and as I've had a rest I thrash off up the next hundred and fifty feet to the foot of the narrow ice-packed chimney. Doug follows with the pack and in the gathering gloom we have some chocolate and glucose and put on headlamps. The chimney is narrow and steep—very similar to the final exit from the chimney system on Point Five. Halfway up the chimney everything goes black—bloody torch. I manage to jam myself sort of diagonally as I try to find the trouble. Not the battery so it must be the bulb. The spare bulbs are in my breeches pocket, but first I've to loosen my anorak jockstrap, then drop my wind-proofs to knee-level and fumble about for a bulb. Eventually light returns, so I get dressed and continue, but this is time-consuming and by the time Doug joins me it's about half past seven, dark and misty. Where to? Up? We run out several rope-lengths in the general direction of the plateau, taking the line of least resistance and being forced further right than we wish. Doug takes off up an iced groove. The rope runs out quickly then stops. Slowly it inches out again and I stand there dozing at the belay not very interested. After all, we're almost at the summit. The rope now speeds up a bit and after a delay I am summoned. The iced groove is no bother, then there's an easy snow slope and a dead end. There's a bare holdless ten-foot corner on the right and an open groove leading to an overhang on the left with a practically bare wall between. Very interesting, but at midnight shattering. Lang smugly gives advice from the security of his phony belay above. He suggests hauling the sack but we've wasted enough time so I try it with it on. I climb up the open groove on the left which gets progressively steeper, barer and thinner as I move under the overhang, until I can just reach the bottom of a large fog crystal which is hanging from the overhang. I then walk my feet up the nearly bare rock groove, crampons scratching displays of sparks from the rock until I'm embracing the fog crystal and lying out at about sixty degrees beyond the vertical. I somehow transfer my right foot from the corner on to a rock hold on the top of the wall and lunge rightwards

praying that there is something for my hands because the rope is no use, Doug being well to the right of me, and the angle still too steep to dispense with hand holds. All is well as my hands close round a crumb of ice. A couple of moves sees the wall finished. How Doug led that pitch I don't know. I'm certainly glad it wasn't my problem. The belay is almost as non-existent as the stance. The pack gets changed and up I go. Not long now. Thirty feet up I reach an impasse: bare holdless rock above. Twenty feet right I can see the slopes running up to the plateau but it might as well be twenty miles for all the chance I have of getting there. Doug gets niggly so I come down and give him a try, but it's no use.

We both feel a bit bushed by now, so we decide to see if we can sleep on our feet. I dig a couple of large foot-holds, drive in my axe and with my arms round it I'm asleep in no time at all. However, Doug has difficulty sleeping in a warm bed let alone when he's wet cold and stuck a couple of hundred feet from the top of the Ben and he keeps stamping his feet and kicking snow down on me so after about half an hour and umpteen rude awakenings, I give up and we decide to abseil back down. We then have our first piece of good fortune in a day of troubles. The belay pegs are useless and I'm scratching aimlessly at the snow in front of me when I unearth a perfect thread-type anchorage and we quickly descend the pitch which had caused us so much time and effort to climb.

As usual the rope jams and we have to jump about like a couple of marionettes to free it. We climb down a pitch and traverse left between some rock bands till we reach a gully. Two pitches later I collapse in the snow at the top of North-East Buttress, 17½ hours after leaving Observatory Gully.

EDITOR'S NOTE:—This is, of course, the second article dealing with Hadrian's Wall we have carried in two years. Discerning readers will, however, notice that routes described are quite distinct! Quinn and Lang's epic struggle on the route compared unfavourably with matter-of-fact ascents made later last winter by parties employing the Cunningham/Chouinard stick 'n' pick technique and now Quinn and Lang, too, have been converted. Since they are possibly the only major Scottish cordée to have resisted the march of progress, their capitulation has a special significance. It may be that we have seen the last all-night struggle with the hoary Ben. *Journal* Editors at least will shed a tear for the passing of the technique of Raeburn, Bell, Mackenzie, Patey and Marshall . . .

TWO ABERDEENSHIRE HILLS

By R. G. Inglis

THE higher Cairngorms are regularly referred to in the Journals of the S.M.C. and of the Cairngorm Club, but no ascent of two fine little hills, Bennachie and the Tap o' Noth, appears so far to have been recorded in this Journal.

Last November, with two free days on the way from Aberdeen to Inverness, I put up at a cosy hotel at Rhynie, with the pleasurable anticipation, at my now limited ascent speed of less than a thousand feet an hour, of not only the two most prominent summits in the district, but exploration of the massive forts that crown each, as well as other archaeological relics in the area.

It was obvious that access to Bennachie would be restricted, as its lower slopes are completely wooded, so on finding, a mile or so short of Oyne, a signpost indicating *Back of Bennachie* the route appeared to be clear. At this road-end a gate, labelled *Forest Walk* led on to a well-made path, which, after half a mile or so of gradual ascent, emerged from the woods on to the upper slopes of the hill, with what appeared to be the rocky summit deceptively close. This, however, turned out to be a heavily quarried outcrop, with the main peak, Oxen Craig (1738 ft.) further on, which took me a good forty minutes to reach, two hours from the car.

The view was extensive: westward, the scenery is flat with the twin tops of the Hill of Morrone rising out of horizon cloud. Northward, the cone of the Knock; continuing eastward, the snow-patched Tap o' Noth, the Buck of Cabrach and, in the far distance, Ben Rinnes, its two ridges standing out in their snowy mantle. Southwards, the Cairngorm massif, Lochnagar, and Clochmaben. Below, Maiden Castle stood out in the sunshine, near which, on the Chapel of Garioch road, stands the ten-foot high Maiden Stone, which I visited at the end of the day's outing, sculptured with religious symbols dating from the 8th to 9th centuries. It is a pity that such a relic is not protected from the elements, for it is becoming very weathered, especially on its southern face, compared with sketches appearing in books of archaeology.

Sandwiches finished, the next objective was the Mither Tap (1698 ft.), a full mile away, standing out like a castle. A mere track in the heather led down 300 ft. to a peaty col, and then upward to the steep ascent to the summit of this extraordinary tor. Defended at every weak point by massive walls from a bygone age, the collapsed debris of which lies both inside and outside the fort, and a still-surviving few yards of parapet walk, eight feet above the present floor level, the fort was obviously immensely high and thick.

The entrance through the wall on the east side is only four feet wide. Seen from a few hundred feet below, one wonders who would dare to launch an attack on such a stronghold.

The map shows the 'Maiden Causeway' to the north, below the summit. Following the broad and heavily eroded path that leads to the Pitoddrie woods, this feature, some 300 ft. down, was found to be a heathery ditch, six to eight feet deep, and ten to twelve feet across, running across the hillside. When it was constructed, or for what purpose, is obscure, but the suggestion that it was an ancient cart road for transporting building material from the ruined fort seems illogical, as it goes nowhere near the summit.

The route home lay over the heathery moor, with a short diversion to the summit of another tor, Knockshalloch (1460 ft. approx.), a faint track eventually being struck that led to the path near the quarry outcrop.

The following day I had planned to climb the Buck of Cabrach in the forenoon, and back to Rhynie for the Tap o' Noth in the afternoon. Getting away at nine o'clock, I drove to the highest point of the Cabrach-Rhynie road, and started on the heathery thousand-foot ascent of the Buck. A fence leads the whole way. There was a full gale against me, and after 300 ft. or so I realised I would never make both summits that day at my extra limited pace, and the Tap o' Noth offered far more interest than the Buck. So returning to the car, I drove the seven miles back to near Rhynie, where a narrow farm road to the Brae of Scurdargue indicated access to the hill. Though devious, this was the route, and at the highest point of the road, with the gale at my back, I struck over a grassy meadow that led to an obvious path going steeply to the summit of the Tap, an isolated cone of 1851 ft.

The summit of the Tap o' Noth must be one of the most extraordinary in the country: long, broad, and as level as a football pitch, it is entirely enclosed by the ruins of an immense stone wall, whose base is formed of vitrified rock, stones fused together by fire. Circles of stones beside the wall indicate the foundations of ancient dwellings, and towards the south-west side of the fort is a hollow in the grass some three feet deep with a pool of water in it, which may have been a well. Is this extraordinary summit natural or artificial? Its flatness, and the vast labours in the construction of the wall surely do not rule out the latter possibility, even in these ancient days. The view, of course, like that from Bennachie, is very extensive, though Bennachie itself looks very tame.

The obvious direct descent to the Brae of Scurdargue is not advised, as the last hundred feet are virtually impenetrable high gorse and broom; skirt this, and the farm road is reached.

There is much else of archaeological interest in this area, and a third day could have been pleasantly occupied.

AN APPROACH TO REALITY

By Hamish M. Brown

'AND now being safely off the hills and steaming for the open sea, the mirth prevailed—the pipes were brought on deck, and the President, in all the splendour of Highland garb, footed it deftly through the Highland fling—and reels were danced—a fitting termination to the Meet.'

The S.M.C. is not what it once was; the above being the end of the 'ever-memorable yachting expedition of Easter 1897.' Mind you the expedition had intended its excursions to be undertaken in Skye but Scavaig proved an inhospitable anchorage and various ploys took place on Rhum and Knoydart instead. Parallel climatic reasons were behind one of my pupils who once wrote in a log: 'During the Skye trip we climbed all the Munros in the Cairngorms.'

Munro to be sure, was the kilted chief of the clan in 1897. Bell, Boyd, Brown, Brunskill, Douglas, Garden, Howie, Maylard, Rae-burn, Ramsay, Rennie, Robertson, Ling, Gibson among the tail.

The internal combustion engine has done irrevocable damage to the safari-skills of the Club. The apogee of logistical effort must lie in this yachting venture—a masterly approach to the hills, even if, in reality, they ended in the wrong mountains. (Car drivers are not less likely to land in the wrong mountains; but have fewer natural causes to blame, subjective rather than objective causation). How much more interesting it must have been in the days of tweed; they really were 'expeditions,' none of our plastic age's 'trips.' Yet as we choke ourselves in cities and burn up the world's fuel perhaps we'll see a return to reality: man minus machine.

One would rather like to see the present committee committed to bumming up from Balloch on a freezing Friday night. (Or just to see a *freezing* Friday night). The President in kilt, of course.

We might end with another 'Always a Little Murder' instead of the deadly prose of present mountain writings. There's a definite lack of hilarity about these days. Everyone works so hard to be safe and comfortable. (*An you canna tak oor Jeemy if you've nae M.L.C.*).

In my richly-bound S.M.C.J. Vol. IV there is also an article entitled 'Mountaineering with Cycles' by one Willie Merckx Douglas. The 'idea struck that a weekend excursion might be made to embrace the notable mountain of Lurven.' This laudable plan entailed cycling off from Spean Bridge at noon, shoving their 'beasties' over the unridable watershed and fighting to Skiary on Loch Hourn in the dark, a howff where they lived solely on porridge

and whisky. A twelve-hour trip-excursion—bagged the peak and the next day they pedalled back for the Edinburgh trains.

I'm quite sure they did not pay the ransom B.R. demand for cycles today. (Fortunately mine is a folding one and once slipped in a sack can simply go as undescribed luggage).

In those good old days before there was a West Highland line you had your weekend on the Ben by starting on the Inverness line and then by horse trap, cycle and foot reached the Allt a' Mhuilinn. No C.I.C. either.

As a teenager I was a madcap cyclist as well as hill basher and a few years ago, in revolt against vehicles and always being the driver having to return to the starting point, I again renewed acquaintance with the beast. The benefits were soon seen, at an Eastern S.M.C. Meet one Bank Holiday weekend. (The one where Charlie lost my crampon). Before dinner in the Glen Shean at Strathyre I made a quick run up into the forests and cached the cycle. After dinner I bivouacked by the Falls of Leny. At dawn I was up Stank Glen and the morning gave a fine traverse of Ledi and Ben Vane. The cycle gave a rapid descent to Loch Lubnaig and while the traffic battled it out on the road we pedalled blissfully along the dead railway track opposite. Q.E.D.

Stay alive in 75, buy a bike! Just think of the £.p. saving on doing Ben More in Mull *Sans McBrayne*. As an 'aid to pedestrianism' you can legally use this on all foot rights-of-way; it is not a *machine*.

On another occasion I left the folded carcass of bike chained to a tree at the head of Glen Ogle, motored round to Strathyre and enjoyed a Corbett-collecting traverse back to the pass—to discover the vital part to hold the machine together had been left in the car. One makes such errors; once.

Often cluttering up the poor car along with the cycle is a canoe, my impecunious substitute for the yacht. It's baptism in approach to mountains was for the peaks west of Loch Lochy. A gale was forecast for the afternoon but the raid was over by then and we sneaked away from the clawing forests with two more scalps.

As a dreamy youth I'd been on those hills with the said crampon Charlie; so enraptured with the sunset was he that we ended crawling, backwards, down through the trees (to save having our eyes poked out) in the pitch dark. The god-like, infallible, unequivocal picture I then had of the S.M.C. was gone for ever. Even though there used to be, pre-vandal days, a plaque on the Ben saying *Ben Nevis, 4406 ft. Erected by the Scottish Mountaineering Club*, the image of mighty mountain men was for ever gone. They even had the height of the Ben wrong.

But to get back to boats—I mean ships (*Boat*=10 press-ups).

Last winter we managed to even out-do the yachting meet, so now it has gone the way of other departed dreams. We climbed on

the Ben, in Arran, and across Cape Wrath from Loch Inchart to Loch Eribol; we sailed from Plockton via the Sound of Sleat, Rhum, Mull, Loch Linnhe, Jura, Kintyre, the Forth, the Minches, Pentland Firth to Invergordon. And I mean *sail*. Sir Hugh and crew *motored*, it was that sort of ship; our was the real *Onedin Line* stuff, a top gallant three-masted schooner, no less; the biggest spread of sail of any British ship.*

Thank goodness Braehead School closed before the scared hand of panicking authority banged down on mountain doings (the backlash of the Cairngorm tragedy) and turned centres into residential courses in gracious living. What *fun* we had! And what adventures, what real demands, what real discipline (not thought-destroying and body-destroying procedural rules), what real expeditioning—and all without serious mishap. Rich reality.

The *Captain Scott* brought it all back with a bang. Thirty-six innocent trainees and three days later, sails reefed, in the dark, battling a gale round Ardnamurchan Point, clinging to the yards (100-foot above the sea), they are a crew sailing a ship. For many the snowy nights in Glen Nevis were the first camping and the Ben the first hill. Arran camping suffered hurricane-force winds in Glen Rosa with Goat Fell a memory of frequent flattenings by big gusts. The Cape Wrath trip gave as wild, yet all trainees, on their own, completed the three-day trek in good style. No rest at the end but, sailing out past the stack where Tom Patey fell, a night of heading for the Pentland Firth. Sleep became the chosen treat.

I have a picture yet of the last dusk with my *Hawke* Watch romping about in the rigging, frantically trying to cover the furled square sails with hessian before the month of refit, while the snow fell steadily. They joked and sang, fear and sickness, weariness and discomfort forgotten. 'We would sail her to Everest and climb the bloody mountain,' one of them laughed.

Before turning in that night I climbed out along the jib boom where you could see the whole ship: masts and rigging, white, vanishing aloft in a spread of hazy stars, a faint glow from the chartroom, a quiet sound of singing from the Mess Deck. Below me the figurehead of Scott, goggles on brow (irreverently referred to as *Biggles*), peered through the falling snow. God, it had been good adventuring; another successful approach to reality.

I'm sure Sir Hugh would have approved.

*See photographs opposite page 236

THE DOCTOR RETURNS

EDITOR'S NOTE:—Some years ago (*S.M.C.J.*, 1968, xxix, 5–8) we printed one episode featuring the indefatigable Doctor and his hapless companions. Here, after a decent interval, we allow them to burst upon our pages again. The perpetrator of these fictions, Geoff Dutton—now just recovered from his Editorial labours—has been seized by a fit of uncontrollable creation. Nightly, the Doctor visits him in Glenshee and the next post brings us a further, more grotesque adventure. From this burgeoning pile we have selected two stories which deal, in different ways, with two of the more ludicrous aspects of mountaineering in the Doctor's world. Tendentious readers may, of course, find some points of similarity with our own . . .

Finishing off a Top

It was impossible to see anything. Mist pressed about me, determined to stay. There was no hint of wind. Undressed for late July, I was extremely cold. Droplets explored the tail of my shirt. I stood, cursing, as for the last fifty minutes. It was a small comfort to know that within a two-mile radius of this mist, almost certainly in this mist, the Apprentice and—more satisfyingly—the Doctor were likewise standing; and likewise at their own particular spots, and likewise for the last fifty minutes. On this God-forsaken bald-headed hag-ridden heap, three thousand feet up.

Why were we thus enchanted? Could we not sit down? There was nowhere to sit but weeping heather. One could keep drier, or less wet, by remaining upright. Drops gathered and crept down back and knees, but to sit invited cold prolonged and intimate embrace. Then why not move about? Why not indeed, but for an unaccountable loyalty to the Doctor; a loyalty, I discovered later, shared equally, equally unaccountably, by the Apprentice—whose displeasure in such circumstances is even greater than mine, and whose experience of the Doctor is no less. It only remains to add that at the feet of each of us lay a flag on a long pole.

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'No, never mind,' said the Doctor, flashing out his handkerchief and wiping the Guidebook page rapidly dry, 'I'll get you another—same as before, eh? Fine. Another Glen Riddance, Geordie—ach, make it three more—yes, of course, doubles . . .'

To cut the story short, he won us over. It was to be a Very Relaxing Day. We had all had enough of Difficult Routes (here the Apprentice swelled visibly; I kicked him accurately, beneath the table) and this Sunday—we could leave late Saturday, he would pick us up as usual—this Sunday would merely be to Finish Off a Top.

'Not bloody Munros—' began the Apprentice.

'No, no, not at all,' said the Doctor.

'A Corbett—or a Donald,' I suggested, maliciously.

'If you think—' roared the youth, gripping his Glen Riddance tighter this time—

'Certainly not,' said the Doctor placidly, gazing down his beak, 'not Munro-bashing. I did all the Munros in that Section thirty years ago; in one weekend, as it happened. Not Munro-bashing. It's tops.'

'Tops? !!!'

'Much more skilful, much more interesting. You see quite different country. Some of them are damned difficult to find. Not all properly measured, you know. There's one I'm still not sure of. Here it is in the List, d'you see? (Of course they've missed out the initial aspiration—they always spell these names wrong). We'll go up there just for a stroll. I'm still quite stiff myself, so you two must be really feeling it; one never gets much exercise up and down those artificial routes of yours. We'll go for a leisurely walk, and I'll nip off and collect that little chap. The weather'll be dead clear all weekend—fine and warm and quite settled, the forecast says. You'll just lie and relax. I'll do all the running about. Tops really test a fellow. Munros! I did most of 'em when I was a student.'

'How . . . many . . . have . . . you . . . done . . .?,' muttered the Apprentice, in morbid fascination.

'Two hundred and twenty-eight—or two hundred and twenty nine if you include Beinn Tarsuinn. But I've hardly bagged a new Munro for years. Been after all the confounded tops I left out before. And I haven't even done one of those since last Easter Meet.' He closed the Guidebook, put away his spectacles and smiled disarmingly. It was my round.

We crawled out of the tent into a dawn of lemon and blue. An early start, the Doctor insisted, would miss the Heat of the Day and ensure us time to relax among the summit heather while he rattled off in pursuit of the errant top. Halfway up sweatily endless slopes, peopled by that detestable species, the 7 a.m. midge, we stopped

for a second breakfast of warm ham sandwiches. The view was excellent. Probably even the Apprentice did not miss his rocks.

'I've brought something rather interesting,' mumbled the Doctor through his ham, rummaging in his rucksack—the only one with us, and already stuffed with the Apprentice's shirt and my cagoule. He held up triumphantly a small shining cannon-like object.

'You've probably never seen one'—this to the Apprentice. Then to me: 'Pretty good, eh?'

'Looks like a Dumpy level,' remarked the Apprentice, sourly. The Doctor, somewhat crestfallen, confirmed that it was. However, it had belonged to a Father of the Club After further carabiner-like janglings, he produced a diminutive brass alarm clock.

'Aneroid. Sir Hugh's very own. Patient of mine picked it up at a Kirriemuir roup.'

The Apprentice steadfastly chewed at the view. We awaited a clinometer. But it must have remained inside.

By ten o'clock we had traversed sufficient miles of peat-hag to be rewarded by the cairn, beaming pyramidally from the desert horizon. The Doctor had unerringly smelt it out.

'This is the Top,' he announced.

'The one you were after?' enquired the Apprentice hopefully rubbing sweat off his shoulderblades.

'No, of course not. Not the top, but the Top. The Munro. It's the fifth time I've been here,' he added. 'Second in summer.'

He poked a boot reminiscently among burnt stems. Sun gleamed on his polished clinkers. He looked suspiciously innocent. Statistics will out.

He knelt and spread the maps. Two maps because, naturally, the elusive top could be cornered only at the junction of two sheets. It was not named on the maps. It did not even aspire to a contour ring of its own.

'It's a very doubtful top,' he explained. Phillip and Burn—and Gall Inglis as well—thought it *was* one, but they could never get decent sightings. Today's perfect. Absolutely clear. But you see the ground's so flat about there—digging a long forefinger into a blank area of map—'that I can't take sightings on these other two points'—prodding at two bald unpronounceable shoulders—'unless somebody stands up on each of them with, say, a flag.'

The Apprentice and I began to feel a familiar feeling. We avoided each other's eyes.

'Now if you two chaps would be good enough just to pop over to those two points—see them over there—and stand on them and wave a flag when you see me wave mine: then I can get accurate

the Ben, in Arran, and across Cape Wrath from Loch Inchard to Loch Eribol; we sailed from Plockton via the Sound of Sleat, Rhum, Mull, Loch Linnhe, Jura, Kintyre, the Forth, the Minches, Pentland Firth to Invergordon. And I mean *sail*. Sir Hugh and crew *motored*, it was that sort of ship; our was the real *Onedin Line* stuff, a top gallant three-masted schooner, no less; the biggest spread of sail of any British ship.*

Thank goodness Braehead School closed before the scared hand of panicking authority banged down on mountain doings (the backlash of the Cairngorm tragedy) and turned centres into residential courses in gracious living. What *fun* we had! And what adventures, what real demands, what real discipline (not thought-destroying and body-destroying procedural rules), what real expeditioning—and all without serious mishap. Rich reality.

The *Captain Scott* brought it all back with a bang. Thirty-six innocent trainees and three days later, sails reefed, in the dark, battling a gale round Ardnamurchan Point, clinging to the yards (100-foot above the sea), they are a crew sailing a ship. For many the snowy nights in Glen Nevis were the first camping and the Ben the first hill. Arran camping suffered hurricane-force winds in Glen Rosa with Goat Fell a memory of frequent flattenings by big gusts. The Cape Wrath trip gave as wild, yet all trainees, on their own, completed the three-day trek in good style. No rest at the end but, sailing out past the stack where Tom Patey fell, a night of heading for the Pentland Firth. Sleep became the chosen treat.

I have a picture yet of the last dusk with my *Hawke* Watch romping about in the rigging, frantically trying to cover the furled square sails with hessian before the month of refit, while the snow fell steadily. They joked and sang, fear and sickness, weariness and discomfort forgotten. 'We would sail her to Everest and climb the bloody mountain,' one of them laughed.

Before turning in that night I climbed out along the jib boom where you could see the whole ship: masts and rigging, white, vanishing aloft in a spread of hazy stars, a faint glow from the chartroom, a quiet sound of singing from the Mess Deck. Below me the figurehead of Scott, goggles on brow (irreverently referred to as *Biggles*), peered through the falling snow. God, it had been good adventuring; another successful approach to reality.

I'm sure Sir Hugh would have approved.

*See photographs opposite page 236

THE DOCTOR RETURNS

EDITOR'S NOTE:—Some years ago (*S.M.C.J.*, 1968, xxix, 5–8) we printed one episode featuring the indefatigable Doctor and his hapless companions. Here, after a decent interval, we allow them to burst upon our pages again. The perpetrator of these fictions, Geoff Dutton—now just recovered from his Editorial labours—has been seized by a fit of uncontrollable creation. Nightly, the Doctor visits him in Glenshee and the next post brings us a further, more grotesque adventure. From this burgeoning pile we have selected two stories which deal, in different ways, with two of the more ludicrous aspects of mountaineering in the Doctor's world. Tendentious readers may, of course, find some points of similarity with our own . . .

Finishing off a Top

It was impossible to see anything. Mist pressed about me, determined to stay. There was no hint of wind. Undressed for late July, I was extremely cold. Droplets explored the tail of my shirt. I stood, cursing, as for the last fifty minutes. It was a small comfort to know that within a two-mile radius of this mist, almost certainly in this mist, the Apprentice and—more satisfyingly—the Doctor were likewise standing; and likewise at their own particular spots, and likewise for the last fifty minutes. On this God-forsaken bald-headed hag-ridden heap, three thousand feet up.

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sightings and—we'll soon know the Real Height of this top Phillip and Burn could never do it. Nor Gall Inglis. Make a good Note for the *Journal*.'

'What about a Flag?' I asked, mechanically.

He rooted again in his rucksack. From its lower leathern recesses, Dent-Blanche-battered, he produced a cluster of mahogany brass-ringed rods. He fitted them together.

'From Lamond Howie's tripod. Just the thing. And here's the cloth—bits of the wife's old curtains. Shove the spike through 'em. There's your flag.'

He handed us each our pole and flag, and dismissed us cheerily. We had not the heart to protest.

That had been two hours before. Flag in hand, I reached my imperceptible prominence. Across a deep corrie dozed an identical whale, surmounted by a tiny figure. Another figure, equally remote but recognisable by its bony stride, denoted the Doctor, scaling his debatable contour. His flag danced, a speck of colour, as he climbed. At the top he would wave it. I prepared to stretch out in the sun.

Then out of that blue-eyed sky the mist appeared. Suddenly. Wet, white, annihilating.

Of course, it would lift. It was bound to lift. A mere midday aberration. A casual stray. Rising air would shift it.

It stayed. Fifty minutes, as I said. An hour and a quarter.

Enough. I sighed; I gazed at the pole, I bent down and gripped it. I would go, Doctor or no Doctor. The mahogany and brass gleamed. Sun. Sun

I looked up. Blue indecision, but blue.

Across the corrie, the whale oozed into view. Upon it, a faithful figure. I waved my flag. He lifted his, not with enthusiasm. I guessed his feelings. And the Doctor? Smoke lay thick on Sinai; but it was clearing, clearing. Then—hell and damnation. Clamminess hugged again, and all was lost.

Twice this happened. At intervals of half an hour.

Then it became darker, and drizzled. Low cloud had joined us.

So I bent down, gripped the pole firmly, and strode off.

But where to . . . ? This way, keeping the corrie on the right. But where *was* the corrie? That would be the edge? Peat hag? No Yes? Yes.

I halted, embarrassed. I was about to become lost on this hopeless plateau, *sans* food, *sans* map, *sans* compass, *sans* torch, in shirt and breeks and carrying a mahogany pole with a piece of curtain material on it. And doubtless over there, on his invisible

whale, the Apprentice faced the same fate, but without even a shirt

The weather being Settled, this cloud could last for days. I must obviously descend into the corrie. Forty-eight hours' circling on the plateau could never be lived down. Think of the Accident Report. Think of Daddy McKay's. Think of the shrill glee of The Weasels

The corrie revealed itself bleakly and blackly as I went lower. Six miles down the glen, a shooting lodge. Then four miles to a public road. After that, twenty odd more round to the Doctor's car on the other side of the hill

Two peat-haggard hours later I overtook the Apprentice pulling his feet out of a bog. He had passed the savage state, and the weeping state. He was impervious to all, and merely nodded. A dark green stain down his neck indicated where at one time in his vigil he had tried to clothe himself in his flag. (My own was red).

We reached a puddled track and trudged on silently, in thin sheets of sweeping rain. Wind had arrived, and chased hungrily over vanishing slopes. We half-hoped the Doctor might still be up there, checking his watch. But of course, with map and compass, he would be down at his car. Or perhaps—we must both have thought of this together, for we stopped and looked at each other—perhaps he had back-tracked on bearings to each of our lonely stances, to collect us

No help, we were down. If he was up, looking for us, hard luck.

The Lodge came into view. Large shiny limousine. Early shooters, awaiting August; or landlord inspecting before the let. Probably the latter. A sniffy-looking cove in tweeds emerged from the door, said 'Aah'

Before the Apprentice could reply suitably, I got in with a cordial 'Good afternoon.' Four miles to the public road. You never knew.

'Aah your friend rang up. He'll be round by car presently. Do come in, woncha?'

We stopped, breathed deeply, and turned into the porchway.

'Aah by the way perhaps you could leave those things out here, eh?'

We were still carrying our poles with pieces of curtain on them. We leant them carefully against the ox-blood pine posts and went inside.

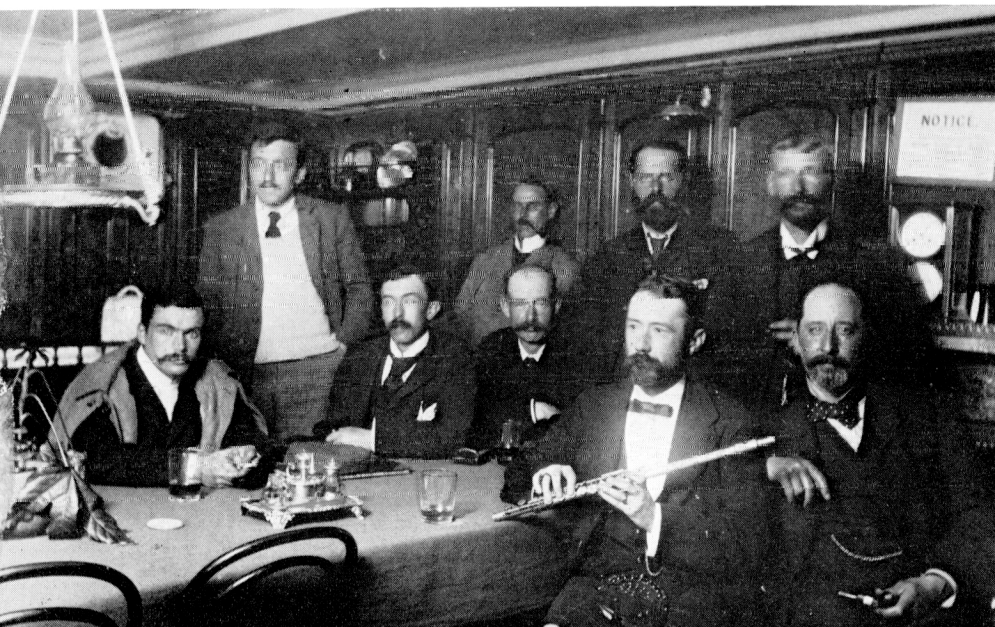
An hour later, a car scritchd on the gravel and the Doctor appeared in the room. From our armchairs, we saw him vaguely across the roar of fire, the shine of plates and glasses. The Apprentice, much moved, extended a wavering hairy arm from beneath his thick wool travelling rug.



Photo: Royal Navy

Above—Escaping to Reality aboard the *Captain Scott* in 1973.

Below—Still Life with Munro, Flute and Whisky: the lounge of the
Photo W. Douglas





'Ha,' said the Doctor. 'Knew where you'd skedaddle to when you deserted your posts. Rang up Charlie here—you look fine Charlie, no more trouble, eh? (another of his patients, no doubt . . .)—rang up Charlie here—yes, thanks, I'll have a Strath Grapple—told him to look after you. Good thing, keeping the flags. Kept mine, too. We'll have another shot next weekend, eh? Settled weather—this is just a local front. Then we'll finish it off, and get back to some real stuff. I'm sure it's a top all right. The aneroid made it three thousand and two—can I check with your barometer, Charlie?'

A Good Clean Break

WE coiled the rope. It had been a good route. Warm eastern granite, and now sunburnt heather. The Doctor arranged himself elaborately at full length, head pillowed on arms.

'It *is* a shout,' confirmed the Apprentice, looking up from his last coils.

We listened. A feeble cry, which might once have been 'Help', wandered up from the other, easier, side of the crag. I peered, but saw nothing.

The Doctor reassembled his full height, climbed a convenient protuberance, and inspected the heathery hollow below.

'There! It *is* somebody. Chap lying on a ledge. Some ass fallen off.'

This was one of the Apprentice's best days. He was in excellent form, and swiftly led me down a steep series of slabs to the victim. The Doctor, irritatingly, arrived there first, having walked down a heathery rake neither of us had seen.

'Well, and who are you?', asked the Doctor pleasantly, as he took off his jacket, knelt, and rolled up his sleeves.

'I'm the Casualty,' announced the figure, not altogether surprisingly.

'So it seems. Now,' said the Doctor, frisking him professionally, 'have you any pain? Back or limbs?'

'I'm bloody stiff,' remarked the Casualty. 'Been here hours.'

'Of course you'll be stiff. But have you any pain?'

'Only when you poke me like that. Who are *you* anyway?'

We all raised eyebrows. The Doctor adopted his blandest bedside approach, suitable for dealing with irate landowners, lunatics, or the concussed.

Photo: H. M. Brown

Opposite—Beinn Alligin and Loch Torridon.

'Never mind, laddie. We're here to help. We'll soon get you down.'

'Get *me* down?' remarked the Casualty sarcastically. 'I think you'd better get *them* down.' And he stood up, yawned, hobbled stiffly to one side and, most disconcertingly, proceeded to empty his bladder over the edge of the cliff.

The Doctor was as near nonplussed as I have seen him. His fingers stroked the air, his cuffs—now loose again—fluttered uncertainly. '*Them?* Who are *they?*'

'The Rescue Team,' remarked the Casualty, turning and adjusting his dress. 'They're all stuck. Up there,' he added, jerking his head towards the cliff behind us.

We turned. Some eighty feet up, a collection of cagouled figures fluoresced ashamedly from various unlikely positions. One was clearly upside down, resting on his elbows. All (fortunately) were tied together by a welter of ropes. In reply to our gaze, they mewled in chorus a feeble and obviously highly embarrassed 'Aaa . . . help.'

The Casualty sat on an outcrop and lit a fag. 'I suppose we'll have to go and sort 'em out,' he said. When pressed to describe the nature of his accident, he explained that it was no accident, but just his turn to be Casualty. It was, he further explained, and somewhat belatedly, an Exercise. Training. This was the Pitfoulie M.R.T. They came out every weekend, if the weather was fine. A sort of a club. Good fun, and useful.

The Doctor, cheated of his prey, was reluctant to believe all this. 'Concussion,' he confided to us, 'has curious effects. Now I've—'

'Concussion?' broke in the Casualty. 'He got that all right. Same as last time. Always gets it. That's why they're in that mess.' He jerked his fag towards the now silent tableau.

'So there is a real casualty, after all!' exclaimed the Doctor, brightening and rising to his feet. He brushed down his breeches and slipped on his jacket. 'The sooner we fix him up the better.'

'Och, he's all right now, Eck is,' said the Casualty, inhaling and blowing the smoke out again in neat little rings. 'We just drove him back to town. He'll get home in a day or two, like last time. They usually do, with mild concussion,' he informed the Doctor.

Eck, it turned out, was Leader of the Pitfoulie team. He had started it, having apparently discovered a passion for rescue when a mere boy. His absence accounted for the failure of this particular exercise. The rest of the team—apart from the Casualty, who was experienced enough but, as he explained, had to take his turn as Casualty like anyone else—the rest were not too familiar with complex rope manoeuvres and had gradually fankled themselves into complete stasis.

'But how did Eck get concussion?' demanded the Doctor, still obsessed.

'He fell out of our Land Rover. He always does. He's that eager. He leans out, directing us, as soon as we drive on to the hill. It holds things up. We didn't get started again till 11 o'clock—though we were a lot quicker this time than last.'

So the question resolved itself simply into the four of us releasing the rescue team. We turned ourselves towards the cliff, the Casualty nipping out his fag-end with some regret. Just as we were about to plunge down the heather to the foot of the crag, a line of figures appeared above our bowl, twittering.

'Careful, now! It's an EDGE!' boomed out a rich contralto voice, with more than a brush of five o'clock shadow in it. 'Stop where you are!'

One figure, that of a long thin man in a flapping raincoat, did not stop. He slipped, sat down on his raincoat and began, inexorably, to slither towards the edge of the crag. Our eyes popped. The Doctor smelt game.

'I said STOP, Mr Pilchard! I SAID STOP!'

Mr Pilchard slowed down and, obediently, stopped. A large female figure made towards him and plucked him, raincoat fluttering, back to safety. The excited buzz of conversation resumed.

'It's Mrs Cairnwhapple,' said the Doctor. 'Ursula Major. And that's her ornithological party. A breeding pair was reported here last week.'

Mrs Cairnwhapple, no mean woman, took in the scene at a glance. 'Just as well we STOPPED, friends. There are four foolish people down there who did not stop and who are now In Trouble. They are waiting to be rescued by the experienced mountaineers you see below you.' (Agonised twitchings from the web). 'A real Rescue Team. We must sit and watch, and pick up some Useful Hints.' She plumped herself down in the heather, her chicks snuggling likewise. She kept a sharp eye on Mr Pilchard, who still exhibited suicidal tendencies.

We may imagine the next hour or so. Sufficient to say that by the time we disentangled the rescue team and took them down to the foot of the crag, a late June sun had mellowed into early evening. And Mrs Cairnwhapple, with a bittern-like boom of delight, had recognised the Doctor and had trodden heavily and decisively down heather and ledge to join us. Her wheepling brood accompanied her, Pilchard suffering minor mishaps on the way. The Apprentice, who had performed daring deeds over the past two hours, was particularly helpful to one admiring and attractive young lady ornithologist. 'That's Ann Scarsoch,' said the Doctor, rejoining me after wearily separating once again two entwined and fluorescent rope-coilers.

'Old Poltivet's daughter. Only one line of triple hobs on her shoes. Flighty piece.'

Mrs Cairnwhapple had caused baskets to be produced and opened; we munched in satisfaction. The Pitfoulie team, though still somewhat subdued, finished first and, with a commendable sense of duty, stretched out their casualty once more and began trussing him up for the carry-down. The Doctor was suggesting we should examine their knots. 'After all, they're doing it on purpose this time.' Behind us in the heather, the Apprentice was teaching La Scarsoch the technique of pressure grips.

Suddenly we froze. Beneath us, up the long slopes of the evening glen, the sunlight heaved with an army of people. Crowd after crowd. The Doctor snatched up his binoculars. He paled. 'Rescue Teams. Walkie-talkies. Army. Air Force. Police. Navy. Shepherds. Civilians. Dogs. Schoolboys.' We listened. Yes . . . and helicopters.

We hurried over to the Casualty. (The Apprentice was too much engaged to notice). We asked him what he knew of this invasion. Was it another, but mammoth, Exercise?

The Casualty, with disarming ease, freed his left arm from a splint, and pulled the bandages from his mouth. He sat up and grinned.

'No, it'll be a real one this time. We'll have to join it. They *still* mustn't have come back to that car. Two whole days away, no notification, no sketch of route taken. Must be lost. That lot'll find 'em. Not that they'll want to be found, when they tot up the cost of this little trip.' He complacently stripped off his dressings, rose, and assumed command.

The Doctor and I felt the earth wither. Why, oh why *had* he parked in that car park? Why *had* he bought a parking ticket? Against all our rules. Yet there was still hope What sort of car was it, what number? Did anyone know?

The Casualty frowned. The occasion was rather too important for trivial curiosity. 'A big old German crate. Yes, a Merc.' Number? He had, of course, noted that. He pulled out a grubby bit of paper and read off the Doctor's registration number

That was that. We would share his costs certainly, despite his protestations, but nothing could lessen the blow from the Accident Report in the next *Journal*. Hummel Doddie wrote these Accident Reports, it was rumoured (by all except Hummel Doddie); Hummel Doddie, whose active pen flayed the tomfools that caused unnecessary searches, that caused vast and growing inconvenience to vast and growing mountainfuls of rescuers (the helicopters nosed above us, attracted by the carrion-beetle orange of the Pitfoulie cagoules); Hummel Doddie would certainly not spare—and rightly

not spare—the Doctor, whose views (like those of the Apprentice) on these matters were not the views of the establishment

‘Blast it,’ said the Doctor. He bravely stood and watched the attackers close in. His pipe remained unlit.

At that moment there was a crack, followed by a scream. We all sprang round. Miss Scarsoch sat up in the heather, white, and holding her wrist. The Apprentice stood beside her, rumped and red. He had been trying to teach the Lay-back, but clumsy-like

With a glad cry, the Doctor leapt forward and knelt down. He felt the wrist nimbly. He looked up. His eyes brimmed with happiness.

‘A Colles’, by the Lord. We’re saved. A good clean break!’

He issued orders in all directions. The Pitfoulie team, led by their casualty, marched towards him. Behind them rose the dust of advancing myriads, the barking of dogs. The air grew thick with engines and whirring metal, with cries and commands. Miss Scarsoch would have doubtless have fainted, had not Mrs Cairn-whapple bellowed encouragement in her ear.

‘Stick it, Ann! A little thing like that!’

As the impis approached, their aerials glittering in the setting sun, the Apprentice gloomily held Miss Scarsoch’s other hand and thought, like me, of our small brown tents alone in the Upper Corrie. The Doctor thought of them, too, but also of a large empty Mercedes surrounded by cameramen and police officers; and blessed the animal spirits of the young human male.

I could imagine his conversation when he at last got back to his car. The saluting police officers. Himself breezily nonchalant. ‘Aye, a nasty business, officer, but could have been worse, could have been worse.’ ‘Verra fortunate you were up there, Doctor.’ ‘Aye, we’re often called upon to render assistance wherever we may be. Inconvenient, but must be done. The Oath, you know, officer, the Oath.’ ‘Aye, sir, the Oath.’ ‘Inconvenient to you, too, officer—I expect, ah, I expect you thought I’d got lost or something, with my car here so long?’ ‘Och, no, sir, no’ (deprecatingly). ‘One never knows when one may be delayed on this sort of business. One always has to be ready.’ ‘Oo aye, sir, ye cannae tell, ye cannae tell.’ ‘Why, I’ve still some Glen Houlet I’ll not risk any more, driving. But yourself—must be fairly tired and cold, officer . . . eh?’ ‘Och’ Mutual exchange of understanding. We would be saved.

That night, as we packed up our tents, the Doctor showed us the piece of paper he had been scribbling on by torchlight. ‘I’m sending it to Hummel Doddie,’ he said. ‘Old Doddie likes his reports in early, and from those first on the scene. Later on, you know, there

could be all sorts of confusion.' His eyes gleamed beneath the midnight sun.

The paper read:

30th JUNE—Ann Scarsoch (19), Scottish, fairly experienced, practising layback with more experienced companion at foot of corrie below Grouse Shoot, Lochnagar, fell her length. Fractured wrist, shock, some exposure. Found and brought down by Pitfoulie M.R. team (acting leader Alec Sprachle). Injuries dressed on spot by doctor climbing nearby. Invaluable assistance given by Army, R.A.F. and R.N. teams, shepherds, police and civilians. Dogs used. Large bodies out, including Mrs Ursula Cairnwhapple, M.B.O.U. Two helicopters broke down but crews rescued by Army, R.A.F. and R.N. teams, shepherds, police and civilians; dogs used. One policeman bitten by dog; injuries dressed on spot by doctor climbing nearby. One civilian, T. Pilchard (41), English, lost on way down; found in hotel bar later.

A considerably shortened version appeared in the subsequent *Journal*.

———oOo———

FAR AND FAIR

Far and fair, the hills of blue
Caught his childish gaze.
Some day he would go, he knew—
Life has many days.

Some fine day in Spring, perhaps,
When the air was keen—
But for time's unnoticed lapse
So it might have been.

Far and fair, the hills of blue
Swam through Summer's haze—
He had other things to do.
(Life has many days.)

In the leisured Autumn time
He would up and hie,
With the season at its prime—
Still the days slipped by.

To his dying gaze each hill
Dazzling white with snow
Beaconed, beckoned, brighter still
Now he could not go.

In his Will they found the clue:
'Life's a cunning snare.
Far and fair the hills of blue;
Strew my ashes there.'

D.J.F.

PERSONAL IMPRESSIONS WHILE ON MOUNT KENYA

By Michael Coleman

'QUEUEING up' is one manifestation of our present ultra commercial lifestyle with which I have little patience. I am irritated by the merest queue, the merest delay. Impatience can be burdensome at times. Squatting on a spacious ledge, therefore, on the north side of Mount Kenya, I could not fail to choke upon the irony of my situation. For two hours I had waited. For two hours I had invigilated over the minutes. For two hours I had queued, impatiently longing for 'my turn.' Each minute dragged twice as long as the last in an Einsteinian slowing of time until each minute became timeless—and time endless. But my turn was fourth in line, last in the queue and—or so it seemed—as remote as ever. Distasteful nervous energy surged in waves, slipped back, and left only the wet sand of irritation. I would fiddle with the rope, feeding it in a pretence of vital effort, coiling it in a pretence of good housekeeping, sitting upon it again in an all-consuming nervous rage. I had long since lost interest in the prospect. Tererei and Sendeyo stood like Laurel and Hardy: an absorbing partnership until I could suffer their humour no more, and then only an idiotic pair. In time they were removed from sight as the predictable midday cloud obscured them, transporting me from the warm pleasure of flame blue skies and firebrick rocks to the misery of seeping cold and grey-white blindness. While I could doze in the warm sun, nodding scarcely conscious approval, I fumed and shivered in the billowing, misty cold.

At such times, one considers with acid cynicism the remote reflections of more placid moments. One will recall that philosophic gem—'. . . the sense of isolation . . . '—and sneer. For two hours I had waited. The isolation contributed nothing but a welling agitation to be active. 'The summit, the summit . . . '—an elusive, almost abstract thing, not conjuring images of a fine, spired cathedral but providing merely indeed merely—the impetus for movement, upward movement, continuous upward movement—the only antidote for this intolerable nervous impatience.

I could still hear Bruce above, though out of sight. His absent presence provided no soothing balm for my malaise. I could hear him reviling the mountain with a single vernacular, muttered, shouted, an apparently inviting accompaniment to his upward ascent of the tower. '— me,' I could hear, uttered in breathless, strengthless exacerbation. Again and again I could hear him. '----- me,' as if the accumulatory vituperation provided an essential

foothold or groping handhold—the link between confusion and understanding. I felt the urge to shout ‘Get a bloody move on!’ I could not—I am no paragon.

I squatted once again. ‘Have you ever wondered at the fineness of the balance?’ I asked, in rhetorical vein. ‘How one must delicately approach each moment and pass it by with infinite care lest the balance be upset. That fine balance of contentment, a soul appeased upon a precarious knife edge, wafted by excessive agitation or wasted effort and by this tottering, threatening to plunge into the morass of brooding discontent . . .’

There is a moment or period in every greater route which persists in one’s mind long after the route has been completed and superseded in time. It may not be a moment of great anxiety nor a period of fine ecstasy. It is usually a time, often prolonged, during which one is idle and powerless—powerless to speed up events; a time when uncertainty is in the ascendant and one has not the opportunity to resolve that uncertainty speedily. Thoughts well, impatience swells, the rope is unmoving, one is out of communication with one’s leader and hoarse from the discovery. It is a time repulsive upon later recollection. For this reason I recall with particular clarity my sojourn at the foot of Firmin’s Tower upon Mount Kenya. However, when the malady is expelled and activity is resumed, it is with a great sense of relief and a great sense of lost joy that one moves up, with hands and feet as light as one’s heart.

At the top of the chimney which provided access to the tower and upon which we had spent so much time, I found my three companions, consuming the whole of the available stance: Ronnie, who had led the pitch and who had roped up Bruce and Spike, and now myself. I was glad, exquisitely glad to be moving again. The top of the tower was some two-and-a-half pitches distant, beyond some steep rock which fell sheer upon each side—a stimulant to caution, but generating a fine sense of airiness. ‘At last,’ I thought, ‘this is the place . . .’ Below, the base of the tower dissolved in a swirling cauldron of thick cloud; above, the summit of Nelion would appear darkly, like a black moon waxing against a white night, occasionally to appear wholly revealed as the cloud parted. Lower, the ‘Gate of the Mists,’ choking upon great mouthfuls of blue-green ice, dribbled icicles over the great steepness of the north face. Batian, our goal, was hidden from us.

The tower, it appeared, represented for us a doorway. Facing and climbing towards the door we were caressed by the warm morning sun—brightening our efforts as well as the day. Though we would wilt under its oppressiveness and direct obscene badinage towards the sky, we should all have preferred it to the greater oppression of dark, dank billowing cloud—an oppression approaching

depression. The weather men speak of depressions with profuse apologies—it is a word with very appropriate connotations. Beyond the door, there was no sun, no warmth, no cheer.

We climbed steadily, meeting few difficulties and nothing hard. The tower had been a door in another respect. Reported as the crux, it now lay behind us, subdued, posing now no impediment. The summit was ours and would be ours—in time. But how much time? How long would it take? I had lost my new-found cheer. I could not enjoy scuttling around breathlessly over huge boulders and freezing in inactivity.

We reached the West Ridge—Bruce and I some time in advance of Ronnie and Spike. Here we discovered a fine bivouac site and decided upon this spot to spend the long night. We relieved ourselves of our sacks.

Shipton's Notch is not a pleasant place. A *venturi* at its most amenable, proffering only crumbling rock and poor security. The summit can be seen from this point—though we were denied that advantage. We received instead an evanescent glimpse of a rocky boss masquerading as the summit. We continued; now not tired but growing bored, awaiting the arrival of our propinquous host. Flouncing over large boulders upon the south side of the ridge, seemingly suspended over the gleaming glacier basins below; occasionally sidling along under a steep wall and bridging up wide gullies. But always pulling, hauling, stepping high. Could we ever find the top? We were taking such a time over this last section Emerging from a boulder-strewn trough, I spotted the summit, only a short time before I arrived

The summit is a circular plinth, strewn with boulders. A large block sits slightly to one side—like a table in the corner of a room. 'The room at the top,' I thought. Nelion appeared as a near-far satellite, clearly diminutive, inviting in its uncertain proximity but distantly severe at the end of a narrow and dangerous-seeming ridge. However, the gloom which might have accompanied the senescent evening was dispelled by the thinning cloud. The spilling warmth of the strange evening light was a great pleasure. I sat upon the table with my legs dangling over the edge. A rope passed through my hands—too slow it seemed. I heard Bruce shout, 'Take in the bloody rope!' 'Him again,' I thought, and pulled the rope tight—too tight, the final vituperation informed me.

My mind wandered through a forest of evergreen thoughts, my impatience now appeased. I thought back to the morning, twelve hours before. I remembered with delightful revulsion the first hour or so: the drowsiness of too few hours spent only just beneath the blanket of deep pleasurable sleep, multiplied by the dark cold and a gnawing sickness which no food could dispel. I remembered the hunched, slouching shuffle to the foot of the north side of the

mountain. I remembered the steep gravel up which we had to struggle to reach our starting line—a line which always seemed so close but never closer, repugning with reluctance the wish to return to voluptuous sleep. I remembered the moment of arrival at the foot of the highway, speeding up out of sight above. A supreme moment when unwillingness was transformed into expectation and drowsiness into final wakefulness. My spirit had risen with the sun.

I remembered embarking upon this exercise thinking of it as a child's game in which each pitch, each step, each breath was a building block, accumulating until finally they took shape producing the perfect form only with the addition of the last block—the last breath. I remembered the first series of chimneys leading to the amphitheatre. Not always deep and narrow—largely shallow and open, permitting freedom. Each was sensibly difficult and intelligently long—while not so short that one had the impression that it was unclimbed, neither were they so long that rope became a scarcity. Each was provided with a comfortable stance. I could remember halting upon one occasion and turning to examine the way I had come. The steep highway up which we had travelled stretched down and disappeared, consumed by the ragged jaws of the sheer rocky walls upon each side. Distantly, the crenellated, silhouetted north ridge of Lenana provided a remarkable horizon—the clouds hanging ready for the words of poets. I remembered disturbing a stone which tumbled on Ronnie and Spike below. I remembered sitting down with Bruce to await the arrival of Ronnie and Spike and have a little to eat.

We tramped across the amphitheatre enjoying some easy, unstruggling climbing upon shallow slabs, Bruce and I ascending to the foot of the tower by means of a direct steep wall. I remembered arriving at the foot of the tower—eager. Ronnie commenced to climb while I waited for Bruce. I saw Spike follow—and Bruce follow in line. And while I watched, I waited. I waited for two hours

Bruce joined me upon the summit—followed soon by Ronnie and Spike. The top was unremarkable and remained unremarked upon. By tangled lines and torpid steps we descended to our bivouac site.

———oOo———

Climbers

Fodder for agape enthusiasms, all the cruder
Lethargies, they lie and bask
On some raw slab and do not ask
Other than that the holds shall not be too close together.

G.J.F.D.

THE INSCRUTABLE BREGAGLIA EAST

By Robin Campbell

AFTER three days chewing our knees in a minibus, Peter and I were anxious to be off. So while the others stuffed their faces in Chur we stuffed our sacks, stripping the roof-rack in the main street and exposing our crummy equipment to the supercilious stares of Swissers-by. Below the Albigna Barrage in the late evening we hopped down, straightened up, huffed and groaned sweatily up to the Hut. The guardian was civil, considering the hour: he fed us with beer and showed us to a tolerable room. He was a very tall man, his head cocked like a heron's from dodging the hut lintels. His cold eye fell on our English guidebook. He riffled:

'Dieses Buch ist schitt. Pföckenschitt,' he explained. We should climb the north-west ridge of the Punta da l'Albigna, it seemed, an easy training climb. Our book said Grade V, but, as he said . . .

He was as good as his few bad words: the Punta was a nice easy day. In the evening we fell foul of his powerful wife for not ordering dinner in the morning. She banished us to the Winterraum and then accused me of stealing someone's sandals. Wrongfully. The Hut thronged with ugly German policemen who had taken turns through the afternoon to stand naked in the trough and soap themselves furiously. Eventually we found our advisor sloshing dishes in the kitchen. We brandished our guidebook.

'Cima Zocca? Ist gut? Schnee O.K.? Absteig nordwand?'

'Ja. Ja,' he grunted. But this was all we got.

The way up was straightforward, if laborious. We got there about one o'clock and tested the north face with some boulders. Big scabs of snow sloughed ominously away, disclosing hard grey ice. We consulted our book. *Except in good snow conditions, the best descent on the Albigna side is the north-west ridge.* Ho hum. Down we went, slithering over loose slates. The Ridge worsened into the afternoon, with the slates getting looser and each descent couloir showing the same fierce grey ice. Benightment loomed. But we abseiled instead; 1000 ft., 2 pegs and about £1 of tape onto the glacier. Eventually we staggered into the Hut, late for our ordered dinner. She mastered her fury, manfully, and shooed us to a corner along with some other unspeakables, Fred Mantz and George Chisholm from Edinburgh, who had *brought their own food for her to cook*. The idea. While we minched we grabbed a German guidebook and thumbed to the Zocca north west ridge. *Gefährlichen, schlechten fels* it said, and well it might. We stared accusingly at Heron Head, busy with his pots and pans. Next day she insisted we go down.

'Many, many people come,' she said. We went.

The next idea was to traverse the Disgrazia by the Corda Molla, a classic ridge. Our book was fulsome—the *finest mixed climb of its standard in the area*. It also said something about getting from Maloja to the Bivacco Taveggia (a box at 9500 ft.) in a day, but we saw right through that one. We tried to buy some food in Maloja (a sort of Alpine Aviemore), but all we got was chocolate and giggled at by a crocodile of pretty schoolgirls on their way to church. Then there was a whole long day plodding through the Alpine flowers to the Passo di Muretto (a sort of Alpine Lairig Ghru) then back through the flowers in reverse to Chiareggio. Finally, we dragged up to the Porro Hut with the Disgrazia sulking in the clouds behind.

Neither of us knew a word of Italian, but we'd both been to the better sort of school:

'Mangare. Dormire,' we intoned, gesturing at a frightened girl. She fled, understandably. Then we found a man from Milan who spoke French and soon we were sitting down to an enormous meal. Afterwards:

'Il faut parler avec le guide. Venez.'

We trooped out of the Hut and stumbled over to a rival establishment. A bronzed gorilla opened the door and waved us all in. His wife, who would have done all right on the beach at Cannes, sat in a corner, knitting and drying mushrooms. She raised her golden head and smote us with a smile.

'Scozzese? Loro sono molto avari!' She chuckled throatily and returned to her chores. Embarrassed, we bought postcards. Cheap ones. The man from Milan chipped in.

'Tous les lombardiens sont avares, aussi. C'est la faute de capitalisme.' The gorilla put us all to shame by producing a bottle of grappa and waving away our disgusting money. We spoke to the man from Milan in French, he spoke to the gorilla in Italian and soon we had the Corda Molla all ravelled up. We would go tomorrow to the Bivacco Oggioni, then the day after up the ridge to the summit (where there was a *nuovo bivacco, molto bellino*) and down the Preda Rosso glacier to the Rifugio Ponti. The *ghiaccio*, apparently, was not *brutto*; the *tempo* was, but this would pass. We talked on while the grappa lasted, agreeing that capitalism was bad, that Italy was beautiful and that national stereotypes were always false. We also put the gorilla straight about Raeburn and Ling's 'Spigolo Inglese' on the Disgrazia's North Face. Then we all shuffled back to sleep in beds with sheets in the Porro and dream about being on the beach at Cannes with the gorilla's wife, once she got her mushrooms all dried out of the way.

Next day the Disgrazia still sulked. We ploughed up the Ventina and over the Canalone della Vergine glaciers to reach the Bivacco

Oggioni without incident. This turned out to be comfortable, if cramped. It sits on a ledge looking across the Disgrazia glacier to the North Face. In the evening the *tempo* turned *buono*, as promised, and we rubbernecked at the Spigolo Inglese and at the Corda Molla snaking up to an improbable ice ridge and the gleaming summit.

During the night it froze and so we made good morning progress up the steep snow to the start of the rocks. These were comforting rough red gneiss and we dawdled along the ridge in the sun, exclaiming about the route like juveniles. The ice ridge put a stop to all that: it was steep and steepened as we rose and as it steepened the névé changed to disobliging blue ice, finally to that hard grey stuff we met on the Zocca. Definitely *brutto*. On the last run-out Peter was in front and terribly slow and I railed and cursed at him from my exposed perch, eyeing the evidence of stonefall embedded all around. But then he reached the rocks and stood for a pointedly silent hour while I clawed sloth-slowly up the summit ice-grooves. Then there it was, the *nuovo bivacco* all bright and shiny. We clattered in to find a half-empty bottle of wine, two glasses and miscellaneous victuals—the remains of the Opening Ceremony.

‘C’est la faute de capitalisme,’ we said, drawing up our chairs.

Later, we wobbled past the enormous summit crucifix and down the easy ridge to the Sella di Pioda and the Preda Rosso glacier. A long blistering descent got us to the Ponti at about five o’clock. It was closed. We tried the cellar. Open, but a cold miserable place, foodless.

‘At least, it’s better than nothing,’ Peter said, reasonably. By way of an answer a noise came from the foundations, like some ancient beast stirring and rattling its grizzled claws. Five minutes later, it came again. ‘The pipes?’ we wondered. Or the reason for the Hut’s desertion Wordlessly, we hunched in our sacks and headed for the valley, not looking back. Low in the valley and lower in spirits we found, unbelievably, the Albergo Scotti just as the evening thunderstorms broke. We rushed in to bewilder the *albergatrice* with our Latin. ‘Tedesci?’ she asked. But we got it sorted out eventually.

In the morning we came down to Cataeggio in the Val Masino. After a big lunch we sat eating ice-cream in the main street café. We planned to go to the Allievi Hut, climb on the Zocca again, then go over the frontier ridge back to Maloja. Peter made enquiries:

‘E aperto, Capanno Allievi?’ We were learning fast. The café rustled with debate.

‘Dovete parlare con Pietro Bardini, a San Martino.’ They wrote it down. At San Martino, Peter turned to the first person in the street after leaving the bus. An old man.

'Cerciamo Pietro Bardini,' he said, proffering our bit of paper.

'Io sono Bardini,' he said, stabbing his chest with a rusty forefinger. Perhaps they had telephoned. The Allievi was open. So up we went, a long enervating 5000 feet of effort. Well up we passed a crucifix. For the Memory of Aldo Paravicini, it said, a Brave Mountaineer. *Caduto*, of course. On the way through Il Pianone, a box canyon containing amongst other oddities a herd of horses, we could see the guardian watching us from the Hut balcony on the canyon lip. We were his only guests. He invited us into his living room and we responded by ordering steaks and much wine. All went well until about nine o'clock when two English we pretended not to know burst in, boots and all, and asked him to cook tinned hamburgers. We were all bundled out into the cold hut after that. Discouraged, we asked him what to climb. Something not too hard.

'Via Paravicini,' he said, indicating a menacing pillar overhanging the Hut. 'Quintogrado,' aping our Latin.

'Molto pitones?'

'Libero, libero,' this with a disparaging wave of the hand.

We were late getting away—a bad mistake. Aldo Paravicini was a Brave One all right. We laboured up long unprotected pitches. Then came a 150 foot groove with pegs every three feet. *Libero, libero*, I muttered and swung up on tatty slings. With our meagre equipment, I couldn't get more than halfway, so we had a fearsome belay in slings. Then my hands started opening or closing involuntarily with cramp, I can't remember which, and I had to take a long terrifying rest. The afternoon wore on. Clouds gathered. We came out of the groove on to easy ground below the summit just as the storm broke. Nothing for it but down through the thunderbolts. We had several appalling abseils: on the second last one I hadn't thrown the ropes down properly and abseiled below the point where one had snagged. Peter clicked his tongue and sorted it all out while I cursed and panicked. On the last one the lightning struck the rocks a foot from the ropes. A shambles.

Then we were down at the Hut. We went on about his *libero, libero*, waving our guidebook at him. He held it at arm's length and leafed through it fastidiously.

'Ah!' he said. 'Questo libro e crappa. Bladdicrappa.' He beamed. Next day, we fled to Maloja, and home.

HINGI: A Minor Baluchistan Peak

By Roger North

ALMOST due east from the Sariab railway station, some seven miles south of Quetta, stands a very conspicuous triangular peak on the range of hills which rise from the eastern side of the Sariab valley. It is called Hingi, its summit is 9180 feet above sea level, and some 3000 feet above Quetta.

No very obvious line of easy ascent can be traced from a viewpoint in the valley, and no path to the summit is shown on the map. I decided to ascend the hill trusting that a way could be found avoiding the western face, which falls in steep slopes like the boiler plates of an engine, to the valley.

My companion for the expedition was to be Maula Bakhsh Shahwani, a footman from the Sariab Levy post, whom I know from earlier association to be a stout walker, and intimately acquainted with the neighbouring hills, as well as being an interesting and cheerful companion.

For a day on the hills, especially if the route is unknown, it is essential to set out as early as the season allows. At eight next morning, therefore, the month being January, we left the village Ghulam Jan Karez fortified by several cups of green tea, and packing a parcel of prathas, dates and two bottles of water.

The base of the range, at the northern end of which the Hingi peak is situated, lies some three miles east of the railway. A wide stony river bed emerges from the hills, through which there is a path to the Zarakhu plain beyond the range. Maula Bakhsh had decided to approach the peak from this river bed, and having traversed the gorge which it has cut through the range, to reach the summit ridge by slopes invisible from the plain and easier, though steep enough, than the forbidding boiler plates mentioned before. The summit ridge attained, an hour's scramble along it should lead direct to the peak.

Having crossed the railway we followed a karez. After an hour's walk across the valley, made interesting by the informative conversation of my companion and additionally pleasant by the soft dawn breeze, we entered the gorge formed by the river bed. The sun had now climbed above the peaks of Murdar and the whole eastern face of the Chiltan range behind us was bathed in a bright red glow, though our side of the valley was still in shadow.

The route now was nowhere difficult—no scramble across cliff-faces, no dizzy ridges with a precipice to one or on both sides. Just straight forward plodding ahead. The summit ridge appeared attractively close but Maula Bakhsh assured me it was some hours

distant yet. He led the way with easy confidence, being familiar with the range since boyhood.

As we ascended I endeavoured to walk as quietly as possible in the hope that we might see some hill sheep. There was little chance of them being disturbed by any other agency as during this season the mountains are deserted by shepherds, all the nomad Brahuīs having gone down to Kachhi. In spring they return and bring their flocks to pasture on the fresh grazing nourished by the winter snow and rain.

The flora of the Baluchistan hills, with the exception of that of Zargun and Chiltan, is not of any beauty, but there is scarcely a plant or bush that is not used by the people either as food or as a relish to food, or for its medicinal properties. Two hours after we had left the river bed and were well up the hill side, we reached the juniper trees. They have a lovely scent when warmed by the sun. Once you have reached the juniper belt you know that you are truly on the mountains.

Maula Bakhsh, a real mountaineer, missed nothing. When we were about 900 yards from the summit ridge we surmounted a slight rise with a hollow lying between its top and the summit ridge beyond. 'Look,' said Maula Bakhsh, 'Melht!' (Hill sheep). Yes, there they were some 150 yards away, 17 of them, slowly crossing the hollow. We lay down to watch them. Evidently alarmed by something they trotted off in a long bunch towards the ridge. Such easy, graceful movement! A beautiful sight! As they reached the skyline they halted for a moment, four or five of them silhouetted against the sky. Maula Bakhsh said there no good heads among them but wished he had his rifle. I felt he rather scorned me for not expressing the same wish, but it would be no pleasure to me to shoot at one of those graceful beasts. With Markhor it is different. They live on dangerous ground and to get within sure hitting range of a warrantable markhor after a long and difficult stalk, where all the advantage is with it, would make the prize worth while.

When we reached the final ridge the sheep had disappeared but we were rewarded by a magnificent view over the Dub plain and Zarakhu valley to the Shug range south-east of it, and the forbidding precipices of the southern face of Murdar. Far below between us and the precipices, lay the dry crop (Khushkaba) valleys of Trakhi thal and Uzhdā. In the distance we could hear the thud of some woodman's axe. Three ravens circled against the deep blue sky.

The desired summit was hidden from the spot at which we emerged on the ridge and was still a good distance away. Several

Photo: R. Colliste

Opposite—The Infinite Variety of Scottish Rock: Iain Rowe about to succeed on the Hill, Creag Dubh . . .





rocky peaks with steep, rather disagreeable clefts separating them still intervened between us and our goal. It was not until 12 noon, exactly four hours after leaving the village, that we trailed up the final steep slope to emerge on the sharp and narrow peak which I had so often longed to stand upon when viewing it from the valley.

The peak is perhaps six yards long and two wide at the top, and is crowned by a now ruined cairn, the work of some shepherd boy. To the north and east steep, grassy slopes fall for some 40 feet and then end abruptly in rocky precipices which Maula Bakhsh said were passable though with difficulty. To the west ground is also steep leading to the boiler plate slopes immediately above the Sariab valley. I was told, however, that this would be the best way down.

On attaining the summit of any hill what a pleasure it is to choose a comfortable spot in which to sit, out of the wind and with a good view. Then to gather fuel for the fire, carefully make a secure hearth for the kettle, and build a good fire. Our two water bottles may have seemed heavy on the way up but how thankful we were to have brought them up full. To even the strongest some hot tea, well made, is welcome and refreshing on the mountain.

Refreshed by our meal we examined the magnificent panorama to the west. Far in the distance lay the Khwaja Amran range overlooking the Kandahar district, its crest powdered with snow. Nearer, and emerging from behind the Karaskha hills above the site of the old brewery, the Mashelak range marked the western border of the Regi-Samungli plain. The Chiltan massif faced us across the Sarab valley decked in a heavy mantle of snow. Away to the south lay the great plain called Dasht, extending from the Mian Ghundi (mound) to Sar-i-Bolan or Kolpur.

The whole scene appeared very peaceful yet in the past one hundred years, this valley and the Quetta plain beyond it, had seen on several occasions the coming and going of large armies.

An hour or more had passed pleasantly. The wind now sprang up and veered round to the west and it began to get chilly. It was time to descend the mountain. How quickly time seems to pass on a mountain once the sun begins to fall to the west.

The first part of the descent was easy, though steep, rough and stony. We passed one or two old bivouac sites (Hanken) of shepherds. All were close to junipers and lie near hollowed rocks in which water would remain after wet weather.

'I hope you won't find the last part too steep,' said Maula Bakhsh. 'I know the way, and as it is constantly used by the donkeys of woodcutters, it is not too bad.' He had evidently assessed my climbing capabilities in a low category.

Photo: R. N. Campbell

Opposite—. while Paul Brian contemplates failure on Surgeon's Gully's monumental crux

The treading through generations of donkeys' hoofs had formed miniature revetments of stones at the innumerable turns in the path. It was a pleasure to know that I was descending the boiler plate slopes and that they were not as formidable as they appeared from afar. As is usually the case the gradient became steeper as we descended, and it took us all of two hours to reach the low foothills on the edge of the plain.

Some five miles walk lay before us on quitting the foothills, and the accomplishment of this distance, with home in full view the whole way, was a tiring performance; but rejoicing in the fact that I had visited Hingi and been kindly received, made the distance and the roughness of the way more tolerable than would have been the case had our day ended in failure.

My companion was quite ready to go with me as far as Quetta, but as his home lay to the south and mine in the opposite direction I persuaded him to leave me, and to take the shortest way to the village. What had been to me a day's pleasure was probably to him only a duty, not even enlivened by the chance of a shot at game.

THE SEPARATION OF MUNROS

By F. F. Bonsall

My purpose is to report the results of a rough measurement of the separations of the tops in Munro's tables, carried out on the one-inch O.S. maps. It may be recalled *that the *separation* $s(P)$ of a top P is defined to be the least number of minutes taken to walk to P from higher ground, and that it is crucial that we determine $s(P)$ with reference to all other higher ground and not merely other tops. The best way to measure $s(P)$ would be to record the walking times of a large number of walkers of varying weights and ages. Lacking such records, we must use maps, and, at least for the mountains on the Scottish mainland, we are not likely to do serious injustice by using the familiar Naismith rule to estimate walking time. For a large part of the Highlands it would now be possible to measure the separations accurately on the revised six-inch and 1:10,000 maps. However, the present report is based on measurements on the one-inch maps, occasionally supplemented by larger scale maps when the one-inch map is excessively obscure or plainly erroneous, as for example with Buachaille Etive Beag. Since the measurement of the separation of the Cuillin tops involves special problems, the following remarks apply only to sections 1 to 16 of Munro's tables.

*S.M.C.J. xxx, 1973, 153-156.

My main finding is a remarkable agreement between theory and practice, as represented by measured separation and Munro's selection of his separate mountains. In each of the eight sections 1, 2, 3, 5, 10, 13, 15, 16, each Munro has a greater separation than each non-Munro. In nine sections, all Munros have separations of at least 26, and in eight sections all non-Munros have separations less than 26. Altogether, I find only seven Munros with separations less than 23, and only twelve non-Munros with separations greater than 30. These nineteen exceptional tops are listed in Tables 1 and 2 below.

The seven rather miserable Munros in Table 1 all occur as minor protuberances on bulky mountains or plateaus. The wooden spoon is won by Càrn Bàn in the Monadh Liath with a separation of 14 measured on the one-inch map. This was confirmed on the ground last summer with a walking time of 16 minutes.

The gold medal for the most separated non-Munro is won by Sgùrr na Làpaich in Glen Affric. The omission of this fine mountain, which dominates so much of Glen Affric, from the list of Munros is doubly strange, in that it was listed as a separate mountain in the 1891 edition of the tables. Munro's intuition seems to have been least reliable in the roughest mountain regions. The main concentrations of well separated non-Munros occur in Glencoe and Torridon. On the present measurements, Buachaille Etive Mór and Beinn Eighe become mountain ranges, each with three well separated peaks. Buachaille Etive Beag and Liathach each have two well separated peaks.

The Cairngorms include four Munros with very small separations and one non-Munro, Cairn Lochan, with a very large separation. One other non-Munro in the Cairngorms deserves special mention, namely Braeriach South Plateau. If this were accepted as a separate mountain it would become the fifth highest mountain in Scotland, and as such would surely deserve a better name. It would be very bold of me to propose a name, but the Wells of Dee lie close to its summit, and I am indebted to Mr W. Matheson† for the suggestion that, accordingly, an appropriate name would be Beinn an Fhuarain.

A brief inspection of a few of the new large scale maps has convinced me that the changes in the heights of mountains given by the new survey make a revised set of tables necessary. For example, in that splendid tract of country between Loch Maree and An Teallach there are two new 3000 ft. mountains, both of them well separated. These are Beinn a'Chlaidheimh (3000 ft.) and Ruadh Stac Mór (3013 ft.). The latter is the shapely peak nearly a mile northeast of A' Mhaighdean, and is therefore even more remote

†Reader in Celtic in the University of Edinburgh.

than that remote mountain. Many of us have admired Ruadh Stac Mór from a distance; the new survey shows that it is essential to stand on its summit.

Table 1

MUNROS WITH SEPARATION LESS THAN 23

Section	Sep. Mt.	Top	Name	Separ- ation
6	224	425	Càrn Bàn	14
8	126	234	Tigh Mór na Seilge (S.S.W. top)	21
	194	366	Càrn Ghluasaid	21
14	222	423	Càrn Cloich-mhuillin	19
	140	253	Meall Dubhag	20
	75	145	Càrn Bàn Mór	18
	265	511	Geal Chàrn	18

Table 2

NON-MUNROS WITH SEPARATION MORE THAN 30

Section	Top	Name	Separ- ation
4	269	Stob na Doire	40
	389	Stob na Bròige	37
	499	Stob Coire Raineach	39
7	459	Am Bàthaich	32
8	170	Sgùrr na Làpaich	53
10	193	Mullach an Rathain	38
	296	Sàil Mhór	43
	290	Spidean Coire nan Clach	48
12	437	Glas Leathad Beag (Centre top)	45
14	16	Cairn Lochan	44
	6	Braeriach South Plateau	32
15	488	Glas Mheall Mór	31

STOTT'S MOUNTAINEERING CLUB

THE recent enforced evacuation of our splendid premises in the High Street has had at least one good result—the Hon. Librarian discovered an ancient manuscript by our first Editor, J. G. Stott. This book, entitled *Tir nam Beann: Rambles and Scrambles among the Bens and Glens of Scotland*, is an account of the exploits of the Edinburgh Tramps, an informal group who supplied the Club with some 9 or 10 of its Original Members. This group is mentioned in various places in the *Journal* (e.g., iv, 52; xxiii, 254) but nowhere clearly defined. Plausible inferences allow us to place T. F. S. Campbell, F. J. Dewar, W. R. Lester and Stott himself in the group but the constitution of the remainder is unclear. Nor does *Tir nam Beann* help much in this respect. Stott introduces us to his companions in Chapter 2—‘Ben Lui—The History of a Failure’ and again in Chapter 8—‘Ben Alder and Beinn-y-Ghlo’ but coyly, protected by pseudonyms . . .

First came the Captain, man of cautious mind
His name was —, who with great pluck combined
Great wisdom: though a man of stature small,
Vast was his breadth and stout his limbs withal.

There is more in this vein: The Pilot—‘a small but neat ’un; wise as a serpent and as rarely beaten,’ ‘the broad-backed S,’ ‘C the Bard,’ ‘K—a very Adonis among the women’ and lastly, McToddy, whose propensities can perhaps be guessed. We invite contributions identifying the members of this colourful clique.

Tir nam Beann was clearly written for publication and on certain grounds probably merits it—it gives a clear and intelligible picture of life in the Highlands in the 1880’s, possibly more accurate than those of the better-known tourists, whether English or Scottish. However, there is much grandiose description. Here is an extreme example from Chapter 4—‘A Rough Road—the West Coast of Inverness-shire.’ Stott is taking the evening air at Inverie . . .

‘Gradually the colours fade and night sinks upon the scene. The sea pies are piping down among the rocks, there is the cry of an occasional gull as he flits past on muffled wing to his roosting place; up on the road behind us we hear the low guttural Gaelic of two or three smokers who, like ourselves, are enjoying the cool night;—other sound there is none, save the musical murmur of the water on the rocks. Suddenly through the stillness there comes across the bay the sound of singing. It is the fishermen who are shooting their nets. A wild Gaelic air it is—‘Fhir a Bhata’—the boatman’s farewell. Nearer it comes and we can hear the regular creak of the heavy oars keeping time to the music. Then there is a stir on the beach near us, and the dusky figures and the grinding of the shingle tell of the

launch of another crew, who catch up the plaintive chorus as their oars take the water. Anything more beautiful I have never thought of; the deep dark blue of the sky, the shadowy outline of the huge hills, the stars twinkling as brightly on the black bosom of the sea as on the vault of heaven above, the scarce-seen fishing boats—their progress only marked by the pale phosphorescence in their wake—, the great strong voices of the crews mellowed by distance as they join in the chorus from different parts of the bay.'

There is a great deal of this sort of thing, so that one is astonished to find Stott complain about Walter Scott 'idealizing the whole of the country! He tells a good story about Scott trying out the first canto of the *Lady of the Lake* on 'some rough sort of fellow, a man who knew and cared far more about tups and turnips, pastures and porridge, than about scenery and poetry. He sat with a stolid face until Scott came to the place where the hounds plunged into the water to follow the boat to the island; and then, banging his great fist down on the table, exclaimed *Dod, mon, it wud be the daith o' the dugs tae pit them in the watter eftir a rin like yon!* One wonders what this bucolic critic would have made of some of Stott's purple passages.

Despite the fact that the *Tir nam Beann* was not published, it was extensively mined by successive Editors of the *Journal*, from Stott onwards. Indeed, one of the chapters, 'Climbing in Dalness and Mamlorn,' has appeared twice (i, 25; xv, 291)! Other articles by Stott deriving from the book are 'Ben Alder' (i, 70), 'Schiehallion' (iii, 260), 'The Highlands in June' (xiv, 259).

There is, however, much that we have missed; material without much mountaineering interest but which illustrates the Late Victorians' capacity for absurd or extravagant behaviour and their unselfconscious attitude towards these absurdities. In Stott this passes over from the domain of action into writing as well, in the form of outlandish metaphor—'all Nature is as grey as a beggar's coat, the wind roars over the woods, the rain comes slashing down, pitiless and penetrating as the arrows of the English bowmen at Flodden!' Stott's relish for the fantastic and grotesque appears to have waxed with age: in his last two contributions to the *Journal* ('Stob Coire nan Albannaich,' xvi, 216, and 'The Unkenned Mountain,' xviii, 220) his imagination is given full rein. 'The Unkenned Mountain is about an ascent of Benyulaidhben in the Corriewhuskey Forest, guided by the Duke of Killiecrankie's head stalker, Ewen Srònmbhòrnafaidh, and one Hector of the Hairy Legs. The latter is no respecter of persons: Stott, who liked his food, is advised to 'Sap up yer brose, sir. Try yon saumon and a pair o' thae baked hens'—a Member of Parliament is addressed as 'You there with the face of a bubbly-jock and the wame of a braxied tup.' In 'Stob Coire nan Albannaich' Stott and various other elder Tramps 'whose

active support for the Club was confined to laying their ample bread baskets up against the Annual Dinner table' dose themselves with essence of he-goats and monkey glands in preparation for the ascent, accompanied by a piper and a masseur!

In *Tir nam Beann*, however, most of the grotesquerie is in action rather than thought. Consider this evening walk from Inverarnan (taken from Chapter 3—'Ben Lui—Victorious at Last') . . .

'We stroll a long way up the glen before we think of turning. There is not much talking; in such a fairy scene one's own thoughts are the best companions. 'S' carries a set of bagpipes under his arm—'K' with polished phrases had borrowed them at the Inn—but as yet he has not put breath into them. At last someone yawns, 'Well boys, as we are sleeping at Inverarnan tonight and not at Crianlarich, it's about time we were getting back. Halt there! Right about face! S, give us *Ho ro, mo nighean donn bhoidheach*. Now, then, left, right, left—' As the second step touches the road there is a sound as of slumbering thunder in the instrument, as the third step is swinging forward the thunder is mingled with the shrill clear yell of the chanter, as the foot comes to earth the full blast bursts forth and loud over the dark woods and along the rough mountainsides rise the stirring strains of the Gaelic love-song. It is a weird, sweet melody with a ring of pathos and sorrow about it that harmonises well with the surroundings and a good marching air is it withal, as the steady tramp carrying us down to our haven testifies. Arrived there we try a livelier measure and contrive to dance a very good reel in the moonlight. Unfortunately though, all the fair damsels of Glenfalloch seem to have gone to bed, so much to K's disgust he has to take the burly Ben Cruachan for a partner, instead of the slim-waisted golden-haired maiden he had been looking forward to. In vain S plies his skilful fingers and addresses himself to his best tunes—the daughters of Glenfalloch will not come forth. So winding up our concert with *Ri nam porst*, we retire to dreamland'

This last passage also betrays a heady sensualism which in Stott's case is largely confined to the pleasures of the table, but others of the Tramps, particularly K, have more wide-ranging tastes. The next evening, 'the fair ones whom our music could not draw the previous night, were by no means averse to a little conversation with the musical strangers. Look at the burly Cruachan man and the wiry K. *They* are not lying on the turf with their cigars and coffee; they are away over under the trees that overhang the bridge and the burn. Nor are they alone; and we will be bound that it is not the recital of our experiences on Ben Lui that is provoking all that laughing and giggling.' No indeed. Stott's own strong interest in food borders on gluttony. Inverarnan receives his accolade . . . 'Tea is on the table in five minutes such a tea as you only get in a

good Highland Inn: piles of crisp oatecake and newly-made scones, red-fleshed trout and fine juicy mountain mutton, steaming hot tea and jugs of rich frothy cream—*milk* they call it here—, golden butter, Keiller's marmalade and delicious strawberry jam As might be expected, he also knows the value of the national drink 'Oh! Ho! a fine thing is the good Hieland whiskey. It is the internal and the external medicine of the Pedestrian. It heals blisters and footsoreness, and an application of it to a rheumatic knee-joint is almost sure to do good. Should you feel a trifle 'seedy' in the morning nothing puts you right as a 'nip' will; a 'peg' before a meal puts an edge on your appetite; a drop during a meal enlivens the conversation; and a drop after it acts as a sedative and promotes digestion. When you get thirsty on the road—a thing which will happen often—nothing refreshes you so much as a draught of cold burn water with just a 'soupçon' of the 'craythur' in it, to take the chill off. On a cold, wet day . . . a pull at your flask makes you tingle all over with warmth and pleasure; and after climbing a peak or a pass, you would surely never think of leaving the elevation you have won without promoting a similar elevation in your own feelings by means of a dram. Finally, the social tumbler of toddy, over which you fight your battles again in the evening is one of the sweetest memories of the Pedestrian and I defy anyone who has once tasted the potent beverage to refrain from joining the poet in its praise:

Fortune, if thou'llt gie me still
Hail breeks, a scone, and whisky gill
Tak' a' the rest.'

However, Stott reserves his most fantastic notions and strongest prejudices for the final chapter 'Practical Hints for Pedestrians.' This chapter begins with various admonitions regarding training—the Pedestrian 'must pack inside his skin every ounce of beef and bone and muscle he can accumulate. Therefore let him eat and drink as much as he likes; fish, flesh and fowl, porridge and pudding, bread, fruit, beer, wine and spirits When you turn out of bed, never on any account whatever—winter or summer—neglect your bath. Have it quite cold, if you can stand it; if not, as nearly as possible. After your bath, spend not less than a quarter of an hour in your dumb bell and bar-bell exercise, or Indian clubs if you have them. A most important factor in training of any kind—is a stroll of one or two miles before breakfast. It fill your lungs with pure morning air, it cleanses your brain and your whole body, it gives you a huge appetite for breakfast, and it braces you up for the day's work. If you find walking on an empty stomach disagrees with you, take a wine glass of milk and a biscuit; this will easily keep you going until breakfast. Of course it must depend altogether on your circumstances, as to when you take the rest of your walking exercise. The best plan would be about an hour of walking before lunch, and

an hour afterwards. Putting it alongside your morning stroll, and any other exercise you may take during the day, it will give you a total of ten or eleven miles. This is quite enough. Walk as much every day of the week, with an occasional long stretch on Saturdays or Sundays, and at the end of a couple of months you should be fit for anything.'

As a result of this regimen, Stott adds, the Pedestrian will have 'a development of muscle as hard and clean-cut as marble.'

Climbing requires practice, too. Even 'the first-rate Roadster' will find 'wind and thigh wanting in him.' If hills and rocks are not readily to hand, then 'a steep stair is a capital substitute. Walk up and down stairs steadily for half an hour with a ten-pound dumb-bell in each hand and see how fagged you feel after it.'

Stott now turns to a lengthy treatise on the proper equipment for Pedestrianising, passing through boots to stockings (which must be of thick worsted—'silk or cotton would be as much out of place on a walk as worsted would be in a Queen's drawing-room') through knickerbockers ('ideal for crawling on your knees') and Norfolk jacket to the vexing question of headgear

'I have tried half a dozen different head-gears before deciding on what I always wear now. My first was an elegant affair, made of cambric or linen; light as thistledown, broad in the brim, and set on a wire framework. For the sun it did tolerably well, wind rather badly, but alas! the first drencher of rain caused the crown to collapse and came pouring through, down face and neck, in an abundance that no handkerchief could sop up. Straw hats I have not found much better; polo-caps or glengarries lay you open to headaches and sunstroke; knitted tam o'shanter are hot and uncomfortable. The tweed caps known as deerstalkers, with good flaps or scoops fore and aft, are capital; but better still is a soft hat with a curly brim made of the same tweed as your coat. The brim will turn down, and shoot all rain clear of face and neck onto your shoulders. There should be no thick lining and the hat should be ventilated with four or six airholes. The uses you can put such a headpiece as this to are endless. By day of course it shelters you; by night, if you camp out or are travelling, it serves as a night-cap; you can fill it with water and use it as a washing basin; you can scoop up water with it out of deep wells, if you have no other means of doing so. To my mind a pugaree savours of the Cockney tourist, so do not have one. A large white handkerchief draped over the hat does just as well; and failing the cabbage leaf, a few handfuls of wet herbage thrown loosely into the crown and supplied with cold water now and again, will keep you safe enough. The back of the neck is an even more fatal place in great heat than the head, so do not fail to let the white awning hang well over it.'

The 'Cockney tourist' comes in for abuse in other parts of the

book. The Tramps find a bottle secreted in the summit cairn of Carn Liath of Beinn a'Ghlo. It contains a leaflet 'inscribed with various rhapsodies,' among them one to the effect that the depositor had enjoyed 'a bath of ecstasy and prayer.' The Pilot holds forth—'Confound these hydropathics and the Cockney crew they bring about the country. I suppose a time'll come when we can't go anywhere without meeting a poetry-spouting tourist.' Indeed.

Next comes some valuable advice about care of the feet. After a discussion of various relatively conventional prophylactic measures (meths, alum, etc.) Stott's own method is presented—'A very good preventative both for footsoreness and blisters, is soaping your stockings. Before putting them on in the morning, take a lump of soap, and, having turned them inside out, rub the whole of the foot over and over till it is quite white and moist. When you put them on, you will find them moist and slimy, but they will keep your feet cool, and prevent chafing. It is useless to soap your *foot*, the soap must be applied to the *stocking*.' A final precaution is to 'change your stocking (at lunch)—the right leg to the left, the left to the right. The six or seven hours of walking you have already done has impressed on your feet the pattern of every stitch in the wool, and the fact of changing puts a stop to this process.' If, however, even this Draconian measure fails then the Pedestrian must 'prick (the blister) and press the water out. Next melt a few drops of tallow into the palm or your hand, and add some drops of whiskey or other spirit. Mix the two into a paste and rub it into the blister as hard as you can.' Stott remarks that this method, obtained from an old Swiss guidebook, has never been known to fail and 'is ever so much better than the old-fashioned and barbarous plan of drawing a worsted thread through the blister and leaving it overnight.'

This obsession with the feet is entirely natural, given the gargantuan expeditions of the Tramps, who thought little of 40 miles in a day. Another understandable obsession is with drink: beer is regarded as 'a very bad drink. It heats you, clogs the mouth and makes you perspire profusely.' Milk is held in low esteem, for similar reasons. On the other hand cider and cold tea are highly valued but the former is 'unfortunately, to be had in few places' while the latter 'usually necessitates long waiting'!

The chapter concludes in grand style with a comparison of Pedestrianism with bicycling, to the gross disadvantage of bicycling. There is first a grudging admission—'the only advantage bicycling possesses is that on good roads it is possible to cover very long distances with comparative ease'—which is then immediately retracted, since 'I say comparative, since nothing that I know of looks more punishing and laborious than seeing a cyclist bent nearly double, painfully propelling his machine up a hill that is

easy to anyone else.' Moreover, 'Look at the discomfort of wind, either ahead or across you; the by no means remote chance of something serious going wrong with your machine; the trouble of cleaning it, and stabling it at night.' Now comes the clincher, 'I have not so far touched upon the unhealthy side of this form of exercise; the complaint known as 'bicyclist's back', or the hollow chests, round shoulders, craning necks and knock-knees induced by it. I do not mean to say that amongst the ranks of cyclists there are not to be found many magnificent specimens of manhood and far-famed athletes who are free from the blemishes I have enumerated; but all the same, the class taken as a whole does not shine in noble appearance and 'manly beauty,' and as a Pedestrian I have not the slightest wish to be classed with it. I think it is a great pity that so many of our young fellows are constantly to be seen spinning about on bicycles and tricycles—their legs nothing more than a pair of cranks, their arms connecting-rods.' Finally comes a masterstroke, 'Another thing that I look upon as an adverse argument is that many men who were once ardent bicyclists, have now given it up.'

What a strange mixture these Victorian climbers were! Stott's boyish enthusiasm for everything connected with our hills (solemnised annually when we sing the atrocious doggerel of his Song) comes no more clearly from these excerpts from *Tir nam Beann* than does his precise old-womanish concern with niceties of equipment and technique. What kind of men dance reels in the moonlight in Glenfalloch before retiring to soap their stockings and rub mutton-fat and whisky into their blisters?

In *Tir nam Beann*, according to Stott, the first rays of the rising sun simultaneously strike the end of Leith Pier and the top of Buachaille Etive. Clearly, in such a country no Antisyzygies are too Caledonian.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Footprint of the Gods?

SIR—Last winter on Ben Loyal I came across what was clearly a recent lightning mark. It began just below the top of Sgor Chaonasaid and extended eastward for about 100 yards down the mountain-side, sometimes as a clean thin mark almost like a knife cut and sometimes gouged three feet or so deep with large chunks of peat scattered on either side.

More recently on the south flank of Stac Polly I noticed a feature which I suspect may also be a lightning mark, but on an enormously greater scale and clearly much older. This began from the foot of the cliffs toward the western end and ran slightly slantwise down the hillside almost reaching the main tourist path at the point where it abuts against the steep slope and turns eastward. That is to say it was perhaps a quarter of a mile in length and covered a vertical interval of five or six hundred feet. On investigation, the

line proved to consist of a series of gouges up to four feet in depth, in places gullied and blurred by subsequent erosion. In nature it was similar in part to the Ben Loyal mark, but unlike it in being almost perfectly straight.

Further observation revealed two other marks on a similar scale but fainter and probably more ancient, one close to the first mark and the other descending from near the eastern end of the mountain.

I would welcome information from other climbers about known or suspected lightning marks seen in the hills, preferably with exact location and date of strike, if known.

W. D. BROOKER.

NEW CLIMBS

In his position as New Climbs Editor the co-author of the once-proposed moratorium on route descriptions in remote areas is somewhat hoist by his own petard. A willing servant of the Club, he is charged with interpreting the amorphous decision of a sub-committee formed to consider the matter. He asks for the Club's indulgence in presenting the following biased summary of arguments.

A pamphlet was presented to the A.G.M. of 1971 for discussion in the following year.

'The Scottish Mountaineering Club has always been concerned by the interrelation of mountains and mountaineers. In the early days it was relevant that this concern be expressed in the exploration of the mountains, and the subsequent documentation provided an essential background for further work.

The present situation suggests that mountaineers are now motivated in two principal ways. Firstly the desire to explore is as strong as ever, and secondly the intensity of activity and increasing technical standards suggest that competition is important to many. We do not suggest that one motive is better than another. We wish to re-establish the realisation that the difference in outlook exists, and that one type, competitive climbing, is destructive of the other type, exploratory climbing. The senior club should try to ensure that the two types can co-exist in the future.

Skye and the mountains south of the Great Glen are and will continue to be areas in which competitive climbing takes place. The North and North West Highlands, and the Isles (excepting Arran) are the areas chosen by the 'explorers' and lovers of the remote. The availability of information about the first areas is important to the competition. However the continuing dissemination of information about the remote areas by this Club represents a dilution of the exploratory reward and is accelerating the process by which its virtues will be lost.'

There was no lack of reaction both within and without the Club. The Club's reaction seemed favourable and a sub-committee was formed to work out the details.

A curious comment on the human ego was the reaction epitomised by the words, 'Good idea, but we thought of it first.' Certainly, the ideas were

being mooted and discussed at weekend centres. For amusement, and for no darker motive, the historical development is worth examining. Were the fathers of the Club aware of any obsolescence built-in to the Rules?

*'... to create facilities for exploring the less known parts of the country; to collect various kinds of information, especially as regards routes, distances, means of access, time occupied in ascents, ... to promote everything that will conduce to the convenience of those who—etc.'*¹

Or were they partially conditioned by Victorian ironists?

*'If somebody should discover a creek in the country next to the one that the North Pole is in, Europe and America would start fifteen costly expeditions thither; one to explore the creek, and the other fourteen to hunt for each other.'*²

Or perhaps Lewis Carroll, often used in mountaineering literature,

*'Other maps are such shapes, with their islands and capes!
But we've got our brave Captain to thank
(So the crew would protest) that he's brought us the best—
A perfect and absolute blank!'*³

Admittedly, Professor Ramsay's doubts as to the value of guide books were directed against Bradshaw *et al*, but are we not in danger of assuming their role as tourist-inducers?

*'The run of that noble deer from Glenartney to Loch Katrine has done more to create a sense of the joy of scenery freely over the hill tops than all the guide-books that were ever written since the creation of the world.'*⁴

However aware the Club was with regard to the conservation of the recreational value of the mountains, a blind spot persisted with regard to the written word. Campaigns for rights-of-way, and agin roads or army bridges were undertaken with splendid altruism. But the nihilism was not entirely unconscious.

'The tendency is to pronounce a curse on all guide books, and to make for the gully or buttress which promises most, trusting that fate and instinct combined will lead to something good.'

'... a complete lack of foreknowledge can only add to the enjoyment of the climb by inducing the pleasing illusion that it is wholly new. Later ... there is time enough to set about discovering how much of it was new, and what parts had received their baptism of hobnailers.'

*But why dispel illusion by delving in musty records! Or why have records at all! Ask the editors of mountaineering club journals; they know.'*⁵

The momentum of finance and ego grows, and moss fails to stick to a diminishing rock. Not only in the S.M.C. but in the Alpine Club heresies are whispered. The A.C. should—

*'shelter its members against that superabundance of knowledge which must needs result from accumulating records. Hereafter, of contemporary exploits the less we know the better; our heritage of discovery among mountains is rich enough; too little remains to be discovered. The story of a new ascent should now be regarded as a corrupting communication calculated to promote the glory of Man, or perhaps only of individual men, at the expense of the mountains themselves.'*⁶

This writer permits himself a final blow of the sledgehammer to crack this particular nut before returning to dour reality.

*'Perhaps when the millenium dawns, of the writing of books there will be an end ... if there are then any unconquered peaks remaining, come what may, successive generations will think them still unconquered to the end of time.'*⁷

A summary, then, of the points raised in the recent discussion.

Pro-guide books and descriptions: they 'help to spread climbers thinner over the ground.'⁸

Con: it is better to concentrate non-pioneers in established areas with detailed, competitive guidebooks.

Pro: If the S.M.C. don't do it, pirates will.

Con: Let them. Financial rewards are debatable. The S.M.C. is establishing an ethic not an investment.

Pro: Pirate guide books will be 'hotch-potch.'

Con: So much the better.

Pro: The S.M.C. is trying to keep the information to itself for its own use.

Con: An unworthy (and, blast it, unworkable) suggestion, and a *non-sequitur*. The possession of information decreases uncertainty; to derive the maximum amount of information (i.e. to gain the maximum exploratory reward), uncertainty must be maximised.⁹

Pro: Such a move would be 'an abdication . . . of its traditional role.'¹⁰

Con: True.

Pro: If you don't want a guide book, don't buy one.

Con: If you don't want to publish guide books, don't write them.

Pro: The S.M.C. is rationalising its failure to produce a decent guide book. 'The proposal . . . does not arise from the grandiose, humanitarian motives which you have graced it.'¹¹

Con: A damaging shot at the horses, if not the cart.

Pro: Mr Smith, 'oop the M6, oop the M74' and presumably oop the A9 for Whit weekend, cannot afford to 'waste' time in exploration.

Con: Should this happen, his judgment or research of existing material is at fault. The S.M.C.'s responsibility to Mr Smith is doubtful and only reluctantly accepted. An examination of the domiciles of recent pioneers would be revealing.

Pro: You gotta go with the times.

Con: In which direction?

The main debate was at the A.G.M. of 1972 at which this writer, embarrassingly dumfounded, failed to defend his position. The inevitable compromise was reached in committee. We hope readers will excuse this burial of Caesar. This is our interpretation:

1. That records should be kept and published in the *Journal*.
2. That pitch by pitch, detailed descriptions are undesirable in the remote areas, i.e. the Northern and Western Highlands, the Isles with the exception of Skye, Arran and possibly Rhum, which are considered beyond redemption. Descriptions should aim at preserving 'that old trite feeling of adventure for subsequent climbers.'¹² Detail features, not moves. Emphasise quality, not standard. Locate starts and finishes, not belays or runners.
3. That guide book routes and published descriptions should be subject to selection and confirmation by second opinion, ascent or acquaintance.
4. That guide books should not be slavishly tied to publication dates or blanket coverage of precise areas, but that they should be more closely phased to the natural progression of exploration and confirmation. They should follow, not lead.
5. That the Club has a duty to preserve records and that the *Journal* should continue to perform this function however brief the route descriptions.

Our editing of route descriptions from the remote areas is, we hope, consistent with these ideas. We have partially removed *climbing instructions* (layback here, jam there, belay, nut runner, peg for aid, etc.) but have retained *location instructions*. An example is *Groovin High* on the **Far East Wall of Coire Mhic Fhearchair** for which a detailed description was submitted. This is a fine and obvious line, and therefore requires a minimum of

description. We are able to confirm that this route is of the highest quality; normally such comment will be reproduced in the NOTES.

It remains only to request your co-operation in spirit and practice to prevent an unwieldy or controversial exercise of the editorial pen.

References. 1. *Rules of the Club* (1891). 2. *Life on The Mississippi*, Mark Twain (1887). 3. *The Hunting of the Snark*, Lewis Carroll (1876). 4. *Rise and Progress of Mountaineering in Scotland—VI*, Professor G. G. Ramsay, *S.M.C.J.* IV (1896). 5. *Eating Between Meals*, J. A. Garrick, *S.M.C.J.* xvii (1925). 6. *The Assault on Mount Everest* 1922, G. H. Leigh-Mallory. 7. *Ascent of Nanda Devi*, H. W. Tilman (1937). 8. *Club Politic*, D. Gray, *S.M.C.J.* xxx (1973). 9. The 'Jaynes Formalism' in 'Thermostatistics and Thermodynamics,' M. Tribus (1961). 10. Letter to *S.M.C.J.* xxx (1973), B. Dunn, C.D.M.C. 11. Letter to *S.M.C.J.* xxx (1973), P. F. Macdonald. 12. Route Description, 'Son of Heart,' El Capitan, R. Sylvester, *Ascent* (1972).

OUTER ISLES

Griomaval: Tealasdale Slabs.

The routes below were all climbed on the slabs which lie left of Golden Gully (*S.M.C.J.*, 1970, xxix, 280). They were found to dry out much more quickly than the main slabs to the right of the gully. However, we remind readers of the comments expressed by R. Sharp in *S.M.C.J.*, 1972, xxx, 60.

—*Joint*. 400 ft. Very Severe. B. Clarke & K. Tremain. 3rd June 1972.

This route takes a line up the wall left of Golden Gully. Scramble up the gully for 30 ft. and start from a ledge at the foot of the slabs. On the first pitch there is a flake which is passed on its right side. On the second, climb a corner-groove at the left hand end of the overhangs and gain a recess with huge blocks. There is a chimney above, then easier slabs to the top.

—*Reef*. 420 ft. Severe. T. Fletcher & I. Sommerville. 3rd June 1972.

Start at lowest point of slabs left of Golden Gully directly below a prominent square-cut chimney. The climb follows a crack system for 210 ft. and finishes by the chimney and slabs of Joint.

—*20 Minute Buttress*. 200 ft. Very Difficult. T. Fletcher & I. Sommerville. 3rd June 1972.

The furthest left buttress on the crag. Start at the lowest point and climb straight up using the left hand vee-groove. Finish on easier slabs.

Sròn ri Gaoith. (Grid Ref. 075291).—G. M. Wallace & J. Crombie report climbs on two buttresses on the west side of Sròn ri Gaoith, and suggest the name Ardrol Buttress for the most prominent of the cliffs overlooking Loch Suainaval, and Flannan Buttress for the outlying crag quarter mile to the north.

Ardrol Buttress.—*Direct Route*. 300 ft. Very Difficult. 24th October 1971.

Starts at a wide corner and goes left beneath an overhang to follow the true crest.

Flannan Buttress.—*Original Route*. 400 ft. Very Difficult. 3rd October 1971.

Start at the lowest rocks and climb to an overhang which is passed by a groove on the left. Take the rib on the left and move back right until above overhang. The crest is approximately followed to the summit.

Aird Fenish Head.—*Route Major.* 200 ft. Mild Severe. A. McDonald & J. Mackenzie. 17th August 1971.

A gigantic overlapped slab on the southern side of the Head climbed from its foot (tide permitting) via an obvious left-hand corner-crack. The crux is at an overlap, then by a vertical corner on huge loose holds, finishing by moving right to the centre of the slab and using crack lines.

New Tolsta, Garry Bay.—J. Mackenzie reports a climb on the pinnacle known locally as the Grey Castle. It is 150 ft. high on its short south side and at least 250 ft. on the other, which can be reached by abseil from the neck of land which joins the stack to the mainland. On the north side there are two long corners. His own climb is on the south side.

—*Looksee Crack.* 150 ft. Mild Very Severe. J. Mackenzie & A. McDonald. 14th August 1971.

Start by a big detached flake. Climb behind it to a recess and overhang. Further laybacks to a heather ledge, a wall to the right, a broad terrace and a choice of corners lead to the summit.

SKYE

Blaven.—*Ecstasis.* 290 ft. Very Severe. C. Boulton, P. Nunn & R. Toogood.

Follows the ramp just left of Clough's Cleft on the upper wall. Enter the slab-ramp from Clough's Cleft and climb pleasantly to a stance (75 ft.). Continue, easily at first, to a spike runner. Climb poorly protected undercut slabs leftwards to a belay in a bay (135 ft., peg belay). Climb the slabs rightwards and finish up a steep crack (80 ft.).

RHUM

Barkeval.—*Rangail Route.* Hard Severe. I Southern, (*ldr*) H. M. Brown, W. Harrison. 27th June 1971.

Left of the Rectangle a dark, gravelly band of rock protrudes; above the west end of it, just right of a trap dyke there is an obvious prow. Cairn. Climb the prow, (60 ft.), to an easy terrace. Above it a trap fault rises from a black and grassy bay. Climb the steep rib to the right of the bay, crux at slightly overhanging top, (85 ft.). Beyond is a maze of ribs and walls of honeycomb rock, climbable anywhere, giving about 200 ft. of scrambling.

ARRAN

North Glen Sannox, Coire nan Ceum.—*Stoic.* 260 ft. Very Severe. J. Gillespie & W. Skidmore. 5th July 1973.

A hard route on wall halfway between Fuoco and Pompiere. Climb awkward 10 ft. corner, exit left (chock) then traverse right until possible to climb up and left to stance and small spike under short crack, (90 ft.). Surmount crack and soon traverse left to grass terrace. Belay round corner on right, (40 ft.). Climb steep wall on left to small ledge. The crux follows. Traverse up left and step up to grass moustache (thread belay, 50 ft.). From belay climb stepped wall and traverse left along narrow grass ledge, surmount cracked bulge and finish up short walls, (80 ft.).

Photo: I. Rowe

Opposite—Alan Fyffe on Dhaulagiri IV above Camp 2





Glen Rosa: The Rosa Slabs.—*Airlift*. 600 ft. Very Severe. B. Clarke & J. Mackenzie. 23rd March 1973.

A route to the left of Guttersnipe. Start at a long clean slab right of the start of the second terrace. Up the steep slab to start then more easily trending slightly right to a line of horizontal holds. Traverse right a few feet then straight up a steep thin slab to a shallow scoop leading left to a poor peg belay, (120 ft.). Go left and then up a rib to flake belay on the second terrace. Walk up a hundred feet or so to an overhung corner with a steep turf cracked slab on the left, (40 ft.). Up the steep turf crack to an overlap, (peg runner) and then up the slab above to small overlap, (poor peg); trend hard left across a steep mossy slab to move over the left wall of the overlap ahead, (nut). Go up and left to layback up a good flake crack, (nuts) to another overlap, (thread runner). Traverse left to another overhung corner to poor nut belay. Surmount the left wall of the corner by crack, and straight up the steep slab above on dubious flake holds; keeping left of the grass patch friction up the steep bald slab to a ledge. Go right to a bay and climb the shallow corner above to reach the belay on Zigzag. A hard alternative finish is to go left along the ledge and up the thin blind crack to the same belay above, (100 ft.). Finish up Zigzag, taking the top overlap direct, (250 ft.). Only pitches 3 and 4 are Very Severe.

Beinn Tarsuinn: Meadow Face.—*Brobdingnag*. 650 ft. Very Severe. 1st 3 pitches G. Gibson & I. G. Rowe, top pitches I. G. Rowe & A. J. Trees. 14th and 15th April 1974.

A line on the great edge between Blinder and Brachistochrone, eventually forced into the top two pitches of Blinder.

Take the initial chimney of Brachistochrone and break left on a slab to gain a corner-crack climbed to a small pedestal on the right. Move left over a slab and climb cracks to a stance, (chock belay, 140 ft.). Step right, move up a slab and hand traverse left. Continue leftwards to pass behind a huge suspended block forming a bottomless chimney and gain a mossy groove with a spike. Move up and hand traverse left. Place a peg and use foot sling to gain holds above the overhang. Pull over to a restricted peg belay, (120 ft.). Climb the twin cracks to gain a single jam crack and make strenuous hand traverse right to huge flake. This was shamelessly aided using large nuts. Step off the flake and climb a slab leftwards. Gain grassy ledges and peg belay at crack in slab, (40 ft.). Climb the crack, (4 pegs, 1 nut, A1) and move left to grass ledge. Move right and layback to gain ledge on left. Climb grassy ramps passing a large chockstone to a cave, (100 ft.). Take through-route above and traverse a remarkable rock arch to a slab, (30 ft.). This slab could not be climbed so a tension traverse was made to the deep chimney of Blinder, using the chockstone sling, (30 ft.). Continue as for Blinder.

NORTHERN HIGHLANDS I

Beinn Eighe: Far East Wall.—*Groovin High*. Very Severe (Hard). R. Archibald, J. Ingram & G. S. Strange. 7th July 1973.

This route takes a line of grooves near the centre of the very steep pillar right of Kami-Kaze. Start about 20 ft. right of prominent deep slit cave and climb short walls and corners to a large ledge. At its left end, climb a very steep corner, move right and continue in steep grooves to the top. Highly recommended.

Photo: D. Bennet

Opposite—The Approach to Piz Buin

NORTHERN HIGHLANDS II & III

Foinaven: Creag Alasdair.—*Succuba*. 750 ft. T. Briggs, P. Nunn & J. Smith. Varied leads. Whitsun 1973.

Takes the central crest of the crag between the gullies in the lower reaches and breaks through the overhangs more or less directly to climb the steep upper walls.

Climb messy loose rock right of the left-hand gully to a small ledge below better rock, (peg belay, 150 ft.). The overhangs are reached after two pitches on the slabby front of the buttress. Climb a crack on the right to the overhangs. Cross a wall leftward and swing round an overlap on to a steep wall which is climbed to gain a vee-groove below a big roof. Move across left and swing round a second overlap to gain the edge of the overlaps. Go up left to a small stance, (130 ft.). Finish right then direct to the summit of the main buttress in two pitches, crossing a 'crevasse' on the second.

Creag Dionard: Buttress 2.—The crag forms a long escarpment up a gully. The climb takes a very smooth corner about halfway up the gully, just right of a yellow buttress and invisible from below.

—*Double Corner*. 240 ft. Very Severe. M. Boysen & P. Nunn. Alt. leads, Whitsun 1973.

The lower groove is climbed to a steep section. Move right to a small stance and belay, (110 ft.). Climb the corner to a bulging section passed on the left. Finish on slabs, (130 ft.).

Cnoc a Mhadaith.—*Pilastre*. 575 ft. Very Severe. M. Boysen & P. Nunn. Alt. leads, Whitsun 1973.

Just left of the crag centre a prominent square-cut pillar stands out from the surrounding slabs and cuts through the overhangs. The climb takes this pillar and is reached by scrambling across heather from the gully bottom at the left edge of the main crag.

Climb slabs over a bulge to a stance, (60 ft.). Up and traverse left to a corner. Move into the corner and climb it in two pitches, the intermediate belay being taken in the centre of the slab on the right. At the top of the upper corner belay on a ledge on the right. Go up the groove and swing left at the bulge. Belay on the edge. Ascend shallow cracks to a vee-groove. Follow the corner to the roof, (junction with Quergang, *S.M.C.J.*, 1973, xxx, 171) and move left round the crest to a ledge and tree. Pull over a bulge and go up left then back right to escape, (200 ft.).

Seana Braigh: Luchd Coire, Diamond Buttress.—*The Rough Diamond*. 900 ft. GRADE IV. P. F. Macdonald & I. G. Rowe. 2nd January 1971.

Start at the left-hand side of the steep, frontal face of Diamond Buttress, in a small snow recess at the foot on Pomegranate Gully. The climb goes straight up this flank of the buttress following a line of weakness with a steep chimney near the top, to finish close to the top of the unclimbed tributary of Pomegranate Gully.

Sgùrr nan Clach Geala: East Face.—*Beta Gully*. 900 ft. GRADE III. (Centre Fork): P. F. Macdonald & J. Porteous. (Right Fork): I. G. Rowe & W. Sproul. 28th February 1970.

A large ice-fall gives access to the Gully, which is straightforward to the trifurcation. Here a short Left Fork goes out on to Number 2 Buttress; the Centre Fork contains a steep pitch and is rejoined higher up by the Right Fork.

WEST HIGHLANDS

Ladhar Bheinn: North-west face of Stob a'Chearchail.—*Para Handy Gully.* 800 ft. GRADE III. A. Ewing & W. Sproul. April 1971.

This gully is the most obvious feature of the face when viewed from Arnisdale, Gaberlunzie Gully being hidden from this angle. Start up a snow fan 150 ft. to the left of Gaberlunzie Gully. The gully is at a continuously steep angle and both the entrance and exit from this gully proved difficult.

Meall nan Eun, Loch Hourn.—The following climbs are on the western slopes of Meall nan Eun. The climbing, though on good rock, turned out to be slightly disappointing with the exception of Sentinel and Bastion. The quotations refer to *S.M.C.J.*, 1968, xxix, 61.

—*Culverin.* 400 ft. Difficult. Miss M. Horsburgh & K. Schwartz. 13th July 1971.

On 'numerous rock ribs'—butteress. Up the left of the two main ribs of this butteress, finishing up left-hand side of the culminating slab.

—*Cannonade.* 400 ft. Difficult. Miss M. Horsburgh & K. Schwartz. 13th July 1971.

On 'numerous rock ribs'—butteress. The right of the two ribs finishing on right of culminating slab.

—*Sentinel.* 300 ft. Very Difficult. Miss M. Horsburgh & K. Schwartz. 13th July, 1971.

On the left of the two butteresses 'set back in bay.' Straight up on excellent rock for 140 ft. Then up discontinuous ribs to slabs near top.

—*Parapet.* 300 ft. Severe. Miss M. Horsburgh & K. Schwartz. 13th July 1971.

On 'cone-shaped hummock.' The coire-facing butteress edge. Follow rib easily for 200 feet. Then straight up short vertical step to less steep finish.

—*Bastion.* 300 ft. Hard Severe. Miss M. Horsburgh & K. Schwartz. 13th July 1971.

On 'cone-shaped hummock.' Up the steep right-hand wall facing the burn. Arrowed. Up crack, then right to vertical groove. This to ledge below overhang. Pass latter on left to reach ledge at 130 ft. Go a few feet right, take leftwards leading gangway to loose blocks and up to ledge. Climb steep mossy wall directly to gain slabs and ledge above, (140 ft.). Short wall to top, (30 ft.).

Biod an Fhithich, Bundalloch.

Climbs on this crag were first reported in *S.M.C.J.*, xxx, 84. It is possible that R. Smith & N. Tennant made climbs here some time ago, but we give the following descriptions.

—*Wrong Turn.* 360 ft. Very Difficult. Miss M. Horsburgh, D. Regan & K. Schwartz. 30th July 1971.

On right-hand side of slabs. Start near the right end of the vertical base (reached by easy ramp leading up from left). Up walls and slabs above passing big heather patch and then smaller one on right to platform near right-bounding ridge above heathery recess. A short chimney leads to easier climbing, (90 ft.).

—*Hump.* 450 ft. Very Difficult. R. Burnett & R. Sharp. April 1971.

This cliff lies 1 mile north-east of Bundaloch near Dornie. Start immediately right of undercut base of cliff. Take a direct line in 3 pitches up a rib,

wall, cracks, slabs and corners, to belay at left end of big obvious recess. Go right and up undercut groove and exit leftwards through final roof.

—*Ankle Ridge*. 380 ft. Difficult. Miss M. Horsburgh & K. Schwartz. 5th September 1971.

The right-bounding ridge of the main crag just left of the obvious gully. Considerable scope for variation.

CAIRNGORMS

There seems little point in continuing to use the old distinctions I and II for the area, nor can we afford title space for enumeration consistent with the guide books. We therefore rattle off the following descriptions and hope that tidier minds than ours will scribble them in the correct fly-leaves.

Cairn Toul-Braeriach: Garbh Coire Mór. An unnamed route is sent to us by G. Cohen. The right-hand side of Pinnacles Buttress as described in the guide is a steep slab or wall with a line of overhangs at about half height. The climb takes this slab direct, passing through the overlap by a short open groove at its left-hand end. Start at the foot of the slab, slightly right of a grassy groove line which leads diagonally right to beneath the overhangs,

—Climb cracks in the slab for about 40 ft. to gain the diagonal groove line and follow this until a traverse right can be made below the overhang to large ledges and belays, (130 ft.). Traverse back left, descending a little, then go straight up cracks to the overhang at a point about 10 ft. right of the short open groove. Make a difficult traverse left under the overhang into the bottom of the groove, then move up and left out of the groove to a good ledge on the left arete. Carry on up the upper slab above the overhang working slightly right to belay near a large loose block, (110 ft.). Continue up the slab, moving left to avoid difficulties and belay at the top of the pinnacle, (80 ft.). Easy climbing up the final pinnacle, (100 ft.).

Ben Macdhuil: Coire Sputan Dearg.—*Rainmate*. GRADE III. J. Bower, A. Morgan & I. Rae. February 1974.

The corner gave 200 ft. of climbing on water-ice. The main difficulty was the overlap which was climbed on the right. Thereafter 300 ft. of easy-angled snow led to a cornice and the plateau.

Beinn a' Bhuird: Coire na Ciche.—*Sandy Crack*. 400 ft. GRADE IV. C. Anderson, R. Archbold & N. D. Keir. 1st March 1973. 7 hours.

A demanding route of unusual character, climbed in lean conditions of windcrusted powder and verglassed rock; maybe easier in fuller conditions.

Starting directly in the line of the fault (below and left of the Pulpit), climb out left then return into the fault. After a steep step, take the snow rake leading right to the Pulpit. The aim now is to reach the stance and in-situ peg belay above the summer chimney via the edge on its right flank (crux). From the stance, a layback exit gives access to the final chimney which climb direct (1 nut), over coping slab, to share finish with Jason's Chimney, through underpass to plateau.

Garbh Coire.—*Salamander*. 600 ft. GRADE II/III. D. F. Lang. 1st April 1973.

Start in the Flume, climb to just beyond a neck in the gully and exit right on to the buttress. Climb the crest then traverse right, across wall to reach easier ground. Up easy snow trough. (Crest of Mandarin Buttress on

right is impractical) to reach cornice. Awkward exit on right in airy position overlooking buttress towards South East Gully.

—*East Wall Direct*. GRADE IV. N. D. Keir, J. Motherssele, R. Smith. 23rd February 1974. 8 hours.

A superb climb with well sustained difficulties from start to finish. The party launched on to the lowest point of the slab apron. After 100 ft. of climbing, a short thin ice traverse left gave access to the chimney system on the summer line. Above mid-height, a set of stepped ramps lead underneath an imposing vertical wall to reach the coincidental 'ice couloir' of East Wall Route. This double pitch, it seems, would always constitute the crux. But instead of breaking out right as on that climb, 'the overhangs ringing the top of the couloir' were bypassed via the summer exit on the left to finish up the final tower from the col. No cornice.

Cairngorm: Stac an Fharadh.—*The Deluge*. 500 ft. Very Severe. G. Shields (ldr), C. Norris & B. Wright. October 1971.

Climb grooves for 200 ft. to foot of break in large overlap to left of *Après Moi*. Climb the overlap, (1 piton for aid) and trend left to peg belay in corner at top of slab. Go right and finish up vegetatious gully or finish up *Après Moi*.

—*Déjà Vu*. 300 ft. Severe. A. Fyffe & B. Wright. October 1971.

Start just left of the central gully at an obvious break in the overlap, to right of start of *Après Moi*. Climb crack, then trend left to belay at left-hand end of prominent overlap. Finish up gully on left.

White Mounth: Eagle's Rock.—*The Waterfall*. 600 ft. GRADE II. N. D. Keir & J. Taylor. 2nd January 1974.

For beginners and veterans alike, a first-class climb normally sheathed in ice for its full height as on this occasion. (Ice screws recommended for protection to save time excavating for rock peg belays.)

—*Bumble*. GRADE II. J. Taylor. 2nd January 1974. 10 mins.

Climb continuous ice on summer route.

—*Green Slab*. GRADE II-III. N. D. Keir. 2nd January 1974. 10 mins.

Climb continuous ice on summer route.

Broad Cairn: Bluffs.—*Funeral Fall*. GRADE IV. M. Freeman & N. D. Keir. 3rd March 1974.

The impressive ice-wall mentioned in the 1962 *Guidebook*. A short test-piece on steep ice. This ascent on rotten snow-ice sandwich.

Lochnagar: Black Spout Pinnacle.—*Winter Face*. 750 ft. GRADE V. N. W. Quinn & D. F. Lang. 17th February 1974.

Start just above the lowest rocks in the little snow chute formed between the 'Mound' and the face, and opposite a conspicuous perched block. Climb groove and move up rightwards to peg belay on wall to left of slab, below prominent overhang, (60 ft.). Gain inset slab on right and climb directly up obvious groove for 70 ft. to peg belay, (crux). Follow obvious line up and right for 140 ft. Peg belay below large wall. (N.B. just below and beyond final groove of Pinnacle Face Route which has been crossed). Move down 15 ft. Go hard right round corner and up to stance in chimney line of Route 1 some 70 ft. above The Springboard. (4½ hours—Serious). Route 1

was then followed to top of the Pinnacle, (2 hours). Magnificent climbing and situations.

—*The White Spout*. 270 ft. GRADE III. M. Freeman & N. D. Keir. 2nd February 1974. 1½ hours.

Located to the right of the Stack in the Black Spout. Trend rightwards via the obvious scoop. Seriously unprotected in the steep snow conditions encountered, but normally draped with icefalls.

Central Buttress.—*Direct*. 380 ft. to the crest. GRADE IV. M. Freeman & N. D. Keir. 3rd February 1974.

A respectable mixed route in the traditional idiom. The 'first belay' was reached by rising in steeply from the right. Next, a broken chimney system on the left gave a sustained 150 ft. run-out, (1 aid peg), to an exposed pedestal stance and peg belay. Going right, a short groove led steeply for another long run-out to a grand belay ledge below the terminal wall. Via left exit, the 'Level arête' was gained on 'The Ordinary Route' which was followed to the plateau.

Creag An Dubh Loch: Main Face.—*Hanging Garden Route*. 500 ft. GRADE IV. D. Dinwoodie & G. S. Strange. 9th December 1972.

Variable conditions were encountered with plenty of snow and ice, few belays and impressive situations. The Garden was reached via Broad Terrace and the summer line followed except at 180 ft. where poor water ice in the right-hand chimney resulted in a zig-zag detour on the left through waves of green ice, (crux). The stepped corner pitch was reached by a short abseil and the plateau gained by the original (Bell) finish which led to the only apparent weakness in the cornice.

Observations taken over several winters would suggest that this line is in condition more often than most other routes on Creag An Dubh Loch.

Central Slabs.—*Cyclops*. 1000 ft. Very Severe. M. Freeman & G. S. Strange. 19th May 1973.

A direct line between Blue Max and Black Mamba. Start about 40 ft. left of Black Mamba, just below and right of obvious brown corner. Climb left-hand twin crack parallel to brown corner. Move right at overlap, pull onto hanging flake and continue to stance below small bulge, (as for Dragon Slayer, 100 ft.). Climb bulge and follow prominent crack to scoop with constricted groove above. Move into groove from right and climb it over grass plug. Continue to stance with thread belay, (120 ft.). Go straight up through lower overlap via Blue Max. Continue up crack-line to belay above second overlap, (120 ft.). Follow continuation fault to belay level with the 'huge flake' on Black Mamba, (100 ft.). Climb pink waterwashed rock to broken ground, (60 ft.). Scramble up left then slant rightwards up terrace to foot of vee-groove immediately right of shallow curving groove. Climb the vee-groove trending slightly rightwards to join Blue Max coming in from the right below the two steep little grooves. Move left and climb the left-hand groove. Continue more easily up crack-line trending left to belay at grass ledge below overhang, (150 ft.). Continue as for Blue Max, (250 ft.).

Broad Terrace Wall.—*Falconhorst*. 470 ft. Very Severe, (Hard). L. Brown, D. F. Lang & G. S. Strange. 19th August 1973.

This route follows a line of weakness approximately mid-way between Culloden and the right-hand edge of the wall. Start from the highest point on Broad Terrace at short left-trending ramp left of obvious pink rock. Cairn. Go easily up ramp and continue to old peg. Step up right, go up short steep slab with pocket hold then move back left to short overhanging

groove. Climb groove, (sling on spike), go straight up then horizontally right along narrow ledge to corner. Climb corner and escape left using good horizontal spike hold. Traverse left then go up corner to large platform on left. Belay at big flake beside upper ledge, (140 ft.). Move back right and climb thin crack in pink wall, (1 nut, 1 peg), then using a further peg step right onto loose block and so up to ledge on crest, (second peg probably not necessary as block more stable than it appears). Traverse right and go up to belay in niche formed by huge detached flake, (50 ft.). Move back down and climb overhang on right, (1 nut, 1 sling). Continue away rightwards and up beyond poised block to good ledge and belays, (40 ft.). Go up a few feet to rock shelf below wet corner. Climb two short walls on right of corner to grass ledge, (nut used on second wall). Go right and back left to large grass platform directly above corner, (90 ft.). Trend left up obvious fault over monstrous blocks, then go straight up to the top, (150 ft.).

BEN NEVIS

Càrn Dearg Buttress.—*Dissection.* 540 ft. Very Severe. M. Cundy & P. Nunn. 30th September 1972.

Takes a fairly direct if contrived line starting between the Shadow and the direct start to Route II and cutting through the midriff of P.M. on the upper wall.

Climb the crack right of the direct start to Route II. Usually wet, (100 ft.). Continue up the crack to a shelf right of a buttress feature avoided by Route II, (70 ft.). Go left up this buttress with initial awkward moves, then easier to the great terrace, (80 ft.). From the back of the terrace pull over a steep little wall slightly to the right and climb slabs on the left which overlook P.M. groove. Belay below a steep groove, (piton, 100 ft.). Climb slabs on the right to junction with P.M., (60 ft.). Climb a crack to a steeper groove in the overhangs. Climb this and step out left to a spectacular stance, (peg belay, 70 ft.). Move left round the overhangs to a fine wall crack finish, (60 ft.).

Number 5 Gully Buttress. Three short Very Severe climbs on the steep upper wall of the buttress, all by P. Braithwaite & P. Nunn on 7th October 1972.

—*Lysistrata.* 180 ft. The steep vee-groove in the left end of the face. Climb a steep corner to a long terrace, (as for Turkish? 50 ft.). Make a few moves up a groove to an overhang, swing left and climb the groove above direct with difficulty, (130 ft.).

—*Antigone.* 180 ft. Start as for Lysistrata. From the Lysistrata groove climb another steep groove to a bulge and a slab. Ascend this to a bulge. Move left and back right to a final crack, (130 ft.).

—*Agamemnon.* 230 ft. Starts lower down the gully, on the access ledge to Fives Wall. Climb the steep groove just left of an overhanging section, with a difficult move at the exit to a ledge. Go right to a pedestal below a very steep wall, (peg belay, 130 ft.). Go up right with difficulty to a hanging slab, (peg runner) and climb to the steep wall above. Finish up a vertical wall on the right, (100 ft.).

Observatory Buttress.—*Left Edge Route.* 420 ft. to Terrace, 1200 ft. to Plateau. GRADE V. D. F. Lang & N. W. Quinn. 9th March 1974.

Summer route followed in the main. Start at the foot of Point Five Gully and just above lowest rocks.

Climb rib keeping to extreme left edge to reach a small snow bay. Belay at cracked blocks on right; good stance, (100 ft.). Continue up the left one of two grooves, break out right (awkward) and up right to peg belay, (160 ft.). Climb the icefall above directly to reach the Terrace and poor belay, (160 ft.). Sustained climbing to this point—5½ hours). Move right to join up with normal finish to the Buttress, (four pitches of 200 ft. to Plateau).

Observatory Ridge.—East Face. 550 ft.
GRADE IV. B. Dunn & C. Higgins. 3rd March 1974.

Below and to the right of Zero Gully a prominent groove strikes leftwards up the entire length of the east face of Observatory Ridge. On this ascent the groove was completely iced up and presented several bulges. The route ended on the crest of Observatory Ridge.

Orion Face.—Slav Route. 1480 ft. GRADE V.
D. F. Lang & N. W. Quinn. 23rd March 1974.

Climb groove immediately left of Zero Gully, move left round ice hose at top to peg belay, (170 ft.). Up left, up steep depression, move right to near rock wall, back left and up steep ice bulges to peg belay, (170 ft., crux). (This is level with, but to the right of, the Basin). Take an ascending line rightwards to belay just below snow arête overlooking Zero Gully, (180 ft.). Continue by way of steep steps and grooves (very obvious) for four pitches, (160 ft., 190 ft., 190 ft. and 80 ft. *resp.*), always close to but elevated from the gully, to emerge on snow slope below a wide square cut chimney immediately right of a formidable buttress. (Possible to descend into Zero Gully from this point, c150 ft.). Exits look forbidding, traverse over groove and wall for 100 ft., ascend very steep groove and up to bollard belay, (190 ft.). Up groove on left and up below wall to emerge on crest of connecting ridge of N.E.B. well left of the Zero Gully exit.

Minus One Gully. 1000 ft. GRADE V. K. V.
Crocket & C. Stead. 6 hours. 23rd February 1974.

Done under exceptionally favourable conditions of good snow-ice, it gave a magnificent climb.

Straightforward climbing led to the major difficulties. An awkward ice wall led to a cave below the main gully overhang, which was turned by a tension traverse to the left ledge. The gully was regained above and the next overhang was also turned on the left. A steep ice wall and a fine corner led to a snow bay. The left hand of two grooves was climbed to its end and a traverse made to reach the right-hand groove. This led up to a final left mantleshelf onto the crest of Minus One Buttress. The crest gave an exciting finish to the climb.

Minus Two Buttress. 900 ft. GRADE V.
B. Dunn, C. Higgins & D. McArthur. 5th March 1974.

Start 40 ft. left of the foot of Minus Two Gully. Climb up leftwards on an iced slab, (100 ft.). Move up and right to enter an open book corner, climb up and over ledge to peg belay, (150 ft.). Continue up the corner to its end and go up a snow crest, (150 ft.). Traverse left across a snow ramp to enter an iced gully, (150 ft.). Climb the gully to reach a snow field, (150 ft.). Finish by a narrow iced gully, (150 ft., 60 ft.) to reach the crest of North East Buttress.

GLENCOE

Aonach Dubh: East Face.—Stitch. 125 ft. Very Severe. B. Clark & J. Mackenzie. 14th October 1973.

Start right of Gut past the trees at the end of terrace where a blunt arête rises above a sapling. Up the wall to a shallow break in the bulges

above which are climbed on awkward jugs. Easier rock leads to an exposed left traverse past a block overhang whose steep left wall is climbed on sloping holds. A small foothold under the overhang enables a pull up to be made to the rounded ledge above. Easier rock to finish.

Garbh Bheinn: Garbh Choire Slabs. This name is suggested for the two prominent slabs a few hundred feet below, and to the left of the bealach, directly opposite the South Wall. These are not to be confused with the Leac Bheag Buttress which is further down the Garbh Choire, about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile from the bealach. Two routes were climbed on the left-hand slab, the left-hand route being the line of Rampage (see *S.M.C.J.*, 1973, xxx, p.180). The following route climbs the centre of the slab on superb rock.

—*Lodestone*. 350 ft. Severe. K. V.

Crocket & I. Fulton. 7th July 1973.

Start 20 ft. right of Rampage and climb crack to detached block. Gain main slab and climb this directly. Move right at top and take short walls to top.

Leac Bheag Buttress.—*Drongo*. 400 ft. Very Severe. K. V. Crocket & I. Fulton. 7th July 1973.

Starting 40 ft. up the gully to the right of Dexter is a huge slanting corner. This is well seen from the South Wall area. Enter the corner and climb level with a large recess; step right into a groove on the edge and so to belay, (130 ft.). Climb up and left across steep wall to buttress edge and follow an arête to belay, (130 ft.). Scrambling leads to top, (140 ft.).

Stob Coire nan Lochain: Central Buttress.—*Satyr*. 335 ft. Very Severe. G. Morgan, P. Nunn & J. Street. 16th September 1973.

The climb takes the buttress right of Central Grooves, starting up a crack right of the crest. Climb the crack to a ledge and hanging block. From a peg on the right move left to a ledge and across to a higher shelf on the crest, (100 ft.). Climb the groove and over loose blocks slightly right to a cave under a pinnacle flake, (100 ft.). Move left, climb the crest by a crack and up a further crack to the flake top. Peg runner above on left. Mantleshelf and climb the right twin groove past small overhangs to a grass ledge and vee-groove, which last leads to easier ground, (135 ft.).

Buachaille Etive Mór: Blackmount Wall. The Pink Wall is promoted to a proper status, and the following route lies 15 ft. left of Whispering Grooves, (*S.M.C.J.*, 1973, xxx, 179) at an obvious crack.

—*The Mutchkin*. 200 ft. Very

Severe. J. Armour & C. Stead. 26th May 1973.

Climb the crack and belay behind the prominent detached pinnacle, (50 ft.). Climb the groove above, turning the overhang by the nose on the right, then go left and belay (peg) at the foot of the vee-corner, (70 ft.). Climb this corner and the following wall, (80 ft.).

CENTRAL HIGHLANDS

Creag Meaghaidh: Loch Roy Coire.—*Loch Roy Gully*. 600 ft. GRADE IV. R. Schipper & J. Mount. 6th February 1972.

This route lies just right of the centre of Creag an Lochain, (grid ref. 417890) starting right of the lowest rocks and leads up into the obvious, very narrow chimney-gully (crux) near the top.

SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS

The Brack: North Face.—*Inglis Clark Arête*. 400 ft. GRADE II. T. Anderson, B. Clarke, C. Garthwaite & J. Mackenzie. 2nd December 1973.

The steep summer crack is taken to the crest where a short left traverse and an alcove lead back to the crest. Short walls and large ledges lead to an awkward wall, then easy ground to a much steeper section. Walls lead to a ledge overlooking the gully and beyond this pitches lead up to a choice of two chimneys to finish. Powder snow, verglas and frozen turf on ascent.

Beinn Dubh, Glen Lochy. J. Mackenzie reports ascents of the gullies right and left of Central Gully, (*S.M.C.J.*, 1973, xxx, 182), which he hopes will be renamed Sickie Gully. The descriptions are respectively:

—*Amethyst Gully*. 700 ft. Very Difficult. 27th May 1973.

Low down, a triple chimney is climbed. Walking takes one to further short pitches and including one with quartz crystals. The exit is steep and taken on the left by a flake. Winter, GRADE II/III.

—*Quartz Gully*. 500 ft. Easy. 27th May 1973.
One ice pitch in winter.

Old Maternity Hospital, Dumbarton: Lang Craigs. A miniature Half Dome, though featureless when viewed from the hospital. Our congratulations to Mrs Mackenzie. Both well.

—*The Wraith*. 100 ft.
A3. A. Macdonald & J. Mackenzie. 10th July 1973.

15 pegs in all; 2 in situ. Up the crack to a leftwards move and over an overhung section which leads to a rightwards thin crack. This crux section leads to a small bay where it is possible to stand in balance beneath an overhung groove which is then climbed. The last few feet are done free.

NOTES

Rhum Notes

Several new lines were climbed on Ruinsval by M. H. Moar & J. D. Roberts-James in June 1970, the best being in the Green Wall area. They christened one interesting line—*Very Well*. 100 ft. Very Difficult. The climb followed the rib bounding the right side of the gully/chimney right of Face Route.

The Dibidil face of Beinn nan Stac afforded some interesting evening climbing and several new climbs were made on the S.E. Face of Askival, all too short to be of great merit.

Northern Highlands Notes

Gruinard Bay: Jetty and Goat Crag.—A. J. Anderson of the Army Mountain Training Centre at Fort George has sent us a guide to Jetty Crag (Grid. Ref. O.S. 19, NG 961927) and descriptions of three routes on Goat Crag (Grid Ref. O.S. 19, NG 960920). There are some forty climbs in all, mostly of about 100 ft. in length, and varying in standard from Difficult to Very Severe. He would be interested to receive details of climbs made there.

We note in particular Meridian, 260 ft., Very Severe, by M. B. Hall and B. A. James. The climb gains the grass ledge left of the centre of the crag, and passes the overhangs on the left by a groove.

Creag Alasdair: Buttress 2.—P. Nunn reports a climb by M. Boysen & M. Richardson during Whit 1973. It starts from the right hand gully. A diagonal pitch led to a belay shared with Succuba, (see *New Climbs*) and a second spectacular pitch led under the overhangs on the left to escape up the final continuation chimney of the prominent straight crack which rises from the left-hand gully. The climb is Very Severe.

Several climbs have been done on **Creag Riabach** in the area south of Cape Wrath. One of these, climbed by C. Rowland & D. Marshall, is 600 ft., Very Severe, with a crack pitch reputedly of extreme difficulty. They were climbed in May 1971.

At **Clo Mhór, Cape Wrath**, Nunn reports two attempts by E. Drummond and T. Proctor. They 'appear to have spent about 10 nights descending and attempting the main face. Despite careful preparations, hanging belays and bivouacs, and a combination of persistence and technique, the central cliff remains only half-climbed. An incursion by R. Shaw, with bold abseil descent and Very Severe climb-out, remains the only vestige of success yet gained on this formidable and unfriendly place.'

We are, as usual, indebted to Nunn for his notes.

Western Highlands Notes

Meall Doire na Mnatha, Loch Shiel.—K. Schwartz notes that on the upper western slopes between Sgòr Craobh a' Chaoruinn and Sgòr nan Cearc overlooking Loch Shiel are several buttresses; Mnatha with the cleanest rock just west and below the top of Meall Doire na Mnatha at Grid Ref. 895768. Some eight climbs have been made on this crag which is a quarter of a mile long and up to 300 ft. high. Its southern end is characterized by two obvious chimneys, the centre is formed by a steep slab wall with easier angled rock on the far north. Belays are generally poor. The crag is best approached from Guesachan on the eastern shore of Loch Shiel.

Western Ardnamurchan: Meall nan Con.—C. Stead notes that the 50 to 100 ft. routes mentioned in the Western Highlands Guide are longer and better than implied. The prominent slabby west buttress of the hill offers pleasant 300 ft. climbs on good gabbro, and can be climbed anywhere at a standard between Severe and Very Severe. A good 180 ft. Very Severe was also found on Meall an Fhir-eòin.

Cairngorms Notes

Notes and Crosses.—G. Strange notes that D. Stuart notes that the phrase 'D. Dinwoodie notes' is now a noted Aberdonian standing joke, the latter having with noticeable diligence substantially contributed to the 1973 Cairngorm Notes. We make no apology but hope that noted Aberdeen climbers will suffer any notoriety and continue to contribute to this section and others, anonymously if necessary. Such hiding of lights under bushels cuts not ice with us, and we have note time for it.

Lochnagar.—On the probable second ascent of the Stack on Lochnagar, J. Mothersele & N. Keir climbed the prominent icicle dropping into the Left Hand Branch to give an alternative winter start to this short but sustained mixed route. It is reportedly more often in condition. Later in the season the icicle was banked out, thus erasing the difficulties.

Creag An Dubh Loch.—J. Mothersele reports two climbs. The first, with D. Riley, is a traverse of the slabs starting left of Pink Elephant, going beneath the first line of overlaps for three pitches to the second belay of Black Mamba. This route is followed for 30 ft., where a peg permits a tension traverse above the overhangs on the right of the cliff, to finish in Theseus Grooves. The route is Very Severe and about 600 ft. long. The second, with W. Nicols, starts at the lowest point of the buttress right of Minotaur and climbs grooves to the Terrace. Above, an obvious chimney-crack leads to the last pitch of Minotaur. The route is Very Severe, about 500 ft. long and called Nemesis.

Cairngorm: Coire an Lochain.—B. Wright notes that Ventilator climbed by D. J. Bennet & A. Sommerville on 29th March 1970 was climbed by himself the previous winter with two Glenmore Lodge students. The route had been climbed on several occasions previously by similar parties.

Central Highlands Notes

Creag Meaghaidh: Pinnacle Face.—*Nordwander.* G. Strange points out that he was not in the party which made the first ascent. D. Stuart made up the second rope with M. Freeman. We offer our best wishes and sympathy to Stuart; he was disabled by an accident while traversing from the top of the route.

Glen Etive.—*The Chasm of Beinn Trilleachan.* This remarkable rift is the right-hand branch of a gully system some two miles beyond the Etive Slabs. There are no unavoidable difficulties. It was climbed in June 1973 by I. Rowe & G. Tiso who cannot believe they were the first. There are rumours of ascents by the Creag Dhu M.C. and perhaps by T. Graham Brown.

Miscellaneous Notes

Sang Award I: Pean Bothy.—The bothy in Glen Pean in Knoydart was renovated as a memorial to Wilf Tauber in the summer of 1973. The following are excerpts from a report on the renovation work sent to us by Phil Gribbon.

There was an excellent response to the circular of February 1973, asking for funds for the renovation project. A sum of £348 was raised by the contributions from 50 individuals and the pupils of Keel School, and by the donations of the Scottish Mountaineering Trust (£25) and the St Andrews University Athletic Union (£20). This sum was sufficient to enable the re-roofing to be carried out with aluminium rather than with iron corrugated sheeting. The cost was £321: the balance of £27 has been kept for future maintenance.

The main items of expenditure were £173 for aluminium and perspex roofing sheets, £44 for timber, £38 for paint, £25 for cement, tools, nails and sundries, £26 for the memorial plaque, and £15 for organisational expenses.

The delivery of the materials posed some problems since they had to be moved over 3 miles of the boggy valley floor from the Loch Arkaig roadhead to the bothy. Although the use of canoes, ponies and helicopters were all considered, their operation was found to be impracticable, and the delivery of the materials depended in the end on human back power.

The work was done during the first two weeks of June 1973 by some 55 members or former members of the StA.U.M.C., 6 M.B.A. members, plus

some schoolboys and local Scouts. The building experience of Irvine Butterfield (Foreman) and Neil Parrish and the carrying capacity of certain M.B.A. members were essential contributions to success. During the period Wilf Tauber's father and mother, and his brother and sister were present at the bothy.

The exterior construction work was (i) to remove all the old corrugated iron sheets from the roof for either subsequent reuse or burial, (ii) to check and repair all the wooden timbers, (iii) to replace the west end roof beam, (iv) to lay the aluminium roof sheeting in place and to paint it with two coats of weatherproof paint, (v) to fit weather boarding at both gable ends, (vi) to install new skylights in the roof, (vii) to fit perspex windows at ground floor, and (viii) to make and hang a new door.

The interior construction work was (i) to level and lay a cement floor, (ii) to re-point all the walls and the chimney breasts, (iii) to erect a stone seat and other primitive furniture.

The renovated bothy was opened on Saturday, 3rd November 1973, by Wilf's father in company with his mother and other members of the family. There were about 60 people present for the ceremony. An aluminium plaque was unveiled with the inscription:

'This bothy was revoated by the St Andrews University Mountaineering Club and the Mountain Bothies Association in memory of Wilfrid J. A. Tauber who was killed while climbing on the Welsh Sea-Cliffs, June–November 1973.'

Sang Award II.—I. G. Rowe writes, 'A. Fyffe and I were the token Scots on a frustrating British expedition to Dhaulagiri IV. We were helped by an award from the Sang Legacy which was much appreciated. Fyffe, with A. Dewison (A.C.G.) suffered Bombay docks in the monsoon and got something spotty, not helped by a trying lorry-trip to Pokhara. I had better luck and helped establish Base Camp and Camp One on the southern approach. Numerous delays finally necessitated the use of a helicopter from Pokhara—a memorable flight below Machapuchare and Annapurna. A 20,000 ft. barrier peak had to be crossed to reach the foot of the mountain and this took a disproportionate toll of our resources, leaving R. Brook and I with diminishing supplies to attempt a 6000 ft. S.W. rib to the summit. We cramponned to about 22,500 ft. and had about 2600 ft. to go when we jacked because of weather, fear or realism. Unfortunately I remained fit for a second attempt two days later by the conventional, W. ridge route. It was during a descent from the W. col that A. Dewison was killed having established a camp which C. Scott and I hoped to occupy.

During the withdrawal, R. Brook & A. Fyffe, despite their exhaustion, had to climb back from Camp One to Camp Three to cover the retreat of two malingering Sherpas. While supplying this unnecessary operation, a Sherpa apprentice was killed in an avalanche above Base Camp.

All this in the superb post-monsoon season of 1973. I returned five days after the birth of my daughter.

As a postscript, W. March is on an R.A.F. expedition attempting the northern approach to Dhaulagiri IV. I hear that three Sherpas have been killed in a base camp avalanche.'

Duff Memorial Mountain Safety Exhibition.—The Sports Council of Scotland has granted sufficient funds to reorganise the Exhibition on more professional lines and has also provided an annual grant for running it. It is hoped to complete the new Exhibition before the autumn and thereafter arrange a rota of shows through the country.

Ski Mountaineering Eagles.—Hamish Brown tells us that the Eagle Ski Club celebrates its Jubilee a year hence. It is a club whose *raison d'être* is the furtherance of ski mountaineering as against penguining and it has run expeditions to the Middle East, Atlas, Pyrenees and most of the main Alpine ranges over the last four years. One of its most valuable aspects is the Training Course run each year in the Oberland and which might interest climbers who have added flippers to their paraphernalia.

This course leads to a certificate qualification similar to the S.A.C. Ski Mountaineering Certificate in standard. Week one is spent at the Swarenbach Inn above Kanderstag, touring peaks, but also, endlessly, from pre-dawn to dusk, working under stern mentors: crevasse rescue techniques, roped ski-ing, ice craft, weather, first-aid, avalanche search (SKADI)—even abseiling *mit ski*. Evening lectures and rope techniques follow Stoller hospitality. Week two is based on the Concordia Hut, touring the main Oberland peaks. Practical tests and written papers. The pass rate is about 6 out of 18, mountaineers rather than mere piste-bashers tending to do better. Anyone interested in this aspect of mountains could find no better course. Normally held before Easter. The organiser of the Course is Mrs Janie Reid, Chalet Bärgrsunne, 3777 Saanenmöser, BE, Switzerland.

Inflationary Situation.—J. C. Donaldson has been scrutinising the 6-inch Ordnance Survey Maps and reports that two more mountains may rank as full Munros. They are Ruadh Stac Mór, 3013 ft. (2850+ ft. in Munro's Tables) and Beinn a' Chlaidheimh which cuts the 3000 ft. contour (listed in the Tables as 2960+ ft.). Both lie in the Carnmore-Strath na Sheallaig area. Donaldson notes that E. C. Thompson in an article in the *Journal* over 40 years ago (*S.M.C.J.*, 1930, xviii, 93) claimed that Beinn a' Chlaidheimh merited full Munro status. However, see 'Aneroids and Munros' by J. Rooke Corbett (*S.M.C.J.*, 1932, xviii, 324-33) for a more cautious opinion. Donaldson's researches in the National Library map collection also reveal a new Top, Sgùrr nan Saighead in the Five Sisters which appears to reach 3050 ft. above the mean level of the tide. This may bring some Munroists out of retirement. Alas, poor Sisypheus.

The Second Century.—The following reports have been received of individuals who have completed the Munros. The place in the list is provisional as there may well be people who have climbed the lot but do not wish, or cannot be bothered to report the fact. Also there is the problem of whether or not they and the Auld One Hundred have done the two Rising Bens of Wester Ross referred to by Donaldson in the above Note.

(108) G. Roger, 1972, —, —; (109) P. Roberts, 1973, —, —; (110) W. G. Barbour, 1973, —, —; (111) D. Smith, 1973, —, —.

Compleat President.—George Roger completed the Munros during his term of office. He sends this account of the ceremonial ascent of his last when he was escorted by an impressive body of retainers and hunting dogs.

On Sunday 22nd October 1972 I had the pleasure of being escorted up Mount Keen from Invermark by my friends, Jim and Sheila Donaldson, Alan, Evelyn and Martin McNicol, Bill Donaldson, Leslie Duff, Barclay Braithwaite, Ken Armstrong, Anthony Keen, Peter Roberts, Roger Soep and dogs Susie and Jenny. The occasion was the completion of my tour of the Munros which started with Ben Nevis in 1927.

It was most kind of my friends to come and we had a good dram or two to celebrate on the summit. There was a cold wind blowing but my stalwart friends endured it without complaint until the last drop was drunk. We had an excellent day and I am glad to report that the whole party returned to Invermark without mis-hap.

It is good to look back on 45 years of great enjoyment on the Munros with so many good friends and to them all I say thank you.

Winter 1974.—The current world shortage of commodities has affected the availability of weekend ice, particularly on Ben Nevis where the trends of the last two winters have been sustained. It is not certain that Scots have taken to the buttresses by ambition or necessity, but a trend out of the gullies is happily noted, and the winter crop of face routes is a fine one. Our icy cliffs, it should not be forgotten, are available mid-week. Advance booking is not (yet) required.

We note the use of a long rope in ascents made by D. Lang & N. Quinn, with pitches of up to 190 ft., thus saving the construction of static belays and time.

A private communication from A. McKeith indicates that there are now two GRADE VI routes in the Rockies near Calgary, the longest of which required 3 days for 1000 ft., all on steep ice. Some discussion of a definition for GRADE VI is invited to avoid a potentially inflationary situation. Can the grade be applied to pure ice whose bulges are now spiked by weighted hooks and no longer lovingly sculpted by craftsmen?

Last Breath.—Members about to emit theirs are advised (as they were last year) of the high demand amongst members who have only recently drawn in their first for copies of past *Journals*. Prohumous bequests should be made to the Hon. Club Undertaker, R. Gall Inglis.

IN MEMORIAM

IAN G. CHARLESON

I got to know Ian Charleson when I was President of the Club and he was Secretary. I could not have hoped for a more efficient or pleasant Secretary and I think we both enjoyed our association.

He joined the Club from the J.M.C.S. in 1938 with a very good Scottish qualification, a season in the Dauphine which included the ascent of The Meije and the Ecrins, and one in the Pennines with the traverse of the Matterhorn.

For many years he climbed widely in Scotland. With W. E. Ford he did the first traverse of the Cuillin ridge including Blaven and Clach Glas. He also did the four Cairngorm 400-footers in one day. One week-end a rock fall caused the breaking of two ribs and concussion, but on the Monday he was at work at the usual time.

For many years he climbed extensively in the Alps including the Cham-onix area, the Pennines and the Oberland. In the Oberland he traversed the Bietschorn with Dr and Mrs J. H. B. Bell with whom much of his Alpine climbing was done. With André Roch he tackled the South face of Mont Blanc by the Pear route.

He acted as Secretary of the Club from 1946 to 1950, was Vice-President 1950 to 1952, President 1960 to 1962.

When he retired from business he decided to realise his ambition to travel round the world. He attended the Matterhorn centenary celebrations in Zermatt, and then started the tour in his Dormobile. When he got to Moscow he found that he was not allowed to drive his car across Siberia, so he and the car had to go by train. He knew no Russian but his innate

friendliness broke through the language barrier and he enjoyed the journey and the association with the other passengers.

In Japan the climbing season was over but he decided to climb Fujiyama and he accomplished this after spending a very cold night sheltering beside a closed hut.

When he got to America he was joined by his wife, Brenda. Their tour of the United States and Canada included a visit to Alaska.

Ian Charleson spent his boyhood in Oban. At school he was recognised as an athlete. From school he joined the staff of the Bank of Scotland in Oban, after a time was transferred to Edinburgh, and at an early age he was appointed manager of the Dunblane branch. Not only did he act as manager of that branch but he presided in Court as Hon. Deputy Sheriff Substitute.

He finished his banking career as manager of the principal Edinburgh branch. He had been treasurer of various Charities and he continued to carry on some of them with energy though he knew that owing to his heart condition his hold on life was precarious.

His death is a great loss to us all.

A.H.

I MET Ian Charleson at Riffelberg (then still the original Riffelhaus of Alpine literature) in 1938. The Riffelhorn became our own little peak and we had many bouts of climbing there and practise in roping down before going off to traverse the Matterhorn by the Hörnli and Italian Ridges and back via Furkjoch to the Schwarzsee within 12 hours. I suggested he should join the S.M.C. which he did in the Autumn of that year. Thereafter I climbed much with him and had the pleasure of introducing him to Howffing. That first time it was Ian who found 'Sunset Arch' high up on Ben an Lochain and Jock Nimlin, arriving later announced it as a 'rale guid howff.' On successive New Years we spent nights out in howffs. The best effort being in the Lost Valley of Glencoe among three feet of soft snow. Ian was a grand companion on the hills—always cheery, fit and strong.

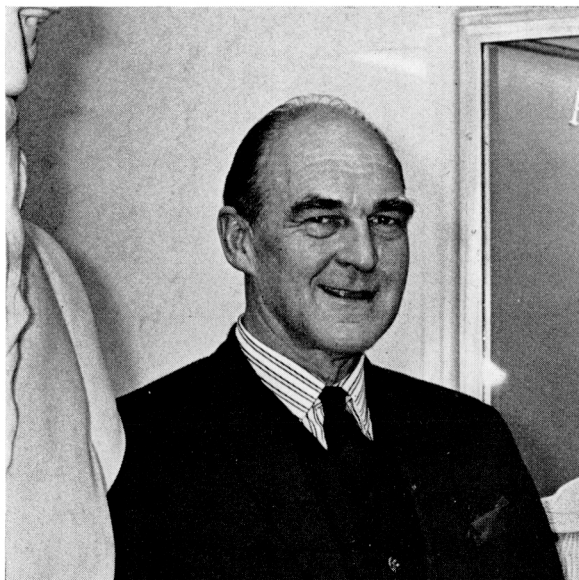
As Secretary he did fine work for us in reorganisation after the war and especially in arranging the joint training meet with the Alpine Club which introduced many of our members to the Alps. Ian became very friendly with Armand Charlet and his best effort was the climb of the Pear Buttress on the south side of Mont Blanc. I will miss him very much and he deserves an honoured place in the annals of our Club.

B.H.H.

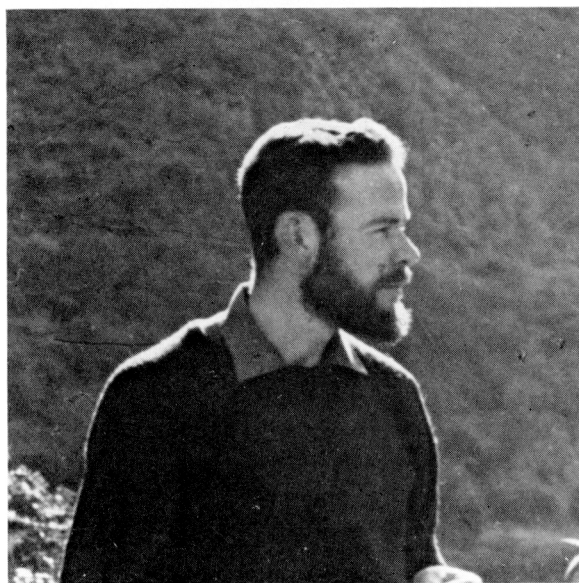
KENNETH BRYAN

WHEN I first met him, Ken was a young tiger with a reputation as a hard climber. The enthusiasm of youth took him to the hills every week-end, and in all weathers. His main haunt was Glencoe, but he welcomed any opportunity to visit other areas. In summer he visited the Alps, and soon matured into a safe, competent mountaineer, capable of the hardest routes.

Soon his personality and ability ensured that he was involved in expeditions, visiting such places as Greenland, the Pamirs, the Andes, Turkey and the Canadian Coast Range, and being involved in several first ascents. On the way to or from these expeditions he managed to visit more countries and so built up a remarkable knowledge of the world's mountain areas. And he was always looking ahead to future possible ploys.



IAN G. CHARLESON.



KENNETH BRYAN.



He was a strong natural climber, happy on all types of climbs, and unruffled in awkward situations, but later, listening to his account you realised that he had appreciated the difficulties more than anyone. A wide range of other interests together with an ability not to be bound to the orthodox made him an excellent and stimulating companion both on and off the hills. One remarkable trait, which never rubbed off on some of us, was his ability always, and with no effort, to be immaculately dressed, even in extreme conditions. He got on well with everybody and was a moderating influence, especially on an expedition.

Dissatisfied with his job as a Sales Executive he entered University in his late 20's, but was unable to settle to the role of student. He then found a satisfying career in non-destructive testing. Inconvenient working hours now restricted his climbing mainly to single days out from Glasgow, but the quality of his climbing remained high. He emigrated to Canada with his wife Chris, and settled in Vancouver a few years ago. He remained in the same type of job, and had just branched out on his own at the time of his untimely death in a car crash.

He is missed by a large number of friends, some of whom met on the Buachaille last autumn to pay tribute to his memory.

J.W.S.

Scottish Mountain Accidents 1973

ONCE again we are indebted to Mr B. H. Humble for compiling this report of accidents in or around our mountains in 1973. We would draw your attention to the Editorial remarks prefacing the reports in previous years' *Journals*, chiefly to the fact that the report does not claim to be comprehensive but is a record of accidents (a) reported to Mr Humble or (b) involving official rescue bodies. We accept no responsibility for the accuracy of the reports and do not necessarily concur with the judgments they contain.

Readers will be impressed with the range of mountain rescue activities from dangerous aerial hoop-la throwing ropes from helicopters to a surviving American on Centurion to cutting through a jungle with a power saw, not forgetting the strange case of what appears to be an attempt at ritual sacrifice of an Englishman on a Pictish broch in Glen Elg during the dark hours of Hogmanay.

Summarising the 1973 survey Mr Humble notes the 'reports have been received of 48 accidents on the hills, plus 20 searches for folk lost, benighted or cragfast. There were also two deaths from natural causes on hill paths. These latter and the increasing number of accidents to tourists on paths to well known beauty spots cannot really be called mountain accidents but all involve rescue teams. A notable point has been the marked increase in the number of accidents to hill walkers and tourists in the North and North-west, indicating increasing numbers of tourists in these areas. There has been a most welcome decrease in the number of fatalities (7 in 1973 compared to 14 in 1972) but an increase in the number of searches where no accident or injury and it is these which involved the most man power and expense.'

Photo: D. Mill

Opposite—Looking south into the Czechoslovakian Tatras from the Polish frontier near Roztoka. The large peak is Mlynara (2168m).

As in previous years half the accidents happened to parties from furth of Scotland, of these two involved Americans and the rest fellow Europeans—French, Irish, Welsh, German and English.

Commenting on the main causes Mr Humble observes that among tourists once again inadequate footwear leads to the Simple Slip. Of accidents to rock climbers eleven were recorded, 'mainly slips by leader and/or hold giving way because of loose rock.' Two cases were reported of slips by second and leaders belay coming out. In one case at least, life was almost certainly saved by wearing a crash helmet.

Two parties of snow climbers were avalanched. 'All other parties involved in winter accidents had ropes and ice axes but accidents took place when one member slipped, either at the foot of or at the top of the climb when the party were unroped, and though on steep ground, ropes were not thought necessary.'

NORTH AND WEST HIGHLANDS

8TH JANUARY — Iain Clyne (18), Inverness, with party from Inverness M.C. on Teallach, separated from his two companions on ridge to descend by a gully. Did not join others at base. Dundonnell M.R.T. set out at first light next day. Found at foot of gully 1300 hrs—Accident 1630 previous day, had slipped on ice, lost axe, fallen about 200 feet—fractured pelvis and severe bruising—3 months recovery. Ross-shire Police Team also involved—man hours 224.

25TH MAY — Girl of 15 with school party from London slipped on grassy slopes 200 feet from summit of Meallfurvonie, Glen Urquhart, fell about 60 feet—concussion, lacerations, fractured wrist—wearing *canvas plimssoles*, jeans and sweater.

12TH JULY — John Cobb (28), Aberdeen, one of party of four experienced climbers, evening climb on low level crag Loch Torridon area, G.R. 880575; was about 15 feet up when a hold which had been used twice with apparent safety gave way and he fell, fractured right tibia on contact with ground. All party well equipped except for helmets. 75 man hours—Torridon M.R.T.

14TH JULY — William Taylor (55), S.M.C., had planned to walk over Ben Loyal and meet friend at road. Did not appear at rendezvous. Friend contacted police, search mounted by four parties from Kinloss M.R.T. and from Dingwall Police. After search of four hours message received that missing man had reached Altnaharra Hotel. Light rain and mist down to 1000 feet. Comments by Kinloss M.R.T., man was a diabetic—boots let in wet and cagoule not waterproof.

31ST JULY — Hamish Brown (39), Kinghorn, Fife, with party of four, left cars at roadside Inchnadamph and at Skiag on 30th July, walked to Loch Beag and camped for two nights. No indication of route or duration of stay left with anyone. Proprietor of hotel raised alarm with local member of Dundonnell M.R.T. Man hours of search—40. Kinloss M.R.T. also called out, but party returned all in good shape.

1ST AUGUST — Raymond Sbresna (42), Aberdeen, and Helen Starge (6) — (*sic*), London, both very inexperienced—benighted and lost rugged terrain, Ben More Coigach area. Alarm raised 0030 hrs 2nd August by landlady of guest house where they were staying. Police called in, Dundonnell M.R.T. at 0100 hrs. Search started 0200 hrs. Party found at 0345 hrs—suffering from slight exposure and exhaustion. Wearing *summer city clothing, no map or compass*.

5TH AUGUST — Ruth Horder (11) with family party visiting Falls of Glomach. Slipped on lower path where it was very narrow, wet and slippery with loose stones, rolled down then fell over rock into a pool—shock and fracture of left hand. Track unsuitable for stretcher party. Glenelg and Dundonnell M.R.T. called out. Casualty. Patient put in a tragsitz and carried up to head of falls then down via upper track to Killilan (last lap of journey on stretcher). A safety rope had to be rigged from accident point up to head of falls. No team-owned equipment of Glenelg team, marked shortage of slings and karabiners. (All such available were personal gear of team members). A difficult rescue over dangerous ground.

17TH AUGUST — Two youths seen leaving for Falls of Glomach 16th August, carrying only light packs. Car still in place next day and Glenelg team called out 0700 hrs. Search—70 man hours, called off 1300 hrs when found car had gone away.

18TH AUGUST — Kathleen Beanland (50), Cheltenham, with husband and others—experienced hill walkers, wearing vibrams—slipped where path near summit of Beinn Eighe Nature trail descends slabs of granite, which were wet from recent shower. Fracture of left ankle. Torridon M.R.T.—90 man hours.

24TH AUGUST — Stephen Farrow (38) Exeter, set off from hotel at 1500 hrs to climb Suilven from Inverkirkaig, returning by Glen Canisp, leaving word he would be back for dinner at 2030 hrs (this is normally an eight-hour walk for a fit man). Alarm raised with Police at 2400 hrs, 18 Dundonnell M.R.T. started search 0200 hrs 25th. One party to go to summit ridge from Inverkirkaig and set up radio link, and others to carry out sweep search from Glen Canisp Lodge. Man found on small ledge 500 feet below summit at 0800 hrs. He had found himself short of time and tried to take shortest route to Loch-inver by climbing down west buttress of Suilven. Eventually slipped and became crag bound. Rescue effected from above with evacuation route back over the summit to the saddle into Glen Canisp and out by Glen Canisp Lodge. Man suffering from exhaustion, wearing summer clothing and TUF soled boots, no map or compass. Dundonnell M.R.T., 306 man hours.

12TH SEPTEMBER — E. G. Codling (49). Wallington, Surrey, wearing Vibrams, slipped near summit of Beinn Eighe Nature Trail—wrenched knee. Torridon M.R.T.—60 man hours.

15TH SEPTEMBER — Elizabeth Walker (20) London, fell on steep grassy slope Sgùrr na Creige, Kintail, rolled over slight crag and fell total distance of 80 feet onto rock, fractured arm, ankle, collar bone. Kintail M.R.T. 150 man hours, Glenelg M.R.T. 72 man hours.

28TH DECEMBER — Lights seen flashing on known rocky ground on other side of Loch Hourn from Arnisdale at 1700 hrs. Kintail and Glenelg M.R.T. put on a stand-by. Search party crossed Loch Hourn in a small boat taking radio with them. Found a party of climbers from Border region encamped and discovered they were walking round Knoydart peninsula from Kinlochhourn to Inverie.

31ST DECEMBER — Man (39) Yorkshire, claimed he slipped on wet grass Glen Beag (near Glenelg) fractured right tibia and fibula. Medical opinion that injuries not thought to be compatible with history (climbing on one of the Brochs).

CAIRNGORMS AND LOCHNAGAR

6TH JANUARY — Sue Bailey (21), Bucks, and Brian McDonald (22), Inverness, (both Inverness Mountaineering Club) soloed up to foot of Central Couloir, Coire an Lochan, were preparing to rope up when girl slipped, and fell over

steep hard snow, unable to control slip and finally lodged at foot of Great Slab. Climbers nearby raced to Car Park and phoned Aviemore Police. Glenmore Lodge and Cairngorm M.R.T. called in. Three Lodge staff set out 1300 hrs—casualty found dead. Helicopter called on but attempt to evacuate by it thwarted by mist. Body carried out by Lodge Staff and Cairngorm M.R.T. Lodge 21 man hours; Cairngorm 94 man hours.

13TH JANUARY — Madeline Thomson (23) and Denis Rankin (27) climbing in right branch Y gully Coire an Lochan (Ulster Ski Club) both well equipped and with crampons. Weather fine, snow very hard with ice in places. Girl said to have unroped to descend when she slipped and was unable to control, fell to just above the lochan. Accident about 1600 hrs, Glenmore Lodge alerted by Police at 1720 hrs. Two Lodge staff set off at 1730 hrs with first aid gear. Four Lodge staff left with stretcher at 1740 hrs and picked up Dr Macdonald at Car Park. Casualty located by Steve Mitchell, Lodge, at 1840 hrs. Cairngorm M.R.T. went up as standby. Evacuation completed by 2130. Cairngorm M.R.T. 69 man hours, Lodge 21 man hours. Fractured skull, collar bone, and bruises.

22ND JANUARY — Man (25) English, in party of six young climbers on Creag Dhu, Newtonmore, all from Findhorn. Slipped and fell about 20 feet, both ankles fractured. Treated by Dr Richardson of Laggan and evacuated by 6 members of Cairngorm M.R.T.—6 man hours.

3RD MARCH — Robert Kemp, hill walker, Dundee, slipped on a snow field between Cac Càrn Beag and west rib Lochnagar (G.R. 245863), fall of 150 feet down steep snow plus 150 feet over frozen grass and scree. Member of Aberdeen M.R.T. who was on mountain at the time, alerted Braemar control by radio. Members of Aberdeen and Braemar M.R.T. set out at 1530 hrs with Thomas stretcher, first aid gear etc., also stalkers from Inchnabobary. Suspected fractured pelvis and right femur. Evacuation 1700–1730 hrs to snow track at G.R. 248868 in Coire na Saobhaidhe.

5TH MARCH — Man (21) Scottish, while practising braking with ice axe in Coire na Ciste, axe pierced leg and punctured femoral artery left groin.

26TH MARCH — Man (27) Scottish, slipped on steep slopes Coire an Lochan. Reasonably experienced, but had neither helmet or crampons, could not control slip with ice axe.

4TH JULY — Man (35) Scottish, collapsed and died on path between Coire an Lochan and Coire an t'Sneachda. Coronary thrombosis.

21ST OCTOBER — Malcolm Livingstone, Aberdeen, set off from Braemar to walk through Lairig Ghru to Aviemore. He failed to reach his parents' house at Grantown on Spey that night and they alerted police. Because of bad weather the missing man spent night at Corrour Bothy and returned to Braemar on the Sunday. Cairngorm M.R.T. 34 man hours, Police 10 man hours, Lodge 20 man hours.

28TH OCTOBER — Man injured when climbing on Creag Dhu, Newtonmore. His belay came away when he slipped and fell but held by second—broken ankle—evacuated by members of Cairngorm M.R.T. plus R.A.F. from Grantown, plus Police.

29TH OCTOBER — Four soldiers Pioneer Corps from Rothiemurchus Hut on day expedition, did not return at night. Missing party located (all fit and well) near Nethy Hut next morning by Cairngorm M.R.T. on foot, and Fred Harper and Army helicopter. Their proposed route was Sinclair Hut, Allt a Choire Mhór, to Ben Macdhuì, then Cairngorm and possibly Cnap Coire nan Spreidhe. Thick mist on plateau and error in navigation.

23RD DECEMBER — Iain Cochrane (20) and David Youth (24), both from Northumberland avalanched in Coire an t'Sneachda, Cairngorm, swept down about 300 feet, slight injuries, evacuated by helicopter from Lossiemouth. Cairngorm M.R.T. and Police 42 man hours.

BEN NEVIS AND MAMORES

17TH FEBRUARY — Climber (20), Scottish, slipped Castle Gully—broken leg. Also search for parties overdue but got back to base on their own.

3RD MARCH — Allan Bolton (24) and Malcolm Nicholson (20) both from Aberdeen University and experienced climbers, climbing in Zero Gully, snow and ice, slight thaw. Second slipped and pulled belayed leader off. Belayed by deadman, pegs and ice axes. Both fell and slid into Observatory Gully; one slightly injured ankle and crampon pierced, other fractured leg, many cuts and bruises. Many climbers at Hut who took up stretcher and evacuated casualties towards hut. Meantime Police had been phoned and Police called on helicopter, by which, both were rapidly evacuated to Belford Hospital, one detained for treatment.

8TH JUNE — Woman (20) English, hillwalker, when descending from Arête to Coire Leis, slipped on snow slope. Fractured skull, ribs etc. Unroped, no ice axe. 240 man hours, Lochaber M.R.T.

9TH JUNE — Man (23) Scottish, ascending Nevis by path, poorly clad and in wet and windy weather. Collapsed from exposure 700 feet from summit. Police 122 man hours, Lochaber M.R.T. 16 man hours.

27TH JUNE — Rocky Well (25), American, with companion, both experienced climbers on Centurion, Ben Nevis—Well slipped and fell, rope cut on sharp ledge and fell 600 feet—FATAL. Second Frank Zaher stranded. Helicopter flew up with members of Lochaber M.R.T., flew in as close as possible to the man and threw him a 300 feet rope by which he abseiled down. Lochaber M.R.T. 190 man hours.

16TH JULY — Man (28) English—wearing rubber soled boots, slipped on waterslide Glen Nevis and fell 40 feet. Broken ribs and sprained ankle. Lochaber M.R.T. 10 man hours.

3RD SEPTEMBER — Three runners in Ben Nevis race succumbed to exposure, one at summit and others at 3300 feet; weather—heavy rain, occasional sleet/snow showers—strong winds. Carried off by Kinloss M.R.T.

23RD SEPTEMBER — Irish (20) missing after dance Spean Bridge area, search parties, helicopter and search dogs called out. The man had arranged to meet a companion but returned to Belfast without informing him. Lochaber M.R.T. 56 man hours, Police 51 man hours.

21ST OCTOBER — Simon Mawer (26) and Leslie Rutherford (28), both English and from Rannoch Outward Bound School, benighted on Tower Ridge. Rain turning to snow above 3000 feet. Lochaber M.R.T. 240 man hours, Police 84 man hours.

1ST DECEMBER — Party from Heriot Watt University M.C. at C.I.C. Hut. Tim Hagen (20) Leader, with three years' winter climbing. Steve Taylor (18), and Eric Wycisite set off to climb No. 3 gully, a Grade I snow climb. Weather fine, cold, no thaw. Snow dry and seemed to be for the most part firm. When the party were still in the lower reaches of the gully they were surprised by a slab avalanche which broke off just above them and carried them down about 500 feet. Hagen fractured arm and hip; other two bruising and cuts. Evacuated by own party, Rannoch School Party, Lochaber M.R.T. and helicopter.

GLENCOE

3RD JANUARY — Stuart Mackenzie (22), Cambridge Stoke College M.C., with group, all with hill walking experience at 1615 hrs were crossing snowfield in half light between Stob Coire nan Lochan and Bidean nan Bian. Mackenzie slipped, could not control slide with ice axe, fell over small cliff to scree slope—head and face lacerations.

4TH JANUARY — Robert Close (19), Queens University M.C., Belfast, no snow climbing experience. At 1400 hrs he was last in party of four ascending steep snow slope, all unroped, what they thought was N.W. gully, either lost balance or slipped, fell about 300 feet, body at foot of Hidden Gully Stob Coire nan Beith. Weather—rain, wind deteriorating to gale force and driving wind. *Fatal*.

13TH JANUARY — Bernard Church (28), Oban, 6 years' climbing experience, with party descending hard packed snow and ice, foot of Diamond Buttress, slipped, unable to control with ice axe, slid 100 feet, recovered control, then lost control again and slid another 200 feet. Lacerations to head and broken leg.

3RD MARCH — James Ward (18), Garcemount, experienced climber, with party of four who had ascended Ravens Gully (Buchaille Etive Mór) and were on an ascending traverse across snow slope to summit ridge, unroped, when Ward, at rear, stumbled, rolled down slope over edge into Great Gully. *Fatal*.

21ST APRIL — Steven Pressman (22), New York, member of party of experienced climbers, went off route at Red Chimney Pitch, Clachaig Gully, encountered loose rock and fell 35 feet to foot of gully. Fractured right ankle. Casualty raised by horizontal tension method to gully rim and carried to road.

28TH APRIL — Jane Farrar (23), Essex, with party traversing Aonach Eagach unroped. Weather cold, sunny with occasional light snow showers. Between Meall Garbh and Meall Dearg lost her balance, fell over north side a distance of 610 feet. *Fatal*.

26TH AUGUST — Michael Parsons (27), Kent, leading on climb on Gear Aonach, slipped, belay did not hold and fell 80 feet. Serious head and back injuries—well equipped but *no helmet*.

20TH SEPTEMBER — Iain Waugh (20), Leeds, Edinburgh University M.C., was leading first pitch Boomerang on east face Aonach Dubh. When at height of 50 feet fell from an overhanging corner, struck ledge and finished on a grassy slope at foot of climb, pulling out a runner en route. Concussion, bruising to left shoulder and chest. *Probably life saved by use of helmet* as about 3 sq inches of fibre glass torn off due to striking ledge on way down.

28TH OCTOBER — Gerhard Kohlhepp (23), Germany, with inexperienced party traversing Aonach Eagach. Party experienced difficulty on narrow part of ridge when darkness fell. Tried to descend to road on south side of ridge. Two of party fell, one injured (cracked vertebrae), three others rock bound. One reached road and called out Rescue Team. Injured man wearing rubber soled shoes and clothing entirely inadequate.

2ND NOVEMBER — Party of four (ages 23, 22, 18, 23), from Cheshire, all experienced and well equipped, benighted due to wet slabs in Clachaig Gully at 1900 hrs. Belayed from above to escape from gully.

24TH NOVEMBER — James Arthur (14), Duror, helping father in gathering sheep upper slopes Beinn Bhan, Ballachullish, slipped and fell on scree, breaking leg. Father tried to carry him but could not do so and called out M.R.T.

24TH NOVEMBER — Party of four (ages 16, 18, 22 and 22), had climbed to Ossian's Cave and had descended to ramp below when darkness fell. Mistook route down and became stranded in deep gully and had to be extracted by rope. Equipment adequate.

SKYE

21ST APRIL — Married couple (29 and 25), English, on Sgùrr nan Gilleán. Descending snow slope, roped, wife belayed from husband's ice axe, sat down and slid but could not control. Husband's belay gave way and both fell, man crushed bone right wrist, woman bruises. Both inexperienced.

15TH MAY — John Cole (35), Warwickshire, experienced climber, was within 150 feet of summit of Sgùrr Alasdair when hold gave way and he fell 15 feet on to scree—fractured ankle.

19TH MAY — Pat Allen (19), Edinburgh University M.C., with party scrambling on ridge on steep slope near summit of Sgùrr Alasdair, rock dislodged when hand hold gave way, fell towards girl and struck her, she fell about 40 feet and came to rest on a ledge. Helicopter took up Bob Taplin and Pete Thomas and winched them down to a point about 350 feet below girl. Helicopter then flew to Plockton to refuel while above two and others got girl down 600 feet to the corrie. Helicopter returned, landed beside them, lifted girl and had her in Broadford Hospital within 15 minutes. Head and thigh injuries.

24TH MAY — Two lads (17 and 18), crag fast after trying to descend Middle Gully Storr Cliffs.

30TH MAY — Rodney Lackey (30), London, experienced climber, when trying to rope Collie's Ledge, Sgùrr Mhic Coinnich, his foothold gave way and he fell about 100 feet. Fractured wrist and leg and head injuries. Carried down to corrie and evacuated from there by helicopter.

15TH AUGUST — Man (54), English, collapsed due to coronary thrombosis accelerated by heat exhaustion, shoulder of Blaven. Weather hot and sunny. Evacuated by helicopter.

27TH AUGUST — Nicholas Odam (24), Surrey, Guys Hospital M.C., climbing on Sròn na Ciche with Julia Fabricus (same hospital). Girl slipped and pulled Odam from stance, he fell past her and rope caught on rock spur. Ribs fractured, lung punctured, hips bruised. Skye M.R.T. plus Police 72 man hours.

29TH AUGUST — Search for party benighted between Glen Brittle and Loch Coruisk—they reached base 1600 hrs next day. 90 man hours.

MULL

26TH AUGUST — Julia Younghusband (56), Hertfordshire, had been hill walking with family, Creag a Ghaill, Gribun, started downhill and must have gone too near edge of cliff, slipped on loose scree and fallen over. Multiple injuries—*Fatal*. Wearing tweed costume and flat soled shoes.

CENTRAL GRAMPIANS

29TH JUNE — Margaret McDonald (22), Newcastle, limited hill walking experience, well clad and with vibrams, was surveying plants for Scottish

National Trust at height of about 3000 feet in Ben Lawers. Slipped on scree, fell face downwards about 120 feet into a gully. Fractured wrist and nose, injured leg and lacerations.

29TH DECEMBER — Rescue of two climbers in Corrie Fee, Glen Doll—no details.

OCHILS

5TH APRIL — Mr Shaw (58), Local Shepherd, reported lying injured foot of Kirk Craigs. Ochil M.R.T. plus Police and shepherds reached him and found dead. Either blown over cliff edge by strong winds or slipped on very steep icy grass slopes—high wind and intermittent snow blizzards.

13TH AUGUST — Seven Ochil M.R.T. plus six Police searching all night for three boys ages 10, 11, 14, missing western end of Ochils. Two boys got home safely 0900 hrs next day—further day search for third boy who was found uninjured, in Bridge of Allan area at 2030 hrs.

22ND OCTOBER — Overnight search for man aged 73, reported missing in Tillicoultry Glen. Man found safe next day in Dundee.

ARROCHAR, LOCH LOMOND, TROSSACHS AREA

2ND JULY — Two boys, inadequately equipped, cragfast 15 feet up rock face Craigmore, Aberfoyle. Two members of Lomond M.R.T. roped down and lowered boys to safety. Both completely inexperienced.

20TH SEPTEMBER — Junior Soldiers Regiment from Cardonald on a week's training in Queen Elizabeth Forest Park. Pt. Glass (17) missing from camp at 2030 hrs. Local tracks etc. checked that night without result. Search mounted at first light on 21st, involving Army parties, Police, Lomond M.R.T., dogs and helicopter, co-ordinated by radio. Found wandering to north of camp at 1630 hrs.

30TH SEPTEMBER — 520 took part in the Royal Commonwealth Society for the Blind Ben Lomond climb. A well organised affair with many climbers on hill, also Lomond M.R.C. with two stretchers. Weather good but very muddy in parts of path, and four minor mishaps. Two (lacerated knee cap and sprained ankle) evacuated by stretcher. Other two assisted off by friends.

17TH NOVEMBER — Party of schoolboys from Bellahouston Academy, Glasgow, with teacher and another adult, left Trossachs at 1020 hrs to go via summit of Ben Venue to Kinlochard Youth Hostel. After lunching at summit at 1300 hrs ten of the boys went ahead, teacher and the other adult following with weaker members of party. When second party got to Hostel the ten boys not there. The missing boys included two Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award holders. Weather conditions by then very bad with high wind, sleet and heavy rain. Extensive search located boys in bothy by Loch Katrine. Ability of two holders of the Gold Award not up to standard expected for such, as they walked for several hours due north when they should have been going due south. Lomond M.R.T. 300 man hours.

SOUTHERN UPLANDS

5TH FEBRUARY — Party of two men and woman of 20 left Walkerburn at 1300 hrs, went to Seathorpe Cottage, arriving about 1615 hrs. They then ascended Seathorpe Rig and turned south to return to Walkerburn. Mist came down and they became separated. One man got down to Walkerburn via Priestthorpe and raised alarm. The Walkerburn Police picked up the other man on his way off the hill at 2030 hrs. Information given as to the woman's whereabouts indicated the Scald Law area. She was poorly clothed and had no

compass. Galashiels Police called local section of Border Search and Rescue Team (*difficult to get them together on a Saturday night*). Two search parties of team members and volunteers set out at 0015 hrs and with radios. Sweep searches carried out in the Scald Law area. Woman found 0215 hrs at G.R. 352410 in a dazed, exhausted condition and brought down the hill.

26TH JUNE — Ian Duncanson (22), Edinburgh, climbing rock of Grey Mare's Tail, Moffat, slipped and fell about 60 feet. Fractured ribs and right scapula, pneumothorax, lacerations and shock. Wearing smooth soled suede shoes.

6TH JULY — Carious Bruo (17), French, with party under teacher, fell when climbing loose rock on local viewpoint, Scotsview. Multiple lacerations and possible fractured ribs. Wearing canvas slip-on shoes. Rescue by Selkirk Section Border Search and Rescue Unit—48 man hours.

24TH SEPTEMBER — Joseph Newby (32), Yorkshire, tourist, fell when climbing up face of Grey Mare's Tail—slipped and fell 200 feet. Multiple injuries.

6TH OCTOBER — Fraser Folly (16), Hawick, climbed up about 70 feet Grey Mare's Tail and stuck. Rescue by Moffat Hill Rescue Group.

ARRAN

10TH AUGUST — Mr and Mrs Gill (65 and 66), Edinburgh, set off with intention of walking to a stone in Stronach Wood (cup and ring markings) to photograph it. Did not return that night. Heavy rain. Twenty-five members of Arran M.R.T. started a sweep search at 0500 hrs next day. Very difficult search because of undergrowth and fallen trees. At 0730 hrs couple found in very weak condition (G.R. 006367). Path cut clear with power saw and both carried on stretcher to main road thence by ambulance to hospital.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB

Easter Meet 1973—Braemar

THE Easter Meet was attended by twenty-nine members and eight guests, most of whom enjoyed the comforts of the Fife Arms Hotel. The weather was fairly rough but bracing withal. It was a great pleasure to have our Honorary President, Sandy Harrison with us. His activities included a traverse of Beinn Bhreac from Mar Lodge by Glen Quoich and Dubh Glen and down by Glen Derry and Glen Lui, a magnificent effort for a man in his eighties.

Parties were out each day and many summits were achieved including Cairn Toul, The Devil's Point, Monadh Mór, Beinn Bhrotain, Càrn Cloich-Mhuilinn, Derry Gorm, Ben MacDui, Càrn a'Mhaim, Beinn Mheadhoin, Beinn Bhreac, Cuidhe Crom, Meikle Pap, Lochnagar, Cairn Taggart, Meall an t-Sluichd, Creag nan Leachda, Càrn an Fhìdhleir, An Sgarsoch, Creag Leacach, Glas Maol, Meall Odhar, Càrn Aosda, Càrn Geoidh, the Cairnwell and An Socach.

Present:—*Members*: The Honorary President, The President, J. R. Brumfitt, W. L. Coats, M. H. Cooke, J. C. Donaldson, R. R. Elton, R. G. Folkard, J. F. Hamilton, R. G. Inglis, J. N. Ledingham, M. Morrison, D. McArthur, D. J. McPherson, K. Macrae, T. Nicholson, J. G. Osborne, D. D. Paterson, T. J. Ransley, G. S. Roger, J. D. Sturrock, W. T. Taylor, G. Tiso, G. S. Ward, A. Watson, A. Watson Jnr., A. Wightman, J. A. Wood, F. R. Wylie. *Guests*: H. Allison, K. Brennan, P. Browne, C. Elton, P. Ledeboer, A. Scott, L. Watson and J. Wells.

New Year Meet 1974—Roy Bridge and C.I.C. Hut

THE New Year Meet was attended by seventeen members and two guests, most of whom stayed at Glen Spean Lodge Hotel. Despite very mixed weather parties were out every day and a good time was had by all. Quite a few summits were achieved including:—Stob Coire an Laoigh, Creag Peathraich, Geal Charn, Beinn a'Chlachair, Stob Coire Easain, Stob Coire Sgrìodain, Chno Dearg, Creag Meaghaidh, Creag Mhór, Poite Coire Ardair, Càrn Liath, Sròn a Choire Gairbh, Pass of Corrieyairack and Ben Oss. The C.I.C. party climbed No. 2 gully.

The main party greatly enjoyed the comfort, excellent meals and service at Glen Spean Lodge Hotel. At the meeting held to consider the venue for the next New Year Meet it was decided to return to Roy Bridge with headquarters at Glen Spean Lodge Hotel. Our grateful thanks to Vice-President Douglas Scott and his wife for their very kind hospitality at Inch Cottage and for a very fine hogmanay party.

Present:—Roy Bridge, *Members*: The President, D. J. Bennet, C. C. Gorrie, J. F. Hamilton, A. H. Hendry, R. K. Holt, J. N. Ledingham, I. D. McNicol, I. H. Ogilvie, D. D. Paterson, G. Peat, G. S. Roger, D. Scott, I. H. M. Smart, C. B. M. Warren, F. R. Wylie. *Guest*: L. Watson. C.I.C. Hut, *Members*: J. E. Proom. *Guest*: L. Kaczynski.

Reception, A.G.M. and Dinner, 1973

RECEPTION AND A.G.M.—This year we have no report for either of these events as our correspondents failed to correspond. The reception speaker was Les Brown, who talked about Les Alpes with wit and style. As far as we can make out, the A.G.M. was uneventful, the contentious and emasculated moratorium proposals being accepted without a murmur or harrumph (see *New Climbs* introduction).

DINNER—We apologise to our readers for this year's account of the Annual Dinner. Our correspondent who has done well out of Scotland turns out to be one of these boring Englishmen with a chip on his shoulder big enough to fill one of his own rucksacks. Ironically enough this manifestation of the Colonial Mind comes from one whom we have included in the S.M.C. party visiting the Pamirs this year. This invitation from the Russians to a Scottish party would not have happened had it not been for the 'nationalism' of Slessor and Nicol in years gone by. We can only hope that our facile correspondent will not let us down when in Russia.

'The wise who had not parted with £3 left; the few reeled from the bar (bottled McEwans 14p) formed eights and took to the tables. The wallflowers wilted one by two to make up sevens and sixes. Three beats of the drum and Donaldson was off with "Some hae meat" but dark horse Inglis came through fast from the top and cantered home to an easy "Amen."

'Where else can one get powdered soup, two precision cut slices of beef, a languid pear with a tea spoon of frozen snow disguised with serve-yourself brown sauce for £3? The bottled McEwans was now 17½p. The President announced a ten minute recession to allow further sustenance to be culled from outwith the castle walls and then the big event—the speeches!

'The President complained he could not extol the virtuous deeds of members—none were known to him—so he filled in with tales of failure on Dhaulaguri IV and canoeing in Greenland. A stirring

quote or two from his little red book and he sat down, only to rise again to introduce Slesser.

'Slesser sees an Englishman behind every Scottish rock and behind every Englishman a European lurks. Nationalism is never far from his mind and perhaps we should consider revoking his licence to climb. He was in imminent danger of falling from his secure rock ledge to the waiting platform below. His slips, "Ladies and gentlemen," "S.N.P." and "vote" could have been fatal without the warning cries of the crowd. Like other expatriate Easterners he is seemingly obsessed with ski-ing and, regrettably, before sitting down, committed the Club to a ski race with the Scottish Ski Club.

'Dr Hamish Nicol replied for himself, admitted to flatulence—though referring to this condition in most unmedical terms—denied committing an indecent act on an Edinburgh park keeper, patted his school chum Bennet on the head and thanked the Club for an excellent dinner! Thank goodness he has lost his Scottish accent.

'Meanwhile the Club dinner book should have been circulating, gaining its annual quota of illustrious signatures, but it was not.

'And thus the coldest December night in Glasgow since the Club was formed was closed by the President repeating his quote from the little red book.

'Perhaps Edinburgh will be warmer next year!'

J.M.C.S. REPORTS

Edinburgh Section.—The Section has had a quiet year due possibly to the rain which seemed to plague the programme of meets. The Victoria Holiday meet to Skye was however an exception and three days of excellent weather meant some fine climbs were recorded. The spirit of the Section seemed undaunted by the climatic depression and membership increased steadily throughout the year as a result of some active work by the Committee. The membership now stands at 77.

The normal pattern of weekend meets every two or three weeks was followed along with the usual mid-week summer outings to local outcrops for instruction and practice. The meet programme was perhaps less interesting than usual but no meets had to be cancelled. South of the border, two meets were held to the Lake District and one to Wales. Unfortunately also the Section has been very active with parties away on most weekends—one member even claimed the three Knoydart Munros on a day trip from Edinburgh. Only one party ventured to the Alps and only to scurry home pennyless.

The Annual Dinner was as usual a merry occasion and was held in the Glen Hotel, Newtonmore. Poor weather was again a feature of the weekend but this did not weaken the spirit of the members who remained indoors.

Office-Bearers—Hon. President, M. Fleming; Hon. Vice-President, E. D. G. Langmuir; President, I. Brodie; Vice-President, A. Dunn; Treasurer, W. M. S. Myles; Hut Custodian, J. H. Clark; Secretary, J. R. R. Fowler, 14, Craigcrook Square, Edinburgh, EH4 3SJ (031-336 6122).

Glasgow Section.—1973 was a quiet year for the Glasgow Section with meets poorly attended. Members were however active in small parties and some notable winter climbing was done such as Zero Gully and Gardyloo Buttress by President Bruce Barclay and Mike Coleman. This pair, together with members from other sections, made a successful expedition to Mount Kenya, despite the attempts of some 'Zulus' to relieve one member of his gear! Robert Watters, our man in Africa, also upheld the Club name by strolling up Kilimanjaro.

Lectures continue to be held in the staff club of Strathclyde University and in the autumn Bill Brooker and Douglas Scott provided most enjoyable evenings. Bill Brooker recounted the Cairngorm Odyssey, illustrated with some interesting slides of all vintages, whilst Douglas Scott showed us a set of superb slides taken in the Nepal Himalaya.

1974 promises to be an eventful year with planning and groundwork for the celebration of the Club's 50th anniversary. At the moment it is hoped to prepare a history of the Club, to make a commemorative expedition, and to hold a Dinner in October 1975.

Our Annual Section Dinner was held at the regular venue of the Kingshouse where the food and service were at the customary high standard, whilst the company was as stimulating as always: Eddie Thomson's prize for the most defamatory, irreverent, and improper anecdote was shared between two appropriately *risque* contributions. Robin Campbell was chief guest and from his wealth of experience of S.M.C. Committee work gave a most enlightening talk on the art of insult.

Office-Bearers—Hon. President, H. Hamilton; Hon. Vice-President, I. MacLeod; President, J. Messer; Vice-President, W. Duncan; Treasurer, M. Chambers; Meets Convener, R. Ross; Hut Custodian, L. Wilson; Secretary, P. Hodgkiss, 595 Clarkston Road, Glasgow, G44 5QD (041-637 1410).

Lochaber Section.—Following a period of relatively high turnover Section membership has settled down at close on the 50 mark of which the larger proportion are resident in Lochaber whilst the remainder are domiciled from Ullapool to Nairobi.

Monthly outdoor meets, in addition to the weekly Sunday venues, continue to be held, though frequently (to the chagrin of the Meets Convener) in almost any area other than that designated. However, the Rhum meet was singularly well attended as were those at Torridon and the C.I.C.

Rock and ice work of the best standards has been perpetrated on many of our major routes by a wide range of members with much enthusiasm, skill and gear emanating from Nevisport. Members were also active in the French, Swiss and Austrian Alps. Even Mount Kenya did not escape the attentions of our Lochaber and Kenyan members.

The Section journal, formerly the *Lochaber Climbing Times*, made its reappearance for which Paul Biggin is to be congratulated—one feels sure the retrospective humour of many contributors was not encountered on the occasion.

Indoor Meets were, on the whole, not as well attended as the slides, films and lectures merited and it is to be hoped that this situation will shortly be improved.

Mountain Rescue no longer forms part of section activity, this work now being undertaken by a separate association which, naturally enough, comprises a large percentage of Section members.

Steall Cottage bookings continue to increase placing considerable pressures on both hut and Hut Custodian. The countless gas and Elsan fluid containers portered through the Gorge provoke much amused comment from tourists—the rejoinders drawn are, however, frequently less comic in

character. Other than for working parties the facilities of Steall are not availed of by local members, but the siting of a caravan in Skye should prove popular with Section hardmen and family types alike.

The Annual Dinner Dance attracted a very large turnout. The 'Stag Eightsome' although a good v.s. did not raise the eyebrows of the management nor indeed did the 'mixed' nature of the company do so for the Senior Club representatives who arrived as guests.

The committee hope to improve contact and communication at both Section and Club level and the effects of this should be evident before long.

Office-Bearers—Hon. President, J. Ness; President, A. Kane; Treasurer, W. Adam; *Hut Custodian*, J. Currie, 28 Henderson Row, Fort William; Secretary, W. Robertson, 5 Guisach Terrace, Corpach.

Perth Section.—Membership of the Section for the year was the highest figure since the Section's inception—namely 65. Our members' scattered locations remain a feature of the Section's overall membership, though the recent intake of members have all been Perth based, which has led in turn to higher meet attendances.

The average attendances at Section meets was 21 which would have been higher but for the fact that 2 meets were only attended by half-a-dozen members. Meets visited all the regular venues, the most distant being Dundonell at the Victoria weekend when the excellent facilities of the Edinburgh Section's Smiddy combined with very good weather to produce a very enjoyable and Munro-ful week-end. On the debit side a projected meet to Arran was switched to Glencoe at the last moment due to lack of interest amongst members.

Our Section's Annual Dinner Meet returned this year to an old haunt of the Perth Section—namely the Fife Arms Hotel, Braemar, with overnight accommodation in the luxuriously extended premises of the Cairngorm Club at Muir of Inverey. After an enjoyable meal our Honorary President, Chris Rudie, as well as entertaining us with his witty remarks also displayed his usual disgusting amount of vitality which is an annual tonic for any members conscious of encroaching years. The evening was suitably rounded off by a high-class (how could it be otherwise in mixed company) sing-song back at the Muir.

The Section was represented at all but one of the Annual Dinners of the other Sections of the J.M.C.S. and at that of the Grampian Club. The Section was also represented at the A.G.M. of the Mountaineering Council of Scotland and the representatives came away with the impression that the Council did a very great deal of co-ordination and committee work on the behalf of Scottish climbers, but glad that they were in no way connected with the mountain of work involved.

The Honorary Secretary of the M.C.S., Sandy Cousins, gave our Annual Lecture in early January. His subject was his hill walk from Cape Wrath to Glasgow (for details see *S.M.C.J.* 1972). Mr Cousins' interesting and amusing illustrated talk was well received by a packed audience.

The intake of younger members into the Section has meant a significant increase in the amount of rock activity on Section meets and in the event of a real winter this year there are hopes for considerable snow and ice activity. This last should be aided by a decision at the Section's A.G.M. held in November to organise supplementary winter week-end meets to our existing monthly day meets. Due to the rapidly escalating cost of this *Journal* it was decided to offer members the option of paying an Annual Subscription of £1 and foregoing a copy of the *Journal* or paying £2 inclusive of a copy of the *Journal*. The remaining business of the meeting was quickly dealt with and the evening was completed with a brief showing of members' slides.

In conclusion, the Section has had a year of successful expansion with the balance of climbing against hill-walking having evened up.

Office-Bearers—*Hon. President*, Chris Rudie; *Hon. Vice-President*, Andrew Calvert; *President*, John McNeill; *Treasurer*, David Wares; *Secretary*, John Rogers, 19 Stormont Park, Scone, Perth.

London Section.—The past year has been pretty successful, but perhaps not as good as 1972. Members attended twelve meets and numerous weekend gatherings at Glanafon in North Wales helped fill the year.

The two winter meets at Helyg and Glanafon were as usual very popular, although snow conditions were poor. The Ben Nevis meet at the end of March was well attended where we enjoyed excellent conditions. Our winter week was made more memorable by the inclusion of the Club A.G.M. and Dinner, at which ten members made a fair contribution. Easter was yet again a washout, whereas the beginners meet at Cwm Silyn proved to be an active weekend in hot muggy weather. The June and July meets in Derbyshire and Chepstow respectively were pretty sparsely attended, although those who did not go (about 95% of the members) did not miss very much due to the now familiar two months' summer rain. A family meet held at the end of July proved so popular that it looks like becoming an annual event. Three parties visited the Alps, one to Arolla and two to the Bregaglia and Bernina (see *J.M.C.S. Abroad*). The October meet was moved from Llanberis back to Glanafon where a successful weekend saw a number of members once again on the steep slopes of Cloggy. Finally, the year was rounded off with our Section A.G.M. and Dinner at the Royal Goat Hotel in Beddgelert, enjoyed by fifty members and guests.

A number of well-attended work weekends contributed to the hut improvements. Significant additions were the installation of a water heater, extensive shelving and the fitting of a number of power points. Much discussion was given to converting the dormitory into one large Alpine style bunk as at Lagangarbh, but the retention of individual bunks won most support.

During the year hut bookings were similar to previous years with a block booking about once every five weeks.

On the financial side, bad debts were worse than normal and a possible lack of funds could well restrict forthcoming hut improvements. However steps have already been taken to improve the cash flow for the year ahead. Overall membership remained similar to 1972 at around 70, with those leaving the Section being pretty evenly matched by new entrants.

One notable event in the Section's year was the inauguration of Life Membership. This long-discussed proposal now that it has been finally agreed will, it is hoped, serve the dual purpose of securing funds for investment and retaining older members even when they have become inactive. So far Life Members have been difficult to find, but only time will tell.

The 1975 Club celebrations have taken up much of the time of the Committee over the past year. The Section has proposed an 'extended meet' as a joint venture, with the most favoured areas being Spitzbergen, Greenland or north Norway. At Section level a special circular is to be published in 1975 and a Section Dinner in the Lake District in November 1974, in the hope that as many guests as possible can come from north of the border.

Office-Bearers—*Hon. President*, J. Della Porta; *President*, P. Clark; *Vice-President*, H. Jordan; *Secretary and Treasurer*, D. Edmunds, 67 Bourton Road, Olton, Solihull; *Meets and Hut Booking Secretary*, J. Steele, 82 Park-anaur Avenue, Thorpe Bay, Essex (Southend 587596, home or 01-589 4511, work).

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

North America

B. H. HUMBLE writes, 'I was, it seems, the first resident of the British Isles to stay at the new clubhouse of the Alpine Club of Canada at Carnmore, Alberta, in July 1973 (it was opened in May). It is luxurious compared with our standards with a fine lounge and library, well equipped kitchen downstairs and bunk rooms upstairs. It is unfortunate however that the Government would not renew the lease of the former clubhouse at Banff which was so conveniently situated for visitors from abroad. The new building had to be outwith National Park area. Carnmore is fifteen miles from Banff and very inconvenient if you are without a car as local bus services are poor and the village is two miles away. Also there is no reciprocity in fees with members of other clubs and the nightly charge (bunk bed only) is five dollars. Through lack of time, I climbed only on the minor hills around Banff plus a visit to the Columbia Ice Field. A leaflet available there stated that this was discovered by Professor Collie in 1898. Other climbers would not believe me when I said I had known Collie. My main object was a visit to Edmonton where I met Professor Taylor of Edmonton University who has been writing a biography of Collie's life and climbs and to whom I was able to give much information as to Collie's pioneer climbing in Skye. Taylor had obviously done a tremendous amount of research and showed me a wonderful album of photos taken by Collie on the Nanga Parbat Expedition of 1896 where Mummery lost his life. The book will be published by this time and will be a welcome addition to our own Club Library.'

Africa

B. H. HUMBLE writes, 'I would wish to place on record the wonderful hospitality we received from the Mountain Club of Kenya in February 1974. It was good to add one's name in the Visitors' Book after those of Eric Shipton and Rusty Baillie. At one time a J.M.C.S. group from Edinburgh, some Squirrels, some of Baillie's group from the U.S.A. and ourselves were all dossing down on the clubhouse floor between various Safaris and Expeditions. One wishes the S.M.C. had such a clubhouse in Scotland complete with bar and licence, and so conveniently situated at Wilson Airport. Climbers from all the airts have hospitality there. The fine library had almost all English and foreign club journals bar those of the S.M.C., and officials asked me if reciprocity with ours could be arranged. Through unfitness and age 11,000 feet was my own highest point but the descent from 7000 feet to the desert at 1000 feet by dirt track road on the way to Lake Rudolf might well be termed a climb. The latter part of the journey across desert was roadless and ours was the only small car to reach the lake—in fact we met only two Land Rovers and one truck in 200 miles. Access to the fishing camp there is normally by small plane. Sleeping out under palm trees and bathing in the warm lake waters was something like Paradise. Small cars however are not to be recommended for such a journey as a breakdown would be very serious—a Land Rover is much more suitable, while one must be careful as the road goes via Uganda. Safaris to Lake Nakuru with its millions of pink flamingos and to the Tvasa National Park with its 100,000 elephants and all types of big game provided endless interest.

HAMISH BROWN sends this interesting note about a visit to Ethiopia. 'A trip, was made from Asmara to Addis Ababa visiting some of the famous sites: Axum, Debre Damo, the Taccase and Blue Nile gorges, Gondar, the Tissiat

Falls, Lake Tana and so on. A little lazy walking has determined on a return. The Semyen Mountains (4000m plus) must be among the most spectacular non-snowy ranges in the world: great plateaux and canyons and towers like magnified Wallace Monuments, and hardly visited.'

Borneo

C. G. M. SLESSER sends in the following note on the activities of one of our members in Borneo. 'PAT RITCHIE, who recently retired from Strathclyde University, is spending a couple of years at Penang at the University of Malaysia. In May 1973 he climbed Mt. Kinabalu, 13,455 feet in Sabah, formerly North Borneo. It is in a national park, and the climbers are obliged to hire a guide. The trees relent at 10,000 feet, and the scrub at 12,000 after which there are boiler plate granite slabs, and a series of remarkable granite pinnacles. There are climbing huts at about 11,000 feet and seemingly quite a number of local rock climbers. Ritchie remarks that he has just climbed the highest mountain of his life at 66. That's the S.M.C. for you!'

The Alps

J. McK. STEWART writes, 'With two other members of the O.A.V. I visited the Ötztaler Alps in Austria during early September. Our itinerary was as follows: 1st day, from Imst in the Inn Valley by postal bus through the Pitztal to Mittelberg and climbed up to the Riffelsee Hut; 2nd, High level route to the Taschach Haus; 3rd, in thick mist with David, over the Sexegertenferner to the Olgrubenjoch, up Hintere Olgrubenspitze by North Ridge, weather broke on descent to Hut; 4th, retreated in foul weather from Taschach down to Mittelberg and climbed up to the Braunschweiger Hut; 5th, up over the Pitztaler Jochl, descent to Sölden, postal bus to Vent, tramped up to Martin Busch Hut; 6th, Hutbound, snowed all night and day; 7th, in thick snow to the old Brizzi Hut, up Kreuzspitze by S.E. Ridge, descent to Martin Busch; 8th, up the Niederjochferner, over the Italian Border to the Rif. Similaun (recently opened again to British climbers), glacier route to Hauslabjoch and back to Martin Busch; 9th, down to Vent, up the Rofental and on to the Hochjoch Hospiz; 10th, up Kesselwandferner to the Brandenburger Hut and Ob. Guslar Joch, Fluchtkogel by South Face, Glacier descent to Hochjoch Hospiz; 11th, to the Vernagt Hut and a day on the Guslarferner; 12th, High level route to the Breslauer Hut, arriving too late for the Wildspitze; 13th, down to Vent, postal bus to Sölden and down to Ötz Station. The sound of the bagpipes at the Martin Busch played by an Aberdonian climber brightened up the unsettled weather.'

HAMISH BROWN was camping and climbing in Saas Tal with R. Wilson, G. Mackenzie, J. Lawton and others at the A.B.M.S.A.C. Meet, and afterwards, in August/September. They warmed up on Melig and a traverse of the Mittaghorn. From the Weissmeiss Hut they traversed the Fletschhorn-Laquinhorn, an interesting linking ridge. The Weissmeiss was traversed to the Schwischbergenpass and Almagelleralp. Fruitless trips to Brittanica and Mischabel Huts and a snowstorm traverse of the Stellihorn were made during a bad spell. Climbing on the frontier ridge led to a crossing of the Antrona pass for a long, beautiful descent to Antronapiana and a night at Villadossola, returning the next day over the Monte Moro Pass: a round as satisfying as many a peak. From the Mischabel Hut they did the Nadelhorn and crossed to St. Nicklaus over the Ulrichshorn, Balfrinhorn and Bigerhorn. A day on the Egginer preceded the move to Schwarenbach above Kandersteg for the classic traverse of the Balmhorn—Altels. A discovery at Kleine Scheidegg

was that the big hotel has a barn converted into a heated/hot water/beds accommodation which along with breakfast in the hotel cost 12 S.F.

HAMISH BROWN also attended a ski-mountaineering course in the Bernese Oberland run by the Eagle Ski Club and described elsewhere. He would be glad to pass on further information. Tours were made to the Gemmi Pass, Daubenhorn, Roter Totz (down to Kandersteg by Uschene Tal) from the Schwarzenbach. The main Oberland failed as it snowed non-stop for five days marooning everyone at Kleine Scheidegg where tours to Manlichen, Tschuggen, etc., were hard enough.'

SANDY and JOHN STEELE (J.M.C.S.) spent ten days climbing in the Bregaglia East area of the Swiss Alps in early August.

'Having arrived at Maloja by train and bus, we set up permanent camp just outside town. From here we made our way to the Forno hut which, because of its accessibility, was very busy. The following day we ascended Monte Rosso (3088m.) by its N.N.E. ridge. This provided a good half day's climbing on straightforward rock. A day and a bit later, we bivvied on the Forno glacier, preferring the solitude to the noise of the hut. Next morning we scrambled up glaciated slabs and rotten snow to the Passo di Vasseda, then along horizontal shale to the steep North ridge. After some hours of good climbing, we reached the summit of Vazzeda, having on the way gathered a few specimens of high Alpine flora (*softus metallicus*). From the summit, we descended to the N.N.E. ridge of Cima di Rosso (3366m.). This ridge, which overlooks the north face, was comprised of large detached boulders embedded in avalanching snow. Conditions on the descent were not much better, involving a long traverse on rotten ice beneath a wall of collapsing seracs. After a day's clag, we traversed Monte Sissone (3330m.), boulder-hopped into Italy and dosed at the Mello bivouac. We then climbed Monte Disgrazia (3648m.) by its N.W. Pioda ridge, in glorious weather, a classic mixed route on an impressive mountain. The descent and return over Sissone was proof enough that the general snow conditions were not going to improve.'

General Notes: the Roma Traverse Path below Monte Sissone is now clearly marked by red paint crosses. The final approach over nevé to the Mello bivouac is subject to fairly substantial stonefall from the right hand wall of the cirque. A bivouac has been erected by local guides in May 1973, just below the N.W. summit of Disgrazia.

JOHN and LIZBET FAIRLEY (J.M.C.S.) visited the Bregaglia and Bernina in August.

'After a few training climbs from camp at the Sciora hut, we climbed Punta Innominata by the West ridge, Monte Rosso, by its N.N.E. ridge, Piz Casnil East ridge and the North ridge of the Badile. For these climbs we had excellent weather. Some huts were badly crowded, especially the Albigna hut. By August the gulleys on the Sciora side are extremely dangerous, restricting the number of routes, as an approach is normally made via them. However a safer approach can be made from the Albigna. The Badile was climbed on superb rock, although not much of it could be savoured because of the large number of parties strung out along the ridge. Two disappointments were Monte Disgrazia via the Corda Molla and Piz Bernina via the Biancograt. The former because of dangerous snow on the approach glacier and the latter due to two days bad weather and the end of the holiday.'

Mr and Mrs JOHN WILSON, JOHN RUSSELL and HENRY TINDELL visited Arolla during July (all J.M.C.S.). This was their first Alpine outing and proved not too successful. Bad weather and a lot of new snow put most routes out and as often as not an early retreat had to be made. When however, the conditions did improve, illness struck the party.

DONALD MILL writes, 'In May 1973 I went to the Austrian Tyrol with the idea of doing the Ötztaler high-level tour on ski. Unseasonable, not to say unreasonable, weather (heavy falls of snow followed by rain at altitudes up to 3000m.) made hut-to-hut traverses unprofitable, but in clear moments we nipped up and down Similaun, Weisskugel, Fluchtkugel and Hintereis Spitze, while Fineilspitze and Wildspitze were done by "feel" in perfect white-outs.'

DONALD BENNET writes, 'Seven members of the Club joined a ski-mountaineering meet in the Silvretta region of Austria organised by the Scottish Ski Club during the last week of March (1974).

'The main party, eighteen plus two guides, left Ischgl on the morning of 24th March and by the judicious use of the system of ski-lifts above Ischgl were able to reach the Heidelberger hut with little uphill ski-ing (while their rucksacks went by Weasel), and they bagged the Piz de Val Gronda en route.

'Next day the group, which included Chris Ford, Bob Hillcoat, Jim Simpson, Stan Stewart and Mike Taylor, crossed the Kronen Joch to the Jamtal hut. Energetic members climbed the Piz Tasna, and less energetic ones the Breite Krone; the Bischof Spitze was also climbed. On the same day Douglas Scott and Donald Bennet (joining the meet late) got an early morning lift from Galtur to the Jamtal hut and spent the afternoon on the Jam Spitze. These climbs, like others done from the Jamtal hut, were all very straightforward, and in most cases one was able to ski to within a very short distance of the summits.

'On 26th March we split into several groups. Stan Stewart was with Ski Club members on the Jam Spitze. Most of the others crossed the Fuorcla Chalaus to the Augstenberg; Taylor, Bennet and three Ski Club members added the Gems Spitze on their return. It was a day of heavy cloud cover and occasional white-out which inhibited carefree ski-ing.

'On 27th we were due to move to the Wiesbadner hut over an easy col, the Ochsencharte. Taylor, Simpson and Ford with the three Ski Club fit men left first to bag the Jam Spitze on their way to the col, from where they also climbed the Dreilander Spitze. The rest of us went straight to the col and up the Dreilander Spitze before ski-ing down the easy Vermunt Gletscher to the Wiesbadner hut.

'Next day dawned brilliantly, and the S.M.C. split into two groups. Hillcoat, Ford and Scott joined a group going to the Silvrettahorn, and Simpson, Stewart, Taylor and Bennet went to the Gross Piz Buin. Both peaks share the same superb approach beside the icefall of the Ochsentaler Gletscher to its level upper snowfield from which the peaks rise steeply. Some real climbing.

'On 29th Ford and Hillcoat climbed the Tiroler Kopf with one of our guides; more real climbing reminiscent of the Buachaille in winter, and the first ascent of that peak this season. Stewart nobly took two of the Ski Club to the Dreilander Spitze. Simpson, Taylor and Bennet with four of the Ski Club went to the Silvrettahorn and returned to the hut by a roundabout, but very beautiful route—down the Silvretta Gletscher, over the Rote Furka, down the Klostertal and back up the Ochsental.

'On our last day we were due to return to Galtur. All the S.M.C. members climbed the Rauher Kopf and enjoyed a good run down the Bieltal to round off the holiday. As we approached the end of the valley we were congratulating ourselves on having had an excellent week and having successfully avoided all hazards when Scott skied into a crevasse formed by a deep stream; fortunately he emerged more or less undamaged and was able to finish the descent under his own power.

'In retrospect we all agreed that this was a most successful venture on the part of the Scottish Ski Club. Not the least of our achievements was the

fact that twenty skiers (some of them climbers) of very disparate ability and ambition all managed to accomplish what they wanted. In this we were indebted to our two guides, Karl Juen and Erich Lackner, who in addition to giving advice to all, looked after the less experienced and left the others to get on with their own plays.

'A word about equipment. We met none of the deep powder snow that one reads of in the brochures, and ski-ing conditions (particularly early in the mornings) were hard and crusty; harscheisen were invaluable. Although the climbing was fairly easy, and despite the advice of our guides to the contrary, we thought that ice-axes and crampons were desirable, though not absolutely essential. One member of each party should have them, and those who left them behind usually regretted it.'

Polish Tatras

DONALD MILL writes, 'At the invitation of the Gdansk section of the Polish A.C., I spent three weeks in the Tatras in March 1974. Hamish Brown and Charles Knowles from Sheffield, were with me.

'There is surprisingly little coverage of the Tatras in winter (or even in summer) in the English language, and not knowing just what to expect we turned up with normal Alpine ski touring gear. We soon learned that the bigger ridges and faces were a good deal longer and more serious than we had anticipated: ski boots and crampons were not well suited to the prevailing conditions of steep rock, sugary snow, and almost no ice. We also learned that the Czech huts were for practical purposes out of bounds for us, even though we had Czech visas, because each re-entry into Poland needed a fresh Polish visa. This was no great handicap, however, because there is plenty to be done from the Polish side, and for our next visit even more from the Czech side.

'We covered some of the easier parts of the main ridge, including a three-day traverse of the whole of the Western Tatras with, if not always actually on, ski—24 tops and 15,000 feet of up. We visited the highest of the Polish summits, Rysy (2499m.), an excellent belvedere with a sense of height and exposure out of proportion to its difficulty, for even in winter the summit can easily be reached. We crossed some high passes which gave long ski descents to the tree-line, and beyond by thrilling forest paths in powder snow well shaded from the sun, until eventually when the track consisted of about 90% pine needles we had to remove our skis. On another occasion we left skis behind and, travelling really light for once, made a low-level treeline traverse over foothills and purple-croccussed meadows.

'We came away with some knowledge of the Polish side, leaving more, much more, to explore another time. What we saw, of mountains and of people, made us want to return.

'A word of warning (superfluous in this journal?) if you are thinking of the Tatras for a *downhill* ski-ing holiday . . . DON'T. The pistes are excellent, the ski-ing standards remarkably high, but the machinery is quite inadequate for the numbers who go there. Poles happily queue for anything any time, rather like wartime Britain, but the queue for the one cable car in Zakopane is grandfather to them all.

'The most outstanding expedition to be done in the Tatras is the traverse of the main ridge from Kolove sedlo in the east to Wolowiec in the west. A competent party familiar with the ground and with pre-arranged food depots would allow ten days in summer (it has been done, solo, in five) or fourteen in winter. Reputedly it has only been done in winter six times. An opportunity for a Scottish party to make the first British! This would be a magnificent experience. The ridge has long sections of V and two of VI,

and lack of first-hand knowledge of the ridge in summer would be a serious handicap. A convenient way around this would be to join forces with a Polish party, and indeed there is in Krakow a friendly English-speaking Pole who is keen to arrange just such a trip. His name and address: Marek Brniak, ul. Grottera 1/10, Krakow 30 035.

'The existence of over twenty volumes of apparently very adequate guidebooks in Polish available at ridiculously low prices makes the absence of one in English particularly frustrating. However, armed with two or three of the more popular volumes one could manage well enough in normal summer conditions by getting one's route translated in the hut the night before—there always seems to be someone anxious to practice his English.

'It was a very cheap holiday. We had too much gear for economical air travel, so we went by train: well under £40 return fare from London to Zakopane, with couchettes. Our Polish A.C. invitations exempted us from the irksome regulation requiring one to spend at least seven (U.S.) dollars for each day of one's stay. The currency situation is a jungle of middle-European complexity, full of snares for the innocent Westerner. A pound, worth perhaps 35 zlotys at the official rate, and 70 at the tourist rate, can fetch up to 200 in the black market. If a foreign visitor were so dastardly as to change his money at the most favourable rate he would find living unbelievably cheap.'

BOOKS

Call-Out. By Hamish MacInnes. (1973; Hodder & Stoughton. 190pp., 32 illustrations).

Hamish MacInnes has written about several rescues in which he has been involved and which, according to the introduction 'have given him some of his most memorable recollections of the mountains.' Later on we read that 'On an exacting rescue each moment is remembered with amazing clarity'; this is perhaps a pity since many of the rescues are pretty damn dull.

In attempting to recreate situations MacInnes has chosen to write in a style which at times is not only annoying and confusing, but interrupts the free flow of the story line. In describing complicated technical details, which are confusing enough when one is actually present on a rescue, along with anecdotes and snippets about the Scottish climbing scene, the book falls between two stools. Many of the anecdotes deserve expansion; for instance on page 19 what did happen 'that sublime June day when the first Jacksonville was built' or on page 145 when we hear of the author's first winter ascent of Clachaig Gully?

Yet not all is bad, some of the re-creations are extremely realistic, although the book really only comes to life when the author describes the situations involving those closest to him, the stalwarts of the Glencoe Rescue Team. Here the writing is at a higher level, with much light-hearted banter, although the reader is left in no doubt as to the dedication and toughness of the team members and the high regard the author has for them.

One chapter, however, which is magnificent and would be worth buying for this book alone, is that relating to the Ben Nevis tragedy. Here MacInnes writes about the loss of three friends and fine climbers and the rescue of the survivor of the ill-fated party. All the emotions and atmosphere are captured completely in a style which is moving without becoming maudlin.

One wishes perhaps that MacInnes had kept the best bits of this book for his autobiography which is surely long overdue. Since his involvement with the mountains is total, to write of one aspect without involving the others as this book demonstrates, does not come off.

R.S.

Cockleshell Journey. By John Ridgway. (1974; Hodder & Stoughton. 213pp., 25 illustrations. £2.25).

This is an account of a visit to an unexplored region of Southern Patagonia by Ridgway, his wife and two other men, Richard Shuff and Krister Nyland. In the course of a long voyage in rubber boats through ice-choked fjords and (for one section) the Magellan Straits, Ridgway and his companions show considerable resourcefulness and determination in dealing with a variety of depressing setbacks. They also stop off to climb Monte Inaccessible and the Gran Campo Nevado Ice-cap, but as the difficulties they encounter there are largely of their own making, the book is probably of more interest to sailors than mountaineers.

R.N.C.

Journals of Kindred Clubs.—*Alpine Journal*, 1973.—This journal seems to grow in size as other British journals dwindle. To reiterate a point I have made before, most of its articles are somewhat *dull*. It is as if authors adopt a special, safe, conservative voice when they address the Alpine Club. Even our own scurrilous Iain Rowe is reduced to a terse businesslike prose. Presumably, posterity is considered humourless. This habitual quibble, which is directed to the Journal's contributors rather than its management, must of course be set against the comprehensive nature of the A.J.'s coverage of World Mountaineering. In this respect it really has no peer. *Fell and Rock C.C.J.*, 1971–72.—Undoubtedly my favourite Journal after our own, this issue is the best for quite a while. From several excellent articles I would single out Frank Alcock's 'A Matter of Look'—a witty account of a farcical visit to Beinn an Dothaidh. The illustrations are as usual excellent and, sad to say, far superior to our own. The *Fell and Rock*, of course, publish only every second year now and, failing the discovery of an inspiring new Editor, perhaps this recourse might be forced on us, too, as a means of improving quality and, effectively, halving the price. *Cairngorm Club J.*, 1973.—This issue devotes most of its space to the Feith Buidhe disaster—there is a very full account of it and Sergeant Duff draws some unexceptionable morals in a long and wide-ranging article on safety. Until and unless St. Andrews House lifts an inky finger, however, it seems doubtful that mere homily will have much effect. There will be Feith Buidhes as long as we have Mountain Leaders. Other things of interest in the Journal are a note remarking on Bob Scott's Retiral from Luibeg and, complementing this neatly, a splendid Gaelic poem affirming the joys of Cairngorm poaching! *New Zealand A.C.J.*, 1972 & 1973.—This Journal has now displaced the South African and American A.J.'s as the Glossiest of the Lot. Their fantastic mountains, of course, give them a good start—not even the higher Himalayan peaks can match the New Zealand Alps for ice architecture ((disbelievers should examine, for example, the Hooker Face of La Perouse (1972, p.47) or the South Face of Cook (1973, p.59)). To make way for the vast splurges of top-quality photographs (with matching texts—there has been 'a mini-explosion of consciously interpretative alpine writing,' says Editor David Galloway) the Club business and Notes sections have gone—a move symptomatic of the N.Z.A.C.'s concern about its incompatible roles of 'governing body of sport' and inward-looking Club. These agonies are bared by new Editor Philip Temple in 'Imperative to Belong' in the 1972 issue. Also in that issue is a sickening statement by the Minister of the Environment on Mountain Policy: possibly

his most emetic remark runs as follows, 'the tourist who flies to the peak takes nothing away from the traditional climber who scorns the easy way.' This nonsense is bitinglly criticised by Des Molloy in an article immediately following which also draws attention to the massive American takeover of New Zealand land, particularly coastal land. Messes of Pottage seem to slip down New Zealand gulleets as easily as Scottish ones . . .

Other journals received with thanks were: *Appalachia* 1973, *Edinburgh University M.C.J.*, 1973, *Irish Mountaineering*, 1973, *Journal of the M.C. of Rhodesia* 1972, *Journal of the M.C. of South Africa* 1972, *Ladies A.C.J.* 1973 & 1974, *Leeds University M.C.J.* 1973, *Rucksack Club J.* 1972 and *Sheffield University M.C.J.* 1973.

R.N.C.



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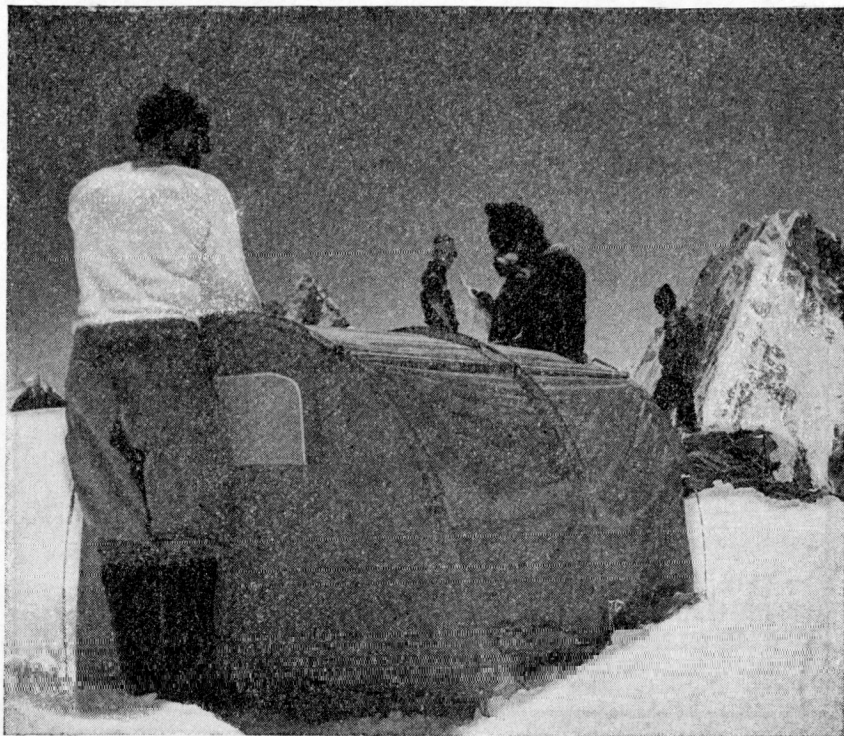
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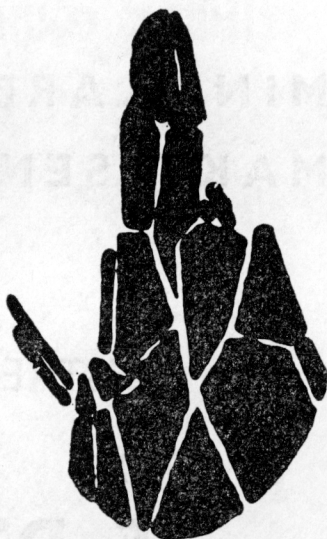
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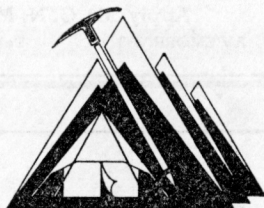
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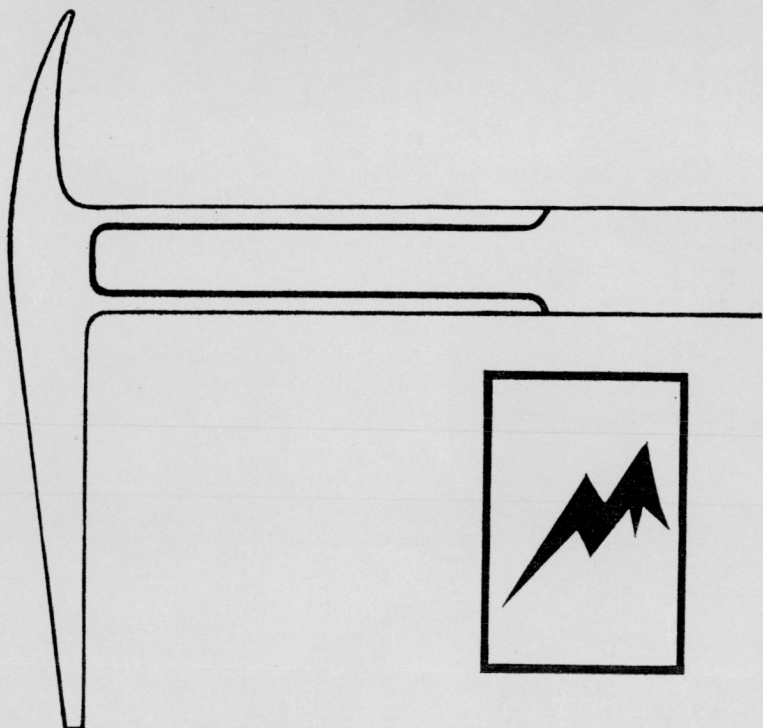
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