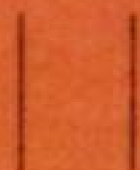
THE MORAY MOUNTAINEERING CLUB JOURNAL

1950

Published by
THE MORAY MOUNTAINEERING CLUB,
ELGIN.

PRICE 2s 6d

DAVID BANKS
F.S.M.C.
OPHTHALMIC OPTICIAN



145 HIGH STREET
FORRES

'PHONE NO. 278

Pharmacy Photography

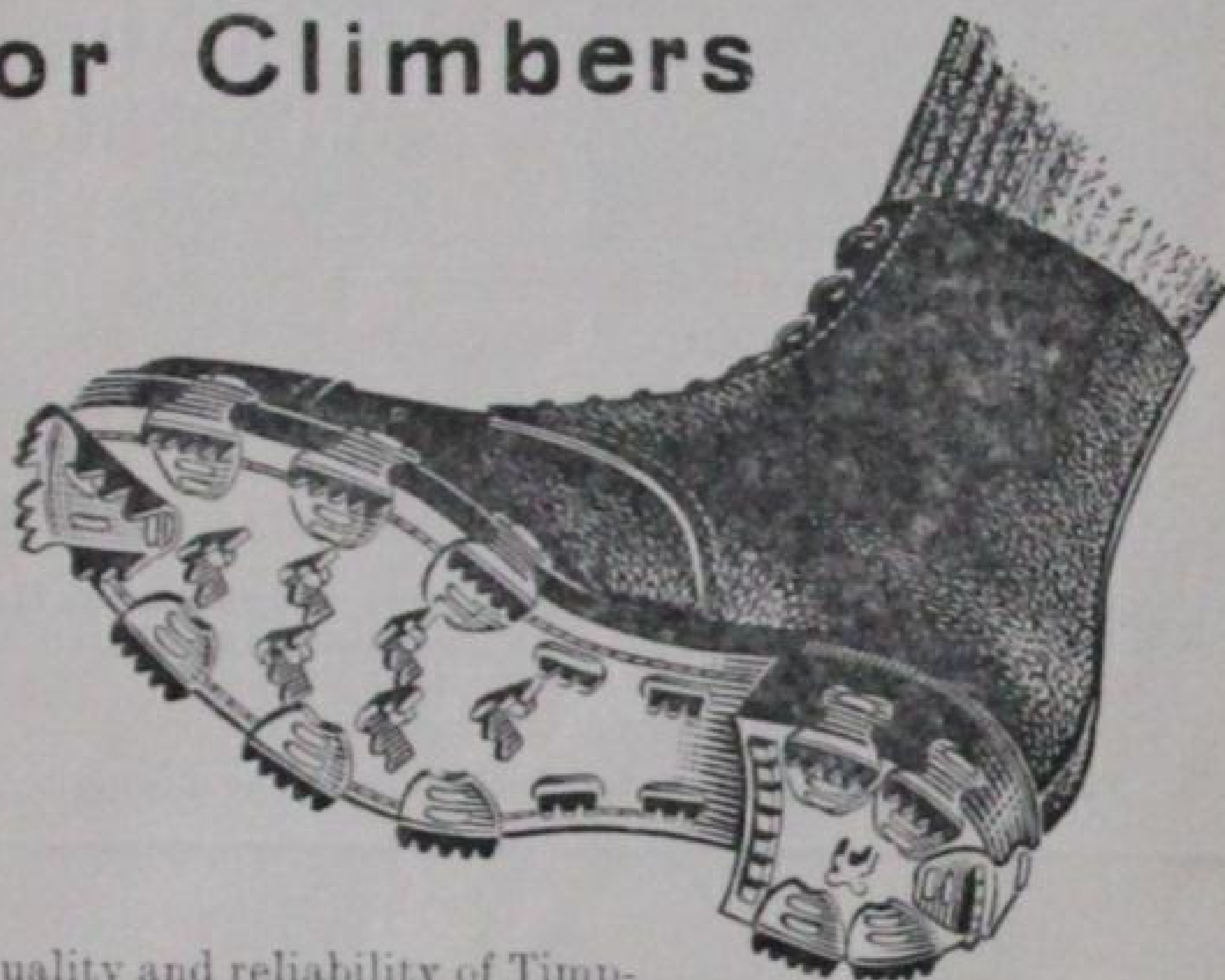
W. M. HARROLD
FORRES

TEL.—FORRES 84

———:o:———

Elizabeth Arden Preparations

TIMPSON Boots for Climbers



The quality and reliability of Timpson climbing boots is well known to all who appreciate footwear of the highest quality. Although still in short supply, a few more pairs will be available and we shall be glad to have your enquiries.

Post your repairs to the

TIMPSON
Shoe Shops

77 HIGH STREET, ELGIN.
48 HIGH STREET, INVERNESS.

EMPIRIC HOUSE, Gt. DUCIE St.,
MANCHESTER 3.

Your Boots
REPAIRED
AND
RE-NAILED

Timpson craftsmen give new life to your climbing boots, through Sole and Heel, re-nailing, re-welting and new middles.

Prompt Service.

TELEPHONE—AVIEMORE 233

CAIRNGORM HOTEL

AVIEMORE

STRATHSPEY

Open throughout the year

Hot and Cold Water in Bedrooms Central Heating

MODERATE TARIFF

Ample Accommodation for Cars

Aviemore is within easy reach of the Cairngorms which from late March to early May provide the nearest approximation to Alpine conditions that can be obtained in Britain.

For Tariff and all information apply to the Manager

KINTAIL HOTEL, GLENSHIEL, ✳ Kyle

PHONE—
GLENSHIEL 5

Under Personal Supervision of
V. CHISHOLM, PROPRIETOR.

The Hotel lies on the main road to the west, on the direct route to Skye by Dornie and Kyle, or by Mam Rattachan and Kylerhea, among magnificent mountain scenery in the wild beauty of the Western Highlands. It is within view of Ben Attow and the Saddle, the massif of the Five Sisters towering above and the waters of Loch Duich at its door.

Salmon and sea trout fishing is available on the river Croe, brown trout on famous Loch Cluanie, and Loch-a-Bhealaich — Boats and Ghillies are available.

Although in a quiet district, the Hotel is very accessible. Trains from Euston arrive at Inverness on the following morning and Kyle at 2 p.m. Kintail bus service connects each train.

May and June, per week—7 gns. and 8 gns.
July to Sept. ,, 8 ,, 9 ,,

ELECTRIC LIGHT THROUGHOUT.
HOT AND COLD WATER IN BEDROOMS.

TRY

SIMPSON, FORRES

for your next

Motor Trip

Quotations Given.

AFTERNOON and EVENING TOURS

from FORRES

during the Summer Months

Daily Bus Service

between Forres and

Findhorn

OFFICE—

1 Market Street, Forres

Telephone Forres 356

Nearest Hotel to the Cairngorms

THE

DELL

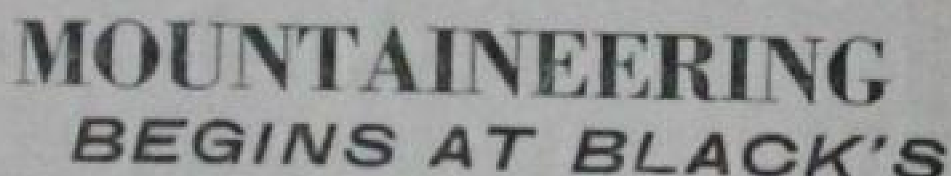
PRIVATE HOTEL

ROTHIEMURCHUS · AVIEMORE

Beautifully situated in own grounds at edge of Rothiemurchus Forest, one mile from Aviemore. Own farm and garden produce. Electric light.

Tennis Courts ⁚ Garages

Telephone 216 Mrs Grant



Experienced mountaineers everywhere rely on Black's of Greenock for the safety and efficiency of their equipment. Write now for the complete list—including the famous Artic Guinea Tent and Ground-sheet, Sleeping Bags, Climbing Boots, Anoraks and Windsmocks, Nylon Rope, Abseil Slings, Ice Axes, Climbing Nails and, in fact, all climbing accessories

Famous Makers of Reliable Camp Equipment since 1863

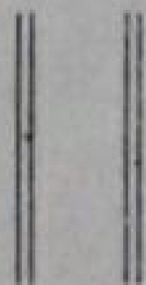
THOMAS BLACK & SONS (Greenock) Ltd.
SCOTTISH INDUSTRIAL ESTATE,
PORT GLASGOW — Renfrewshire

Branches at

126 Hope Street, Glasgow, C.2
Phone : Central 4007

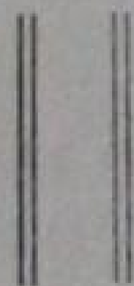
22 Gray's Inn Rd. London W.C.1
Phone : Holborn 5494

Kenneth McLennan



WINE MERCHANT,

44 High Street
Forres



STOCKIST OF ALL LEADING BRANDS
OF WINES AND SPIRITS

Phone—Forres, 68

ROBERT LAWRIE, Ltd.

Alpine and Polar Equipment Specialists

54 SEYMOUR STREET
MARBLE ARCH
LONDON, W. 1.

Telephone - - - - - - PADDINGTON 5252
Telegraphic Address: "ALPINIST," WESDO, LONDON
Please note that the above is our only address

Business hours: Daily 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Sats. 9 a.m. to 12 noon

CLIMBING AND SKI-ING BOOTS

from stock or made to measure

•

Special medium-priced machine-made Students' Boot designed as a combined Walking-Climbing-Ski-ing Boot

•

Accessory items of Clothing and Equipment :— Swiss and French Crampons, Ice-Axes, Sleeping Bags, Rucksacks, Jackets, Socks, and Stockings, etc.

•

Hand-sewn and machine-sewn repairs and re-nailings carried out to Climbing Boots

•

Orders executed by post

Illustrated Catalogue not yet available but Price List may be obtained on application

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

	Page No.
Office-Bearers ...	2
Editorial ...	3
On the North-East Buttress ...	5
Canadian Forty-Eight ...	9
A Classic In Snow-Climbs ...	14
The Call of The Hills ...	17
Photography ...	18
Ski-ing In Scotland ...	24
A Day To Remember ...	26
Experiences In Wales ...	28
A Day On Cairngorm ...	34
Beginner's Luck—Female Version ...	36
A Rock Climb in Torridonia ...	41
Torridon—Late April 1950 ...	46
Red-Letter Day On Ben Nevis ...	47
Invitation To Snowclimbing ...	51
Is He A Climber? ...	56
From Scaut Hill To Sgurr Nan Gillean ...	59
Meets—1950 ...	67

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

"Reward of the Climber"—Summit Cliffs of Cairn Lochan ... Frontispiece

	Facing Page
The Valley of the Ten Peaks ...	10
Aladdin's Seat, Cairngorms ...	18
"An Tellach." Corrag Buidhe and Sgurr Fiona from Toll an Lochan ...	22
"Liathach" from Glen Torridon ...	26
Solitary Climber ...	34
"Am Fasarinen"; the narrow ridge connecting the two higher peaks of Liathach ...	42
The Northern Face of Ben Nevis with Tower Ridge ...	50
Snow Climbing on the Steep Face of a Corrie ...	54
"Cairn Lochan," Cairngorms ...	58

OFFICE-BEARERS — 1950.

President.

DAVID BANKS, Suilven, Forres.

Vice-Presidents.

Miss NANCY CRICHTON,
Ben Aigen,
Rothes.

Brig. D. J. STEEVENS,
Dailuaine House, Carron,
Strathspey.

Members of Committee.

E. P. HARRISON.
F. F. CUNNINGHAM.
D. R. FORRESTER.
Dr J. BREWSTER.
C. E. ROSS.
W. WALKER.

Hon. Secretary.

EDWIN M. DAVIDSON, 24 South College Street, Elgin.

Hon. Asst. Secretary.

Miss MURIEL FLETCHER, 45 Moray Street, Lossiemouth.

Hon. Treasurer.

N. G. EWEN, National Bank of Scotland, Elgin.

Hon. Auditor.

F. W. MANSON, Bona Vista, Rose Avenue, Elgin.

Hon. Editors.

F. F. CUNNINGHAM,
Royal Academy, Inverness.

Brig. D. J. STEEVENS.

D. R. Forrester

"REWARD OF THE CLIMBER"—SUMMIT CLIFFS OF CAIRN LOCHAN

EDITORIAL.

IT is 14 years since we last issued a Journal, and there is no immediate prospect of an annual issue, but it is felt that even intermittent appearance is worth-while in cementing the traditions of the Club. Since the last publication, the effects of war and the passage of time have radically altered the personnel of the club but we are fortunate in still having amongst our 100 members many of the original stalwarts. But of course we do not only look backwards. Under our newest president and his henchmen, the club has taken a new lease of ambitions reflected in the increasing variety and number of meets and the spread of private climbing parties among our members.

To the great regret of all, one of our members, Miss Isobel MacLean, was killed on Suilven in 1949, and we offer our respectful condolences to her parents in their great loss.

We welcome the long-overdue formation of a mountaineering club in Inverness and wish it every success. Opportunity is taken of thanking contributors and others who have helped in the publication of this journal. Our grateful thanks and acknowledgments are due to "The Field" for permission to reprint article on pages 34 and 35, to "The Glasgow Herald" for permission to reprint Mr Nimlin's article. And finally we would like to record our appreciation of the great personal interest and trouble which Mr Bain of "The Nairnshire Telegraph" (our publishers and printers) has taken throughout in the production of this journal.

On The North-East Buttress

"You're all daft!" remarked Frank's wife, as she aimed the garden hose at another rose bush.

It was a lovely evening, cool after the heat of the day with no sign of a break in the hot spell under which the country had sweltered for the past fortnight.

Arrangements had been made to meet the Doctor near Fort William at 9 a.m. the following morning, which, incidentally was Sunday, and the climb in view was the North-East Ridge of Ben Nevis. Excitement ran high as we discussed among other things the prospects of the climb in the time at our disposal, and a chance remark met with a unanimous decision to start off there and then.

"Yes, you're all daft," said Frank's wife, who had been busy watering the garden within earshot of the conversation. The remark did nothing to daunt our spirits. It was nothing new to be considered daft, mad or anything bordering on lunacy, so with a few hurried arrangements it was decided to foregather at Frank's house in an hour's time complete with the necessary climbing gear.

Midnight saw us start on the 96 miles journey to Fort William with Charlie at the wheel of the Doctor's "Singer." Jim's brother Ron had joined the party at the last minute, and with the carrier laden with rucksacks, hobnailers, ropes, etc., the four of us set out on the first stage of the journey to Inverness—and minus a tail light!

A halt was made at Inverness to fill up with petrol and at 1.10 a.m. we left the garage on the next stage of the journey.

"There's a one-way street system here, is there not?" said Charlie.

"Yes," said Frank, knowingly, "but at this time of the morning nobody will be about—straight on and first to the left."

We rounded the corner and a figure loomed up out of nowhere and signalled the car to stop.

"Don't you know this is a one-way street?" asked the policeman.

"No," from the car.

"Are you strangers here?"

"Yes."

The policeman stepped forward to view the registration number, while the occupants breathed a prayer that his visit would be confined to the front of the car. Silence reigned within until he again appeared at the driving window.

"What is the number of your car?" he queried.

It was unfortunate that Charlie and Frank decided to answer this question together and more unfortunate still that neither corresponded with the one the policeman had just inspected. By this time the prospect of a climb on Ben Nevis was growing more remote; panic was complete when the policeman went on to ask Charlie for his driving licence, insurance policy and finally his identity card, none of which he could produce. Fortunately Frank was able to produce his driving licence, which, together with the story of how we came to be there, seemed to satisfy the Law and, without more ado, we were allowed to proceed. No time was wasted and without further incident we found ourselves 2½ hours later in the vicinity of Fort William searching for the Doctor's camping ground.

It was a beautiful morning with a slight ground frost. The huge mass of Ben Nevis loomed up beside us with only a wisp of cloud hanging over the Allt a' Mhuilinn Corrie. It gave gromise of another day of heat and bright sunshine; just what the Doctor ordered but he was not yet aware of it. The " Singer" was turned off the main road into the narrow track which led down to the bank of the Lochy River and it must be admitted that the party was in high glee at the prospect of rousing the Doctor at 4 a.m. He, however, had heard the car approach and it was a rather dishevelled and astonished figure that greeted us. Explanations over, it was decided to have breakfast and make a start as soon as possible. The Doctor dressed to the sounds of a hissing primus and sizzling bacon. Breakfast was consumed rather hurriedly for the morning air was chilly and as the Doctor's spirits rose, so our enthusiasm began to wane through lack of sleep and rest. However, by 6 a.m. everything was left ship-shape and the party was ready to set out. By this time the wisp of cloud had cleared from the Corrie and the North East Ridge stood out magnificent in profile against a cloudless sky.

Crossing the railway near the distillery, we found the path which leads up to the Allt a' Mhuilinn. This path was not clearly defined and on occasions we lost it completely but after crossing stretches of rough country we struck the path proper at a deer fence. From this point the path was good all the way to the S.M.C. hut which we reached at 8 a.m. A halt was called here and it was decided to rest for an hour. The sun by this time was fairly high in the sky and the valley was bathed in warm sunshine.

At 9 a.m. we made a start, and at 10 a.m. we had reached the rocks at the start of the climb. Here we split into two parties. Jim and Rob Flemington roped up and

led off making for the crest of the ridge. With a number of routes to choose from, both parties reached the crest almost together. The crest here was rough and well broken up. It was possible to proceed unroped for the next few hundred feet which brought us to the first of a series of almost vertical pitches. Again roping up, the Flemington brothers made a traverse to the right or Western side of the Ridge, where the route leads up a sixty foot chimney to regain the Ridge. Meantime the other party, determined to stick to the true ridge, were faced with an overhang to negotiate. The Doctor, who led the climb throughout, was in excellent fettle and quickly overcame this difficulty. The rock was grand with plenty of good holds and each pitch was successfully accomplished throughout the climb. Although some of the stretches were difficult and sometimes strenuous, good stances and belays were always to be found. The last pitch ended on the summit plateau some hundred yards from the ruins of the Observatory and the Cairn. We had been 4½ hours on the climb and it was now 2.30 p.m.

The Doctor was congratulated on his excellent lead and it was remarked that if a more difficult route was to be found, he would have found it. We found a shady spot by the wall of the Observatory and viewed with some interest the many tourists who kept on arriving and departing in various stages of undress and exhaustion via the Tourist Route. Seldom have we experienced such a glorious day on a mountain top. The sun blazed down from a cloudless sky. The view in all directions was magnificent and it was with some reluctance we prepared to continue. On leaving the summit, we struck downhill to the east towards the narrow arete which circles round the head of the glen. The going here was over very rough scree and broken boulders, but the magnificent view to the east and south compensated for the discomfort of the rough going. Crossing the very narrow arete proved slow work and although not really difficult a certain amount of care had to be exercised. Here we obtained a grand view of the North East Ridge and it was interesting to note from this point the actual route we had taken on the climb.

Leaving the arete behind we were now climbing the red gravel slopes of Carn Mor Dearg (4012 feet). The heat of the sun beating down ruthlessly, coupled with the fact that we all suffered from a fierce thirst, tended to slow down the pace but eventually the summit was reached. A well earned rest in the shadow of the cairn revived our spirits—but oh! that persistent thirst. A wonderful view of the N.E. face of Nevis was obtained from this point

and continuing the walk to the cairn of Carn Deag Meadhonach (3873) gave us a never-to-be-forgotten panoramic view of the rock precipices, 1½ miles in length and nearly 2000 feet in height, a great natural study in light and shadow. Even the agony of thirst was forgotten as we gazed at the scene before us. The only sound to break the silence was the far away murmur of the stream in the valley far below us.

Cool clear water! The very thought of it hastened our steps downwards over rough heather and dry vegetation, strewn with boulders. It was a very dishevelled party which ultimately reached the burn and a leisurely hour was spent in cooling off and recuperating. We drank our fill of that wonderful water, we bathed our feet, and one member of the party actually fell asleep stretched between two rocks in mid-stream, his legs forming a bridge over water and his snores disturbing the otherwise peaceful surroundings.

Fully refreshed, we proceeded at a good steady pace and arrived back at the car at 7 p.m., where we were able to wash and change, eat and drink, and with that glorious feeling of "something attempted something done," we took our leave of the Doctor and set out on our homeward journey. Needless to say we were all very tired and the lack of a night's rest did not make matters any easier for the driver. We took turns in driving, however, which shortened the journey for each of us to a certain extent. Inverness was reached and passed. We were bowling along comfortably when we were overtaken and passed by a fast car which drew up ahead and signalled us to stop.

"What Now," we thought.

Too tired to worry much we were not very surprised to see two policemen step out and advance towards our car. Very politely they informed us OUR TAIL LIGHT WAS OUT.

Anon.

Canadian Forty-Eight

WHEN, in 1941, I was taken off an overseas draft which eventually went to Crete, and was put on another which finished up at Calgary, Canada, I took a deep breath and quietly sent home for my climbing boots.

So it came about that, on 5th September, 1942, two of us were setting forth on the west-bound mid-night train from Calgary. We were on forty-eight hour pass, and our intention was to climb Pinnacle Mountain which lies a few miles south of Lake Louise and close to the Great Divide of the Canadian Rockies. For Ken it would be his first big peak. For me it would compensate for missing the peak six weeks earlier, during the Canadian Alpine Club Camp. On that occasion a bruised leg kept me off Pinnacle at the start of the Camp; and by the time I was fit for it, the weather broke.

Pinnacle Mountain is 10,072 feet high, and boasts two fixed ropes—formidable term! I had seen the peak from its massive neighbour, Mt. Temple, and had been impressed. More impressive still was a photograph (in a journal) of a party negotiating the top pitch. As we gazed at this we quoted the usual morale-stiffeners about the camera exaggerating and the need to rub one's nose against the rocks. We would, we said, " have a look at it"—an elastic phrase which covers everything from the tiger's unspoken determination to do or die, to the mouse's equal determination that this climb is not for him if he can decently avoid it.

Our plan was, considering it now from comparative obesity, an energetic one. We would go overnight by rail to Lake Louise, one hundred and twenty miles away. The train would be late, as we knew from bitter experience, so we would set off at once to walk the nine or ten miles into Moraine Lake. There we would establish base, have breakfast, and then climb our peak, returning to base for a bivouac that night. Next day we would again go up to the foot of our peak, but this time cross over Sentinel Pass into Paradise Valley down which we would wander, with (theoretically) ample time to browse and catch the train home too.

We made our usual furtive exit from Calgary. This city was the Headquarters of one of the Air Force Training Commands and was positively adrip with Service Police. They haunted railway stations in particular. Before setting off we used to change at a friend's house into climbing kit — a service/civilian motley — and our problem was to avoid questioning by the police. This we usually did by skulking around the more remote parts of

the station; but occasionally we rose to brilliant heights of improvisation as when once, suddenly confronted, we broke into a French conversation on the lines of "*la plume de ma tante*" to the utter confusion of a real "Glesca" type who went away convinced that we were French-Canadians.

So, that night, we entrained after successful evasive action and trundled off to Lake Louise, snatching sleep as best we could and, in our waking moments, hearing the exciting thunder of the train echoing among the great peaks as they closed in on us. Eventually we emerged prickly-eyed at the small station which is the gateway to so much loveliness.

The walk into Moraine Lake was delightful. We got off to a slow start, as befits the hour of 5 a.m. and zero temperatures; but, as the dusty road unrolled before us and the sun came up to touch the snowy summits with fire and release the gorgeous warm scents of conifers and wild flowers, we fairly skipped with exhilaration. This Rocky Mountain weather was a constant delight; except, it must regretfully be added, during two Alpine Club Climbs in 1942 and 1943. Regularly we used to camp or bivouac in freezing conditions secure in the knowledge that a glorious day's sunshine would follow. So it was this day. The road was new to Ken and he gasped at the sudden sight of Mt. Temple's north face blocking the sky as we rounded a bend. Beyond this, the forests and the road dropped away towards Moraine Lake and we walked on with magnificent views of the Ten Peaks ahead and Consolation Valley on our left.

At Moraine Lake there is a camping ground complete with log cabins and a wood-pile. Fire hazards being of great consequence in these heavily timbered areas, the lighting of fires is restricted to these camping grounds. We found two Canadians already in possession, having apparently been camping there in sybaritic fashion. They had a stove going and very kindly offered to share it. As each party prepared for breakfast we looked indeed like poor relations. I had insisted on travelling light. Previous expeditions had staggered along under loads of food, a not unnatural sin for war-time Britons. But this time we had overdone it. Of course we heartily assured our companions that we had ample supplies; but, really, to sit there and hear one of them say "Will you have three eggs or four, Elmer?" and then, perforce, having to watch them eat with a frightful relish was more than flesh and blood could stand. So we finished off quickly and departed, Ken dubbing me a clot of a quartermaster. We never repeated the mistake.

THE VALLEY OF THE TEN PEAKS

The way to Pinnacle lay first along the west shore of the lake to where a path zig-zagged off steeply to the right into an upper valley, called Larch Valley. We went up this track steadily, marvelling at the downward glimpses of Moraine Lake's green-enamelled surface. No gradations of colour here; just an even wash of brilliant green. As we climbed, there came gradually widening views of the great golden and white mountain wall of the Ten Peaks with their remarkable horizontal stratification. When we emerged into Larch Valley, Moraine Lake had sunk from view and we were ringed around with peaks. Ahead lay Mt. Temple and Mt. Eiffel and, between them, our peak. When I pointed out Pinnacle to Ken his remark that it looked "a bit steep" echoed my thoughts. Our route, however, lay out of sight on the left so that assessment of the difficulties was premature. We crossed the floor of the valley, each alone with his thoughts. A big climb fills one's mind; and I think that most climbers are sobered by the sight of a towering rock wall on which they will soon be treading circumspectly. Certainly, with that remote summit ahead, the route unknown, and the responsibility mine, I was no longer interested in the scenery as such. Would it go? That was all that mattered now.

Speculation soon vanished in the practicalities of toiling up to the saddle between Pinnacle and Eiffel. The way was up a long, gradually steepening trough, which one's diary succinctly describes as "screes, screes, and still more screes." This brought us, perspiring, to the ridge, where the real climbing commences. We ate a little and took photographs; and I wandered along the ridge to prospect. There was no mistaking the route. Almost at once a steep wall, probably fifty feet high, barred progress; and down it hung the first fixed rope.

I think the comparative ease of this pitch, even without the rope, surprised us. We roped up and climbed, first straight up then leftwards under a bulge. This led us into a gully which gave easy scrambling for about three hundred feet. We then arrived at a shelf where we trod snow for the first time and from which we could see the second fixed rope. This pitch was a different proposition from the first, and I was quite sure there would be no question of leading it clean. It was, however, equally certain that we need not seek to turn the pitch on the right, as can be done, I believe, by means of a traverse into and ascent of a gully. This alternative, we had gathered from another climber, can be dangerous because of snow in the gully. We therefore addressed ourselves to the pitch, a very steep rock tower cleft by a wicked looking chimney. Down the right wall hung the fixed rope, somewhat

bleached but of a satisfying stoutness. I climbed up the bottom fifteen feet of the chimney to get the rope which had been caught up, and then took to the wall itself, finishing up on an airy ledge from which one could traverse right on to easy rocks. Up to the ledge gave probably eighty feet of climbing, but the chimney proper was much longer. I do not know if it has ever been led throughout. Ken then came up to the ledge and moved past me to easy rocks and another belay. There I joined him, and we moved together into the top of a gully, presumably the alternative route already mentioned. The rest was easy scrambling and we came out close to the summit cairn.

We felt very happy. The climb had been quite straightforward and we could contemplate the descent with equanimity. Meanwhile, we were perched in the very eye of the sun. There was scarce a breath of wind, and the dazzling white of snow and glacier was matched by the towering cloud masses pinned against a royal blue sky. Peak upon peak rose on all sides. Mt. Temple's great pyramid of a summit seemed almost a stone's throw away, and one could easily pick out the route taken six week's earlier. Far south was the unmistakable shape of Mt. Assiniboine, the "Canadian Matterhorn;" a peak much coveted but never attained because one could not get sufficient time off for the long trip. Immediately to the west lay Paradise Valley where we would go tomorrow, and, at its head, the Horseshoe Glacier with its magnificent cirque of peaks—Wenkchemna, Hungabee, Ringrose, Lefroy, The Mitre. We took photographs. We ate. We dozed in the sun. We were very happy. Ken agreed that this climbing "has got something."

The descent was uneventful, for we slid down the fixed ropes and rode the screes. From the saddle there was good running down into the valley by way of the trough which had been such a weariness of the flesh on the ascent. The free, swinging walk back across the valley floor was, I think, the pleasantest action of the day. Indeed, it usually is when a successful day is ending and, violent action gone, one's limbs seem tireless. We paused to look back at our peak, this time with vastly different emotions. Then we plunged down the zig-zag track to Moraine Lake and made camp.

That night was a miserable one for me. Due, possibly, to the altitude, I developed a raging toothache. Sleep was out of the question, so in the small hours I left the smouldering fire's warmth, climbed the moraine at the end of the lake, and, huddling down, eyed the ghostly beauty of the Ten Peaks sourly. The cold may have had

something to do with it, but I dozed off and awoke some time later, chattering with cold but free of toothache. I went back to camp and slept like a log till Ken roused me at nine o'clock.

The second day was a race against time. We retraced our steps of the previous day as far as Larch Valley then followed a well defined track to Sentinel Pass (8,566 feet). Descending the other side of the pass we found footprints in the snow there, and speculated as to who the solitary climber might be. Then Paradise Valley claimed us.

I suppose there are finer valleys elsewhere, and no doubt we were in an appreciative mood that day, but Paradise Valley seemed ideally named. We arrived in it when the sun was full up, and, as we trod kindly turf again, we were entnralled in all our senses by the grouping and colouring of forest, glacier and peak, by the myriad scents and sounds, and by the animation lent to the scene by the wild life and flashing torrents. But the intended browsing had to wait, for there was a train to catch, the day's only train. We fairly raced down the trail, Ken setting a cracking pace and I, not having his length of limb, twinkling along in the rear. It was a near thing, for we and the train puffed into the station at the same time.

So we returned to Calgary, where the expedition maintained interest right to the end. On crowded Ninth Avenue we bumped into one Joe Clitheroe, a keen climber whom I had met once before. We chatted, and found that he had been over Sentinel Pass that same weekend. The tracks we had seen in the snow were his. A small world indeed, my masters.

W. H. Rae.

A Classic In Snow Climbs

THE classic snow climb of the whole Southern Highlands is the Centre Gully of Beinn Laoigh, in Perthshire. And there was one day above all days when that mountain gave us nine hours of its best—a mingled hell and heaven. It was during the long frosts of February, 1947, that I went there with Trevor Ransley on his first snow climb, and with Norman Tennent.

The three of us arrived at Tyndrum at 9 a.m. and set off in a shrill and freezing east wind. The five-mile track running west to Laoigh was badly drifted. In one of the drifts we passed an abandoned car, obviously destined to remain there for another month—there were scores of drifts to either side. After three miles the great bend in the glen brought us to Coninish farm, beyond which Laoigh raised that graceful peak for which it is famed, snow-draped and lustrous, deep into cloudless blue. Of its 3700 feet the last 700 formed an icy wedge lifting up from the back of a great eastern corrie, which was flanked by sentinel spurs. The wedge had double summits placed close. Warning banners of drift flew from the twin tops, and between them the Centre Gully fell to the corrie.

Conditions, I could see, were going to be savage high up, but could hardly have been more pleasant for our present purposes—the long grind to the floor of the corrie at 3000 feet. When the climber has plenty of wind-proof clothing, and can work up warmth by hard work, there is sheer elation in facing high bitter winds, and joy in the hard play of the muscles. We made a speedy ascent to the corrie. On my last visit there in the late spring I had seen a lizard basking on a warm boulder. I like lizards and wondered what had become of it now. Not a rock was visible. Every boulder was blurred in soft snow and each crag plastered with ice.

We waded across the floor and started up the long lower slopes to the gully. The snow had fallen as dry powder; now it was well packed and firm. One kick made a step. At 200 feet we had a short halt while Ransley practised falling, and stopping by braking with his ice-axe. It is a very easy thing to do, but at first needs resolution. Ransley was somewhat frightened about letting himself go, but quickly grew bolder. I think it doubled his self-confidence—as indeed by the nature of things it always must. Confidence insured that he avoided a crouched position and stood erect in his steps, and so had surer footing. It was valuable practice for later events.

The slope steepened to the foot of the gully. We roped-

up—Tennant leading, myself last. Although it is shallow—little more than a groove up the face—the gully was well filled with snow. The rocky flanks were plated with white ice, but in the gully itself no cutting was required. We made steady progress at an angle of 45 until within 150 feet of the top. There the angle steepened, the gully's walls fell away so that we were out on the open face and at the mercy of the wind, which at 3600 feet was vicious. The snow was wind-packed and the crust hard as a board. At this point I took the lead from Tennant, who had so far done all the work.

We had been moving all together on a short rope until now, so my first order was to lengthen rope and move singly from axe-belays. I was in no doubt about the discomforts of the climbing ahead. The wind was already hitting us hard. We had to be vigilant about balance. Every move had to be firm. The cutting of steps is a part of mountain-craft in which I personally revel, but on this occasion I soon found that neither rhythm nor revel was to be my lot. The short route lay straight up to the ridge between the two tops, but this ridge being corniced I went direct for the true summit on the left—a steeper route, rising to 50. At every step we gained we were more and more delayed by the wind, which bombarded face and eyes with icy spiculae. Sometimes I was unable to see the slope in front of me. It vanished in the flailing drift, and all I could do was drive in my axe-shaft to the head and hang on until the gusts slackened. But gradually, foot by foot, rope-length by rope-length, we fought our way on to the summit.

The wind at the cairn was so strong that we could not face into it. It fairly howled across the polar world, heeld by hard sheets of drift that obscured the view and blinded us on impact. Directly overhead—not more than a few feet—was the clear blue sky. That did madden us; for the mountain view that day must have been splendid beyond all telling—and there we stood in the main stream of the summit's plume. The cold was unendurable and we quickly agreed to make our descent by the north ridge.

Turning our backs to the wind we traversed the short ridge to the north top. Ransley belayed me with the rope while I crept—literally crept—to the edge of the north face and prospected. And there was the north ridge. It fell long and steeply. At a glance I could see it to be rocky and thoroughly glazed with snow-ice. Several hundred feet of down-hill step cutting was demanded, and that with speed. I let myself over the edge.

After cutting the first dozen steps I was overjoyed to find myself out of the wind. I was in perfect calm. The

wind with its plume went streaming harmlessly over the north top. I rested for a minute, and thought benignly of the fortitude of my companions freezing near to death just 25 feet above my head. Refreshed in spirit, I continued cutting until 60 feet of rope had run out, then waited for Ransley. When he joined me I had to move on, leaving Tennant still on top; for the footing was insufficiently good to support two of them during the delays of my own descent. Fast down-hill cutting is a much more searching test of skill with an axe than up-hill work, and relatively slower. At last I was ready. Tennent joined Ransley, and Ransley came on. This was a moment that I awaited in mild anxiety. He could have no good belay from above, and the descent of hard-frozen snow on steep slopes is the beginner's most searching test. He amazed me. He stood up with his back as straight as an axe shaft, his head poised and every move a display of good balance. It was delightful to watch him—as it is to watch any man in complete control of himself and working with skill and pace. The firm and easy sureness gratifies the eye: here is another fellow-human fulfilling his powers! Probably he would not have moved one half so well had the ground been easier and so less tonic to the nerves. And may-be the braking practice contributed.

We were half way down the ridge at sunset, and on the wrong side of our mountain; for our view was to the north east. Yet if the sun was itself invisible, the white-cowled community that filled the choir of Perthshire was growing every minute more glorious in reflected red, until the pure white by virtue of which they were able to receive the glow was transformed utterly into the full and holy of their sun. A vault of luminous blue arched them, and round their feet flowed the first dark tides of the night, the death that is the salt of the Earth and life's brotherly shadow, flowing and rising, hazily and smokily blue along the glens.

Meanwhile I continued cutting. The air was very still now, and the axe rang sharp. Chips scattered on the glazed surface. The rope rasped on frozen gloves. The angle of the ridge gradually eased and soon allowed us to stop cutting and to creep down on edge-nails, and at last, to face out and stride. The last colour had gone from the north-eastern tops to be replaced by a cold grey, too much honoured by the name of light. On reaching the sentinel spur, Tennent and I enjoyed the long fierce swoop of a standing glissade to the corrie-floor, where we waited for Ransley, whose swoops were shorter. Then we hastened down to Coninish, and set out upon the last of our nine

hours over the snow-blocked miles to Tyndrum.

Under the arctic silence of a still starlit sky, the only sound to be heard was the crunch of nails on the freezing track, sounding through the lifeless waste and the enveloping gloom.

W. H. MURRAY.

THE CALL OF THE HILLS

Awake! and let thy spirit freely roam,
  Mid crag and corrie, battling with the blast;
Where nature's elements create their home
  Fear not to see an inner-being cast.
Break from the narrow confines of a cell
  Where time grasps all within his headlong flight,
The captive web of shallow joys dispell,
  Before the lengthening shadows herald night.
Seek not: intended goals obscure the way,
  They shroud the unrevealed engrained within;
Release thy senses into boundless day,
  Unveil the soul, for all to flow therein.
    Discard thy bonds, go—yonder take a place;
    To breathe new life from out eternal space.

M. E. BARLEN.

Photography

One of the finest companions we can have on the mountain is, undoubtedly, a camera. Year in, year out, this faithful friend will be filling our album pages with the highlights of our climbing days and providing a pleasant pension to our memories when we are no longer able for the high tops. Even then it will be at hand as we roam the valleys and foothills, busy capturing the sunshine and shadow at play on our beloved hills.

But like the best of companions our camera requires understanding and it is a sorry fact that many climbers who carry a camera on the hill are barely on a nodding acquaintance with their instrument. The purpose of this article, then, is to help the beginner to make the most of his camera, no matter how simple it may be, and perhaps to assist the owner of a high grade camera (who may also be a beginner) to understand all the knobs and numbers which decorate it.

THE CAMERA

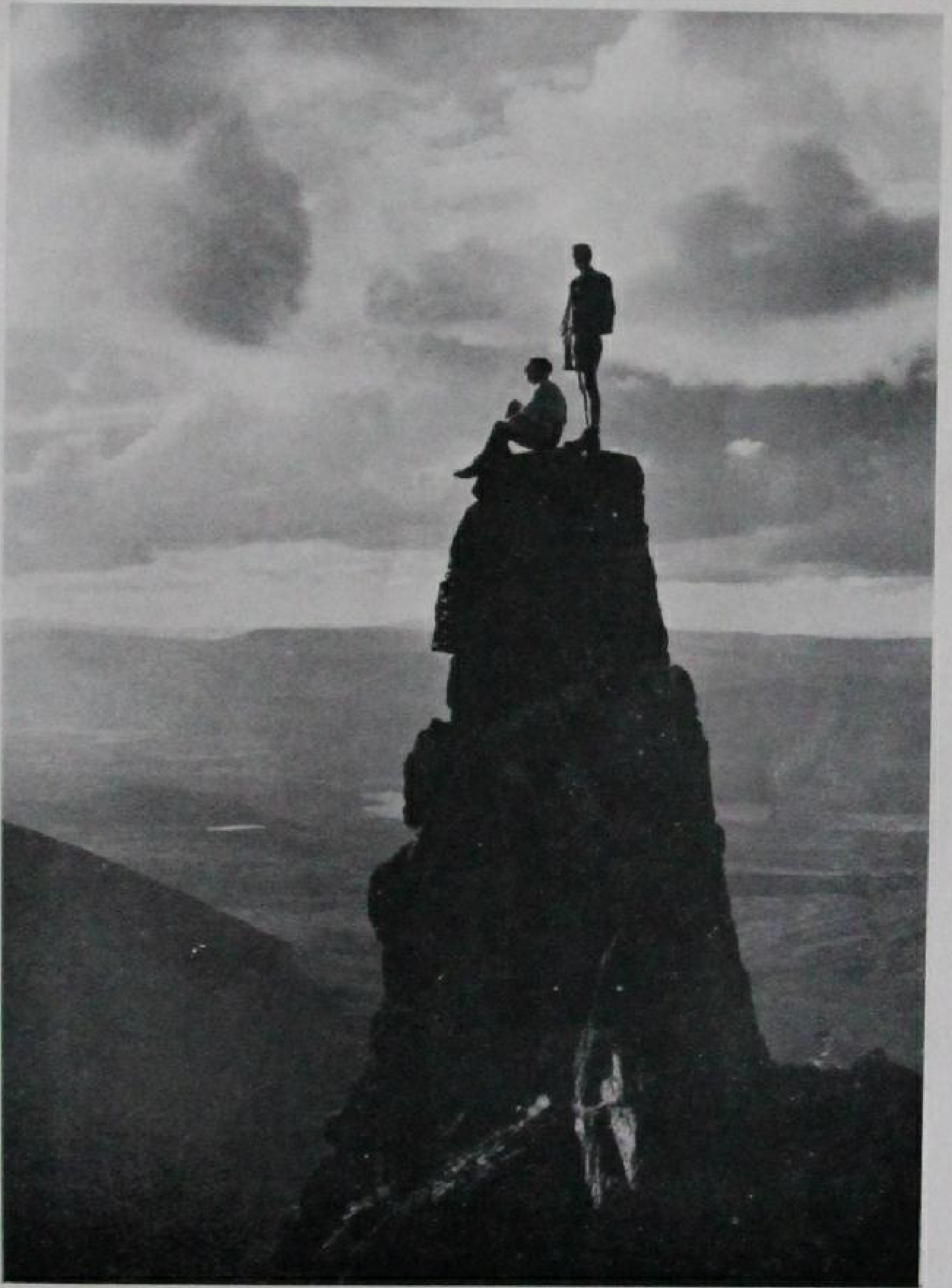
All cameras are essentially the same and whether we pay five shillings or fifty pounds for our camera we receive a light-tight enclosure with a lens at one end and a means of supporting a film at the other. Some means is provided for changing the film after each view has been taken. There is a shutter which flicks open and shut allowing light to pass through the lens and reach the film. There may be a focussing scale so that the lens will bring the view before it to a sharp focus on the film. Then there will be a viewfinder so that we may see exactly what we are including in our view.

THE LENS

The purpose of the lens is to form a sharp image of the view before it and to project the picture image on to the sensitive film at the back of the camera.

On the simple box camera the lens is usually a small single glass element which is quite sufficient for making snapshots in bright sunshine. As the size and quality of the lens increases, its structure becomes more complex and and the lenses fitted to first class cameras are a superbly corrected combination of perhaps seven elements. The more light a lens can let through the faster it is said to be, and the faster the lens is the greater the picture-making scope of the camera.

The amount of light transmitted by the lens is generally controlled by an adjustable diaphragm or stop, and the speed of a lens is governed by the size of its largest stop, or, as it is referred to—" f " number.



D. R. Forrester

ALADDIN'S SEAT, CAIRNGORMS

A lens is said to be of a certain focal length and this is simply the distance between lens and film when the lens is focussed on a very distant object. The " f " number we have just mentioned is arrived at by dividing the focal length of the lens by the effective diameter of the lens stop. Thus an f/4 lens is one whose diameter is one-fourth of its focal length. In the case of a four inch lens this diameter would be one inch. If the lens is stopped down to f/8 then the effective diameter of the lens is reduced to one-eighth of the focal length, and so on.

The simple lens of the box camera has a maximum stop of about f/11 which lets through very little light, while the fast lens of the modern minature camera may have an aperture of f/1.5 which lets through a great deal of light. The smaller the " f " number the faster the lens. The " f " numbers are marked on the front of the camera and the maximum aperture of the lens is shown first. The numbers which follow are so arranged that the amount of light passing is reduced by one half at each number.

The box camera has seldom any " f " numbers marked but its maximum stop is usually about f/11 and a sliding metal lever is sometimes provided giving two smaller stops —f/16 and f/22. The simpler type of folding camera will probably be marked—f/8, 11, 16, 22, and the better class folding camera—f/4, 5.6, 8, 11, 16, 22, or perhaps f/4.5, 6.3, 9, 12, 18, 25.

THE SHUTTER

The shutter controls the length of time light passes through the lens just as the lens-stop controls the intensity of the light.

In the simple box camera the shutter is usually a spring-operated revolving disc which allows light to pass for a fraction of a second—generally 1/25th. There may also be a lever marked " T " which, when set, allows the shutter to remain open for a long or time exposure. The simple folding camera usually adds to these, speeds of 1/50 and 1/100 sec., while first class cameras extend this range to as little as 1/1000th sec. and also provide a very useful range of slow speeds—1/10, 1/5, 1/2 and 1 second.

1/25 sec. is the slowest speed which can normally be used with the camera held in the hand, anything slower requires a tripod or firm support to prevent movement of the camera during exposure. The faster shutter speeds are intended for subjects in which movement is present, but they are also useful on the mountain where a high wind or an unsteady hand after a strenuous climb make it difficult to hold the camera steady.

It is very important to notice that if the shutter speed

is increased from 1/50 to 1/100 sec. then the time allowed for the light to pass has been *halved*. This is allowed for by increasing the lens stop, and so enabling the lens to pass twice the amount of light. Suppose the correct exposure for a view from the mountain top to be 1/50 sec. at f/16. Because of the high wind the shutter speed is increased to 1/100 sec. and as this means halving the light reaching the film the stop is opened up to f/11 which makes the exposure "all square" again . . . . 1/50 sec. at f/16 and 1/100 sec. at f/11 give the same exposure to the film.

THE FILM

The film is the sensitive material in the camera which records the result of the work of the lens and shutter. Films, like lenses and shutters, have various speeds. These may be broadly classed as slow, medium and fast. Very conveniently the speed is more or less doubled as it progresses from slow to medium and medium to fast.

Films render our colourful scenes in monochrome from black, through a range of greys (or half-tones), to white. Different types of film emulsion translate colours to monochrome in different ways. Orthochromatic films render yellow and green in the same range of brightness as these colours appear to the eye. They are, however, much too sensitive to blue which appears almost white on a print while having hardly any reaction to red and rendering it much too dark. Panchromatic films, on the other hand, give a very true translation of all colours as they appear in nature. They depress blue and are very sensitive to red.

The film consists of a strip of transparent material on which is a coating of gelatine containing salts of silver. When light reaches the film the silver salts are affected according to the amount of light reaching them although the effect is not visible until the film has been developed when a further chemical change takes place. When a developed negative is examined it will be seen that the white shirt of a climber is much darker than the surrounding rocks which are in shadow. This is simply because the white shirt reflects much more light than the dark rocks and so effects the film to a greater extent. The reverse works when the negative is placed against a piece of photographic printing paper. The dense parts of the negative hold back the light and the thin parts of the negative allow light to pass, and so the white shirt and the dark rocks appear in the finished print.

When the film is developed the grains of silver which have been affected by the light have a tendency to join up and form clumps of grains. If the negative is enlarged to a fair size these clumps of grains become visible, ruining

the appearance of the picture. The faster the speed of the film the more tendency there is for this " grain " to show up on enlargement. So when big enlargements are required a slow speed or " fine grain " film is used. If pictures must be had and the light is poor or only a limited lens aperture is available then a high speed film is used and smaller enlargements are made.

Examples of slow speed Panchromatic films are Kodak Panatomic-X and Ilford F.P.3. Kodak Verichrome and Ilford Selochrome are medium speed Orthochromatic films and Kodak Super-XX and Ilford H.P.3 are of the very fast Panchromatic variety.

FOCUSSING THE CAMERA

Box cameras have no focussing scale and the lens is usually set so that everything from about 10 ft. to the far distance will be rendered with reasonable sharpness in a print the same size as the negative. The simple type of folding camera has generally a scale set alongside the bellows or perhaps on the front ring of the lens mount and probably marked 6, 8, 10, 15, 25, 40 ft. and Infinity. High class cameras may be fitted with a rangefinder coupled to the lens so that distance reckoning and actual focussing are carried out simultaneously and with great precision. In the reflex type of camera and plate cameras with focussing screens, the image of the view is seen on a piece of ground glass and the front of the camera is moved backwards or forwards until the image on the ground glass is sharp.

When a small lens stop is used and a point is focussed upon there is actually a zone of sharpness extending in front of and behind the object. This is known as " depth of field " and the larger the lens stop and the closer the object is approached the less this depth of field becomes. With large aperture lenses and at close distances, therefore, focussing must be done with great care.

FILTERS

A filter is a piece of coloured glass which is slipped in front of the camera lens. The glass must be optically perfect or it will impair the working of the lens. Filters can be of any colour and are commonly supplied in various depths of yellow, green, orange and red. All the light passing through the lens must pass through the filter so that by changing filters we can hold back or let through any of the colours appearing in our view and cause the film to register any colour in a lighter or darker tone.

In mountain work the most troublesome colour is the blue of the sky. All films have a tendency to be over-sensitive to blue and a photograph where the sky is shown

as blank white when actually lovely clouds were present, is all too familiar. A light or medium yellow filter is the most useful for average mountain views which include blue sky. The yellow filter is also valuable for reducing haze and allowing distant mountains to register more clearly.

Filters have factors of 2 times, 3 times etc. according to the amount of increase in exposure required when they are used. The medium yellow filter is generally a 2 times filter which means that the normal exposure will have to be doubled when the filter is used.

EXPOSURE

All films have a certain amount of latitude in exposure. It is possible to underexpose a little or overexpose a lot and still obtain a passable print. However, to obtain a clear, bright picture there is a correct exposure and this can be estimated by using the excellent tables supplied by the film manufacturers or by using an exposure meter. Light must fall upon the film surface for just the right time and there are several conditions which control this time.

1. The brilliance of the light. This varies according to the time of the year, the hour of the day, and the weather conditions.
2. The amount of this light which is reflected from the various parts of the subject.
3. The amount of this reflected light which reaches the film. This varies with the lens stop.
4. The speed of the shutter which governs the time the light is allowed to fall on the film.
5. The speed of the film being used. The faster the film the quicker the record—and vice versa.

LIGHTING

Early morning and evening are the best times for mountain photography. The shadows cast by the mid-day sun are short and hard but earlier or later in the day the shadows are longer and more attractive and the light is softer in quality. It is often possible to plan a mountain expedition so that the lighting will be just right when a given point on the route is reached. (The photographer calls this organisation but his fellow climbers have other names for it !).

PICTURE MAKING

Our finished picture is either a rectangle or a square and into these shapes we pour a collection of circles, ovals, triangles, curves, straight lines and irregular masses, with all sorts of degrees of light and shade. How we arrange these in our picture space represents the very frightening

D. R. Forrester

"An Tellach," Corrag Buidhe and Sgurr Fiona from Toll an Lochan

word for the novice—composition. Yet it need not be so terrifying if we remember that our finished print should appear pleasing and harmonious to the viewer. Composition is not so much a geometrical exercise as the suitable selection and placing of the various bits and pieces within the picture space. The failure of many photographs, apart from faulty technique, is simply that the photographer failed to give sufficient thought to what was before the lens. Remember that the lens is not selective but sees everything before and behind the subject. There is no excuse for having out-of-focus rucsacs in the foreground and your companion with the distant peak balanced on the top of his balaclava.

Figures are best at a fair distance from the camera and placed so as to give scale to the mountain. The vastness of a scene can only be estimated when some object of familiar size is shown for comparison. Unless a record of a party is being made people in a mountain landscape should never be facing the camera. Try not to have the main object in the picture placed centrally, but a little to one side. The skyline or the far shore of the loch or the horizon are best either a third from the top or bottom of the picture space. The same applies to vertical lines such as tall trees—place them a little to one side so that the picture is not divided exactly in two.

FINAL ADVICE

Choose the viewpoint carefully.
Focus the camera correctly.
Hold the camera level.
Hold the camera steady.
Give a reasonably correct exposure.
Remember to wind on your film.

For those who wish to delve deeply into this subject of photographing mountains, beg, borrow or buy a copy of "Mountain Photography" by C. D. Milner. This book has all the answers and contains dozens of superb mountain pictures the study of which will amply repay the reader.

The sooner you begin to process your own films and make your own prints, the sooner you will master your camera and materials, and the sooner you will be on the way to turning your snapshots into pictures. You alone are aware of what impressed you in a mountain scene and you alone can translate it into the finished picture so that your message may be passed on for the pleasure of others.

D. R. Forrester, A.R.P.S.

Ski-ing In Scotland

Scotland can offer good winter sports but they are to be enjoyed only by those who like to be energetic, and there is little scope for the " down-hill-only " skiers.

Contrary to the belief of many people, there is always snow in Scotland from about the middle of December till the end of April; but often it is necessary to climb 1½ to 2 hours to reach it, though sometimes it lies at low altitudes and is easily reached from main roads. But even in a year which is bad for snow, there is always some at altitudes of 2500 feet and upwards. It is to be found packed into river beds at this height, to a considerable depth, and giving at the worst a kind of " piste " run of 1½ to 2 miles in several localities. In good conditions and with heavy snowfalls, the scope and the runs can be very good indeed.

The best places in Scotland for snow and therefore for ski-ing are to be found on the north slopes of the mountains and on all the high ranges above 3000 feet there is scope for ski-ing under first class conditions.

Three very good centres are Killin, near Ben Lawers, Dalwhinnie, and Aviemore. From the latter, transport is necessary to get to the north slopes of the Cairngorms.

In places where there is always a minimum " piste " run of snow, it would be very advantageous if, in the future, a hut were established where equipment could be stored and also a portable ski lift used; and it is hoped that this will be developed in the near future on the strip of snow on Coire Cas on Cairngorm. This area can produce excellent ski-ing and in a good year a five-mile run from the top of Cairngorm right down to Glenmore Lodge is possible. When conditions are as good as this, there is scope for ski touring, and indeed, people have on several occasions made tours on skis over distances as far as from Braemar to Tomintoul.

The best months for ski-ing weather are probably March and April, although in January and February also and even December, good days can be had, but the weather then can become adverse very quickly and the cold biting wind can be most trying.

It is, of course, essential to be properly clad and to have good wind-proof garments, and a hooded wind-proof jacket is most desirable.

The best way to enjoy a ski-ing holiday in Scotland is to go prepared to vary it with snow climbing, which can be made as safe and as easy as required, but is always interesting because of the day to day variation in the type of snow and because of the thrill of surmounting what is generally the final difficulty in the shape of a cornice at

the top of the climb. Snow climbing in Scotland offers something peculiarly native to the country during the winter and spring, and it is a sport which is becoming increasingly popular. It can be done on many days when, owing to wind or weather of one kind or another, ski-ing would be unpleasant.

There are several active ski clubs in Scotland, notably the Scottish Ski Club, the Dundee Ski Club, and the Highland Ski Club whose headquarters is in Inverness; these clubs each year attract an increasing number of members; and races and meetings are held in the Cairngorms or on the slopes of Ben Lawers.

The Scottish Centre of Outdoor Training at Glenmore lodge has been for the past few years taking courses of students throughout the winter and spring, and teaching ski-ing and snow-climbing; and during the last two years, successful attempts have been made to open certain hotels near the ski-ing areas in the spring season for ski-ers and climbers.

From mid-March this year there has been an influx of people into Speyside, and in particular to Aviemore. The season will continue until about the end of April and every day, cars, buses and lorries carry ski-ers with their equipment from Aviemore past Loch Morlich to Glenmore Lodge, where they commence their climb up to the snow. At Glenmore Lodge itself, which is run under the auspices of the Central Council of Physical Recreation there have been, as usual, courses in ski-ing and climbing for 35 young people at a time.

Every day there are to be seen ski-ers on the snow slopes, but the week-ends have been their busiest times; and each year seems to bring more and more.

Snow conditions have been moderately good in 1950. They have varied from quite good conditions down to 1000 foot level—in fact, right to Glenmore Lodge—to those obtaining at the end of March, when the snow was mainly in large patches, giving runs of two miles and ending about the 2000 foot mark.

Scotland cannot offer Swiss conditions: she does, however, offer Scottish conditions, which are at present mainly for the hardy who are prepared to take pot-luck. But for those who are prepared to do so, Scotland gives her reward. For one thing is certain; in a week or a fortnight's holiday, if the hills are approached in the right spirit, there may be excellent ski-ing to be had, but there should always be enjoyment and the desire to return for more.

LORD MALCOLM DOUGLAS-HAMILTON, M.P.

A Day To Remember

ANOTHER warm summer day in London about to begin. As I come on duty I feel the freshness of the early morning but know that in an hour or so the heat will be unbearable and the air heavy. I reach the duty room three floors up and gaze for a moment from the window at the distant view of London stretching on and on to the horizon. In my near view is Wormwood Scrubs prison with its grim, forbidding walls and rows of little eyelet windows heavily barred. I scarcely notice it now—so familiar has the sight become.

I turn to my desk to start the daily routine and glance at the calendar for the date. Time to turn over the leaf—it is a 'Scotsman' calendar—and lo! the view is of Slioch. I gaze for a second and recall that just so I looked on Slioch in April. How far away it all seems, and yet I feel that I can almost hear the ripple of the stream where A.D. sat that day adjusting his camera to take this same view. Ah, well!—to work.

It is late evening before I sit down again to record the day's doings. I am hot, tired and depressed for it has been a sizzling hot day and now the air is heavy and sultry. I glance at the calendar and again see the slopes of Slioch rising up behind the cool, green trees by the side of the river. Then I noticed the little cloud hovering over the summit, and I say "That cloud wasn't there before." My two colleagues look at me in amazement and with compassion. (Perhaps, they seem to nod at each other, the heat and rush of the day has been too much for her.) But I remember it all so well and I pity them that they do not share the memory with me.

It was Easter Sunday, and such a lovely day. We were staying at Achnasheen for the week-end. Everyone was in good spirit as we joined the bus party for Loch Maree and plans were being made for the assaults on the surrounding hills. Now I have always wanted to climb Liathach and this was a perfect opportunity to do so. But, alas, I had been climbing the day before—the first time for over a year that I had climbed anything higher than the daily three flights of stairs. Reluctantly I had to admit to myself I was scarcely fit to do justice to the ascent of the mighty mountain after several miles on the hard road to its base and in pace with the keen and energetic party now setting off for it. I joined the party going to explore Coire Mhic Fhearchair of Ben Eighe.

There wasn't anything at all spectacular about the expedition—I just recall the sheer pleasure of the day.

D. R. Forrester

"LIATHACH" FROM GLEN TORRIDON

Some miles up the glen we stopped by the side of the Grudie for our first bite from the haversacks, and I can still smell the warm heather and feel the sun on my face as we shared out our lunch packets. Then the not very strenuous climb up to the corrie; the magnificence of the waterfalls and the delightful cooling spray from them; the awe-inspiring grandeur of the buttresses; the lazy half-hour sitting on the stone slabs by the lochan sipping its ice-cold water; watching, with the help of N.H.'s binoculars, the progress of the couple on the 'stone chute'; idly guessing who might be the members of that party on the skyline, why they retraced their steps then turned again towards Ruadh Stac Mor. Then our descent to Glen Grudie in the lovely, violet light of evening, Slioch in view all the way against a cloudless sky.

We sat again by the Grudie water, just under those trees in the foreground of the 'Scotsman' picture, looking at Slioch and thinking our own thoughts. As we moved on again J. G. remarked "You'll remember this in the London fogs, H." Yes, indeed—a day to enjoy leisurely, and to remember.

It was an added pleasure to receive from A.D. at Christmas time a picture he had taken of Slioch that day. It is the same view exactly as the calendar one—but there is not a little cloud hovering over the summit.

H. R. Fletcher.

Experiences In Wales

In retrospect I consider that days spent on the crags of North Wales resolve themselves into two categories only—the exhilaratingly good, and the decidedly bad. There appears to be no middle course, and out of the two categories mentioned one climb from each stands out sharply in my mind against the slate-grey backcloth of Welsh rock climbing. The enjoyable one took place on the Milestone Buttress on Tryfan—as much a rock climbers' mountain as any Coolin, composed superficially as well as internally of sound, rough rock and about as high as Sgurr nan Eag in that range. I forget the name of that particular climb; for all I know, being at the time a novice, we may have wandered all over the buttress. All I remember of its position on the buttress was that it started directly above the tenth milestone from Bangor on the Holyhead road (a sort of Welsh Blarney Stone, only very seldom kissed). It was certainly all very interesting, as slab followed slab in a disorderly succession reminiscent of crazy pavings, and as we gained height, the seemingly uninterrupted drop into the gloomy Llyn Ogwen grew more impressive. Towards the end of our excursion we took in our stride the very interesting Ivy Chimney, still so-called though the last remnants of that plant disappeared well before Edward Whymper climbed the Matterhorn.

An unusual feature of this rather damp sixty-foot chimney is that a direct exit, except the one plumb into the lake below, is precluded as the chimney possesses a roof to it, and an escape to the crags above is effected through a window in the right hand wall, in the manner of one climbing out of a top-story window of a house on to the roof. This, though involving awkward bodily contortions, is not difficult; it does, however, give one the exhilarating impression of great exposure. I will remember for some time to come the derisive cheer set up by a mob of Lancastrians as, preceded by my ruck-sack and camera in that order, I cautiously made the grade. I will remember, too, how I was followed by a member of the female sex climbing in bare feet.

I might do no worse than select as an example of the decidedly bad days the completion, by trial and error, of one of the easier climbs on the Idwal Slabs. Here, my companion and I fell foul of one of the purple-finger-nail brigade. Climbing with the best of rock-climbing women is, of course, a pure delight as well as an exhibition of grace, but on this occasion we drew the short straw. Idwal Slabs is so cluttered up with routes that they all appear

to ascend in parallel at intervals of about six feet, and the lady in question kept switching from one climb to another with the rapidity of alternating current. In doing this, she arranged to cross our line of ascent, crawl under our rope, and recross over it, thus taking it with her and forming a gigantic X of rope on the face of the Slabs. The impasse became imminent as a purple-tipped talon appeared from below and unceremoniously brushed my foot from its foot-hold. With true old-world courtesy for the weaker sex I replaced it; the lady retired with a sharp howl, and we were able to complete the climb. "Fra ghaisties an' ghoulies, long-legged beasties, etc., etc." I immediately departed on a nice fresh ridge walk. The air was as blue as the sky on Idwal Slabs.

But my interest in the Welsh hills started well before the rock-climbing bacillus bit me. In those days I haunted the county of Merioneth like the ghost of Owen Glendower, and today I consider this part of Wales deserving of greater praise than it is usually credited with. Wales has the greatest percentage of hilly country of all the countries in the British Isles, though it does not compare with Scotland in extent; I am tempted to say does not compare with Scotland! There are hills in Wales from Aberdaron to Rhosllanerchrugog, from Neath to Llanfairpwllgwyngll-what-have-you. Wales invites you to start exploration of her anywhere, and so do her people. Between the two haunts of mountaineers, from Brecon Beacons in the south and the Snowdon country in the north—I positively refuse to call it Snowdonia—there are a wealth of mountains and fine mountain passes. There are the Rhinogs, the roughest hills in Wales; the Arans, the mistiest; the Berwyns, the wettest; and Cader Idris, which in my opinion ranks with Snowdon and Tryfan.

Cader Idris extends inland from the sea for ten miles or more. This ridge, seamed and precipitous on the north, reaches its highest point in Pen-y-Gader, 2927 feet. It is relative height that matters and for more than twenty-five miles Cader stands supreme. Owing to its position, however, it catches all the bad weather like all the best mountains, and fatalities are not infrequent. Technically difficult climbing can be obtained on Craig-y-Can and Cyfrwy on either side of the summit ridge, though loose rock occur in places. There is no doubt about it Cader Idris is an excellent mountain, it can be ascended from ten different directions. The traverse of the entire ridge from Barmouth to Dolgelly on a fine day is an exhilarating expedition—the climbs are there, the two inns at Tal-y-Llyn are very hospitable, the lake of Tal-y-Llyn and the Mawddach estuary are singularly beautiful, and the fish bite

like sharks in the mountain tarns. Perhaps there will be one or two Scots less at Dundonnel or Drumrunie this year.

The Aran hills make a fine expedition on a good day, but are maddening in thick weather. This very Christmas I endeavoured to storm over the Arans, but they stormed over me instead, and I therefore made a detour over a mountain pass, wet but not miserable. In this condition I arrived in Bala, a pleasant northern town.

Though there are dozens of more diminutive hill ranges to attract the mountaineers in Wales, the man or woman coughing up the train fare from Elgin or Forres to Wales will pick the north, for here are the finest of Welsh mountains. They have need to be, for anyone who has travelled from the North of Scotland to Wales will tell you that the journey is paid for, not only in money, but in blood as well. Before I give my impressions of the Snowdon area I would like to say a word or two on the subject of the Welsh and their language.

Prejudices that have now been rendered void by the demeanour of the Scottish people still exist against the Welsh because they fail to demonstrate publicly that they possess the abundant good faith which brings Scotland its well-deserved praise. Be that as it may, I have always found the country Welsh hospitable and dynamic. They will dig out ancient and battered Fords and drive you anywhere on the worst roads in the United Kingdom for their enjoyment, entertaining you in precise, quaint, and grammatical English in the manner of the Western Isles. Fifty per cent. of Welshmen are bilingual, and their language is an interesting one, having much in common with the Gaelic.

Since all the hills in the Snowdon range are known by their Welsh names (except Snowdon, which is a collective name for four mountains), it seems logical to give the whole district a Welsh name. As it happens it has one; the name is ERYRI (pronounced "URREE"), meaning an eyrie. As a mountain group Eryri is very convenient. It obligingly divides itself into five groups, three large and two small, and each is separated from each by the minimum of roads. These roads are very useful, enabling the climber to attack his objective from almost any direction, and yet are not too conspicuous; Eryri is not studded with roads as is Lakeland. Whether these roads are an advantage to the mountaineer or not is a moot point; certainly the feeling of spaciousness is forsaken for convenience. Economically, the roads are of great importance and serve the district well, but they cause me to give rise to the opinion that North Wales is hardly the adventurer's country that the Cairngorms undoubtedly are.

The A5 road from London to Holyhead passes through Eryri, and divides the Carneddan mountains in the north from the others. Here in the Carneddan one may recapture the spaciousness of the Cairngorms, and the worst of the weather; this range is notoriously misty and walkers who have found their way up Ben Macdhui in mist have found themselves completely foiled on Carnedd Llewellyn, which dominate the range at a height of 3484 feet. The traverse of the whole of the eight Carneddan tops makes a brilliantly laborious day, high-lighted by spacious cwms (*i.e.* corries), tiny black tarns and rough, steep ridges. Some of the best rock climbing in Wales is to be had on Craig-yr-Ysfa, a crag which was "discovered" by telescope from the summit of Scafell Pike in Cumberland. The Great Gully in particular is a very fine climb.

The Holyhead road branches off at Capel Curig and carries on westwards to Llanberis and Caernarvon. Between this road and the main road lie the Glyder group of hills, which provide the greater part of the rock climbing in the district. The Glyders also consist of eight mountains, providing another five ridge walks over a great variety of mountain scenery. The Idwal Slabs on Glyder Fawr are a well-known training ground in the delicate art of balance as well as providing technically severe courses, and the Devil's Kitchen above Llyn Idwal, which has yet to be climbed direct, enjoys fame beyond the borders of Wales. The Devil's Kitchen is an odd piece of imagery as translated from the correct Welsh form, 'twll du,' it should read 'black hole.' It certainly deserves the names.

Tryfan is the showpiece of the neighbourhood though the least one may indulge in to reach Adam and Eve, the two rock pillars which stand in lieu of the summit cairn, is a stiff climb. The glory of Tryfan is that the climber can spend the whole day climbing on it without reaching the top. The north ridge will follow the Milestone Buttress, and the East face may follow the north ridge and land him out near the top, but Tryfan invites him to wander at will. The ascent of Tryfan by the north ridge, over to Bwlch Tryfan, up Glyder Fash by the Bristley Ridge, along to Glyder Fawr and down to Idwal alongside Twll du is counted as one of the district's finer expeditions.

The two smaller groups, those surrounding the mountains Moel Siabod and Moel Hebog, provide plenty of interesting ridge walking but, with the exception of the Great Slab on Craig Cwm Silin, provide no rock climbing. The remaining mountains in Wales to be discussed are those known as Snowdon, that group which reaches its

highest point in Ywyddfa, 3560 feet, the zenith of Welsh mountains.

Snowdon itself is an over-popularised mountain—it has a cafe on top and a railway to the summit from Llanberis, but thousands too energetic to avail themselves of this Heath-Robinson service, climb the mountain from Pen-y-Gwryd, Biddgelert, Pen-y-pass (an inn on the top of the Llanberis pass), Llanberis, and the Snowdon Ranger Hostel. Mountaineering purists deplore the railway and cafe, but as the latter is not only discreetly placed, and renders it unnecessary to take food, and the former appears foolishly insignificant against the huge flank of Snowdon, I do not object. On the other hand, the railway is smoky and necessitates the construction of stations and termini on the mountainside, and the cafe charges scandalous prices (you have to pay 6d to eat your food in there), and I should not mind if an act of God were to destroy both.

If Snowdon is the Ben Nevis of Wales, then the Crib Goch ridge, undoubtedly the finest method of climbing the mountain, is the Carn Mor Dearg arete of Eryri. I have done Snowdon Horseshoe (*i.e.*, the four-mile ridge of that shape which includes the four summits of Crib Goch, Carnedd Ugain, Y Wyddfa—Snowdon summit—and Lliwedd) twice, and on both occasions was accompanied by rain, mist and consequential zero visibility and I will here relate the second occasion, as it stands out more clearly in my memory. I set out from the top of the Llanberis pass and after some thirty or forty minutes reached Bwlch Moch (the Pig's Pass), from the top of which there is a direct ascent of some 1500 feet to the summit of Crib Goch. At about half this height the use of hands becomes necessary, and at one place rock-climbing (as distinct from scrambling) has to be resorted to. There is an easier route for non-rock climbers about six feet to the left, but conscientiously I tackled the difficult bit, and after a most enjoyable scramble on the upper rocks reached the sharp little summit of Crib Goch. The summit of Crib Goch presents itself with a certain measure of surprise. To the south, a steep slope (walk right up four feet below the top and you can touch it with outstretched arm), to the north, an almost sheer drop down the North Buttress into Cwm Glas. To the east, the way up presents itself, and westwards stretches the Crib Goch ridge. This airy knife-edge is horizontal for about one hundred yards and then, after a subsidiary summit, breaks up into pinnacles. Both the quickest and the easiest way ahead lies over, rather than around, these pinnacles and provides good sport with exhilarating views towards Llanberis. A short descent beyond the pinnacles leads to a col, and the first part of

the Horseshoe, the Crib Goch ridge, was behind me.

A somewhat longer, though not so exposed, ridge known as Crib-y-ddisgl now leads upwards to the next summie, Carnedd Ugain. About half way along there is a 'mauvais pas,' and I found it to be quite a stretch to make it. A short way beyond Carnedd Ugain I spotted the railway track, a sure guide in thick weather, and by occasionally keeping it in view I reached the cairn on Y Wyddfa, 3560 feet above sea level. In the interests of truth I record that I did favour the cafe with a quick visit; it is licensed!

But there are more important things to do on mountains, the consumption of beer included, and it was not long before I was sliding down the scree slopes to the col between Y Wyddfa and Lliwedd. Once on this col (whose name is Bwlch-y-Saethan) the mist cleared and I was able to see the rocky outline of the Crib Goch ridge, the black little tarn of Glaslyn in the gigantic hollow of Cwm Dyli, and below, the angular gaunt Llyn Llydaw. A fairly short rocky ridge took me to the top of Lliwedd, the last of the four Snowdon summits. Near the top of the 2947 foot high Lliwedd I was rewarded with excellent views of the 1000 foot northerly face of the mountain. Seen from Llyn Llydaw, the cliffs appear very smooth indeed, yet once on them one may get a feeling of enclosure. This transmutation from enclosure to exposure is one of the many fascinating things about this crag. I made the descent of Lliwedd by traversing the sharp little Lliwedd Bach, and striking down a steep green ridge towards Lliwedd Llydaw once I reached level ground. The walk along the old miner's track to Pen-y-Pass made a very pleasant finish to what is perhaps the finest easy expedition that Wales has to offer.

The worst part of this business of climbing in Eryri is leaving it, especially as the slow train journey is one of the worst in Britain for its length. It passes all those places in Wales that are not Wales—Prestatyn, Rhyl and the like, full of people determined to enjoy themselves or die in the attempt, and it all makes an uncomfortable ending to a Welsh holiday. This year I intend to walk from Cape Wrath to the Kyle of Lochalsh, and consequently shall have but little time for Wales, but in 1951 I shall be back.

M. F. Hall.

[**Being greedy for more we are sure that many of our members would have liked a few notes on the rock climbs of the Snowdon group, and particularly of Clogwyn Du'r Arddu. Perhaps M. F. H. will oblige in the next issue of the Journal.—The Editors.**]

A Day On Cairngorm

In the faint unreal half-light before dawn, Loch Morlich lay like a sheet of glass reflecting dark hill forms framed between ancient Scots firs. A pair of mallard swung overhead, quacking softly, and alighted with a sudden splash far out; a desultory roar came faintly from one of the high corries and, as though in answer, a dog barked sharply from the stalker's house at Glenmore. The world was already expectant of another day; I strolled up through the forest towards hills silhouetted against a golden sky, while fine-drawn tendrils of mist crept lazily out of the corries and hung hesitant, waiting to be dispersed by ever-increasing daylight. Innumerable ants scurried busily to and fro across the path, and a maze of sparkling spider's threads stretched from branch to branch.

The sun met me as I reached the last outpost trees, and I settled down to brew myself a "second breakfast," time honoured among climbers as the first palatable meal of the day.

The whole broad valley of the Spey, now bathed in sunshine and blue wisps of smoke, showed that others, too, were thinking of breakfast. As I waited for my pan to boil, the thin whistle of a train echoed for a moment among the hills, and I reflected on its cargo of sleepy passengers rushing through the countryside; most of them were probably oblivious of their surroundings, but a few perhaps would wipe the mist from the carriage windows and gaze beyond the forest to the wall of hills in the south. How many, I wondered, would wish to change places with me.

I made an excellent meal and set off once more up the long shoulder of Cairngorm. A broad and gentle slope this, suitable for a morning where I could let my attention wander from the automatic rythm of walking uphill. An old cock grouse, herald of many such mornings, perched on a boulder and proclaimed the day. Away on my right a party of hinds lay in the sunshine, while their attendant stag paced restlessly about, roaring occasionally, challenging interference. Above them, some damp patches on the cliffs of Coire-an-t-Sneachda caught the sun, and I decided to drop down later and look for a route up one of those inviting rock ribs.

Soon I arrived on the summit plateau of Cairngorm; here the night's cold still lingered in shaded hollows and each grass stem carried a bead of little frost crystals. I sat for a while by the cairn and looked over the great expanses of heathery moor-land. Across the green Spey valley the Monadhliaths shimmered in the heat haze and seemed to lose themselves in blue sky.

SOLITARY CLIMBER

A few weeks before I had been climbing in the high Alps, and now I found myself trying to compare the two scenes; how different they were, and yet how much they had in common, each in its own way equally satisfying—the one awe-inspiring and supremely beautiful, though often distracted by the necessity of speed and continued watchfulness; the other more subdued and less spectacular, but no less beautiful. Such comparisons are invidious. Each holds its place and its pleasant associations, and no mountaineer would wish to indulge one at the expense of the other.

The air was so still that a lighted match would burn without flickering; bees droned purposefully overhead, and even the desultory roaring of stags sounded half-hearted in the heat. I slept for an hour and then, overcoming my laziness, rattled quickly down stony slopes into Coire-an-t-Sneachda.

It was now past mid-day, and I ate my lunch beside a tiny lochan in the floor of the coire. Above me, the rocks rose at first in broad bands of smooth slabs, steepening into a series of ribs and towers intersected by shady gullies. I selected a likely looking rib and, after a final drink in the lochan, started upwards.

I enjoyed a good scramble up rocks which were warm and, once above the belt of slabs, well broken up. The rib itself gave some exhilarating situations, and proved to be free from those unstable blocks which are so often an unwelcome feature of Cairngorm faces. On my right was a gully, which near its top narrowed to a rift of forbidding appearance and I made a mental note to return in Spring and examine its possibilities as a snow climb. I had idled up the climb, resting now and then on ledges to smoke a cigarette, so the sun was low in the north-west when I levered myself finally over the last obstacle on to level ground.

A cool breeze sprang up as I made my way along the cliff top, and a low bank of cloud in the west changed imperceptibly through a pageant of colour as the sun sank over the horizon. Shadows lengthened and warmth drained gradually from the hill-sides. Soon only the splendour in the north-west remained. Then, stealthily, stars began to take possession of the sky.

C. H. Pelham Burn.

Beginner's Luck—Female Version

The other day a friend of mine suggested that I should come out as his guest for the next meet of the local mountaineering club. As I considered myself rather a good walker (I spend nearly every Saturday afternoon walking round the shops admiring the hats and clothes) I said that I would come. My friend added that he would send me a list of things to bring, and a few days later it arrived. Here it is below. Did you ever hear of anything so stupid? Fancy taking all that bother just to walk up a hill!

Personal clothing on you—

A good pair of strong BOOTS with BIG nails.
An old coat and trousers, with a very light-weight mackintosh.
A woollen helmet and a waterproof hat of some sort.
Gloves, nice thick woollen ones.

In your rucksack—

Map. Thick pullover. Scarf. Money. Food for the whole day. Possibly a thermos of hot tea.

In a spare rucksack or very small suit-case—

Change of clothing. Small primus stove. Matches. Tea. Sugar. Milk. Knife. Fork. Spoon. More food. Towel and soap. Saucepan of some sort. Comb. Spare lipstick and Kirby grips.

I contented myself with putting on ordinary clothes and taking some sandwiches. He had told me that the bus left at 6.30 a.m. sharp but I overslept and arrived at 6.45 just as the bus was about to leave without me. On getting into the bus I thought that some of the people looked very unfriendly towards me, but it really was not my fault as I had not got an alarm clock and anyway I didn't see much harm in keeping 30 people waiting a *few* minutes.

After a long drive we got to the start in the pouring rain and I felt in no hurry to get out. The man in charge of my party kept on peering inside the bus and looking at me, eventually asking me in a rather sarcastic voice whether I was ever coming out. So rather reluctantly I put on my big coat and heavy mackintosh and got out. No sooner had I emerged than he asked to see my boots. What impertinence I thought. I showed him my nice shoes. "Shoes, shoes," he almost screamed, "why they are ordinary walking shoes and have no nails. You will find it very difficult to walk up the steep hillside and hell to come down again on the wet grassy slopes, and you'll keep the others back. I really ought not to take you with us, however I'll risk it. It will be myself who will really have the bother."

Eventually we all got off, going down a very muddy road. My nice shoes and stockings (nylons, alas) were soon ruined. After about 3 or 4 miles I noticed that the leader kept looking round at me, eventually asking if anything was wrong as he said I kept so far behind the others. I told him that my big coat was very heavy. He told me to take it off and he put it on his rucksack. A mile or so further on he asked me how I felt. I told him my hair was streaming wet (I had no hat), that my feet felt like lead and that my big mackintosh kept dragging in the mud. He took my mackintosh and my handbag. After all he was a man and why shouldn't he carry my things?

Another half hour of purgatory found us struggling up the side of a very steep hillside. By this time the others were a long way ahead. My feet were hurting and I kept slipping. The rain was teeming down. Oh, why did I ever come? Suddenly I slipped on a wet grassy patch, skidded down a hundred feet and came to rest against a big very hard rock. Oh, how I hurt my situpon! The man came slithering down to me and picked me up. He asked me whether I wouldn't like to go back to the bus. Although that was what I really wanted I knew it would spoil his day, but he urged me to return, saying that he would come back with me and brew some nice hot tea when we got back, so off we started, and it made me think "Oh, he's not so bad after all." I almost forgave him for his nasty remarks about my shoes.

Having got back to the bus he lent me a thick pullover, some trousers, socks and even a pair of enormous shoes, all of which I discovered afterwards were his spare dry change of clothing. Of course I was soaked to the skin, and so was he. I can't think what the poor man did about his wet clothes. He made me some tea on his primus and after an hour's sleep I felt much better. Back again by midnight, but what a day! Never again. How I cursed the day and my friend who suggested that I should go out.

That night, however, I had a dream, and I dreamt that I did go out again. I had profited by my previous experience and had:—

Bought a pair of good boots with big climbing nails.
Invested in a good rucksack.
Obtained a pair of cheap trousers and "borrowed" an old tweed coat from my mother.
Bought a light oilskin cape from Campbell's in Aberdeen.
Prepared the night before all my food for the day's outing and told the telephone people to ring me at 5 a.m. as I still had no alarm clock.

That Sunday was a fine, sunny, but very cold winter's day, and I reached the bus starting point half an hour too early. I had misread the notice! Still people greeted me very friendly-like and no black looks today! We arrived after a couple of hours' running and I got out with my suit case. This time I had a different leader, although I still had a soft spot in my heart for my first one. We decided where we were going and my leader showed me on a map, but I can't read a map (my uncle once offered to show me but I really couldn't be bothered). On getting out of the bus we were told to carry our spare stuff some half mile to a house. Half way there I stopped for a rest as my suit case, being a nice big one, was very heavy. One of the men of the party offered to carry it for me, and of course I agreed. After all he only had his own to carry as his rucksack was on his back.

We dumped our spare kit at the house and, after a bite of food, set off in fine heart. After a longish tramp along the road we started up the mountain itself. Half way up it came on to snow with a biting cold wind, but I was prepared this time. I had my woolly gloves. On approaching the summit it turned into a real blizzard and my leader asked me if I hadn't got a woollen balaclava helmet. I told him that I hadn't as I never put anything on my head. After a very hasty lunch we started to come down. Half way down we came into the sunshine and stopped for a few minutes to admire the view. Some remarked to me "Why whatever is the matter with your ears, they look black." I replied "Nothing, why? I can't feel anything." A doctor who happened to be in our party said "I'm not so sure. I think that they are a bit frost-bitten. It was silly not to bring a woolly hat." So he started to massage them and, oh, how it hurt.

We got down to the road again and had to face that awful long trek back to the house. By this time my right heel was feeling sore as I was wearing my nice new boots. I had visions of blisters, but never say die; grin and bear it. So on we went. A couple of miles further on I said that I must stop and have a rest as my foot was hurting so. I was made to take off my boot and socks. On seeing my heel the leader said "I'm not surprised that you are lame with a huge blister like that. Fancy coming out on a long day like this with brand new boots. You ought to have broken them in beforehand and put on several coats of liquid dubbin or Mars oil. But I'm glad to see that you had the sense to get a pair of boots that will take two pairs of really thick socks. If only you had told me some time ago that your heel was hurting we could so easily have stopped and put on a bit of elasto-plast and you

would not have got that frightful blister." We put on some plaster, but it was no good. Half a mile further on I had to take off my boot and walk the rest of the way in my socks. My kind leader kindly took my rucksack and helped me along, tucking my arm in his. After some nice hot tea we got back home again and, in spite of my poor heel, I had quite enjoyed myself.

That night I had another dream and, believe it or not, I dreamt that I went on yet *another* outing. This time I felt really wise for I had had such a lot of experience by now. I remembered all my deeds and misdeeds on the first never-to-be-forgotten wet day and my stupidities on the second. So this time :—

I bought a nice, but rather expensive, balaclava hat.
Gave my boots several coats of oil.
Put in some first aid dressings in my rucksack.
Borrowed a small suit case for my change of clothes.

This time it was spring and as we got out of the bus the whole country looked grand, with the hill-tops covered with their caps of snow. It made one long to get to their summits. By this time, too, I had learnt a bit of map reading and I found that it made the outing so much more interesting. I had got a map of my own instead of always borrowing someone else's . It's true that I hadn't got a compass but then you have to be really clever, like a school mistress, to know how to work them.

We were only two in the party and my companion said " I vote we try and get to the top of RAINYTOUL. We might be a bit late getting back to the bus which is due to leave at 8 p.m. but we'll have a try. After all it really doesn't much matter if we are a bit late." We had a good day and after eating our lunch on the top of RAINYTOUL my companion said " We've still plenty of time, let's go back by the SLUMBER STONE." We found the going very much stonier and rougher than we expected and after a long weary trek we got back to the bus at 9 p.m. We cried out " Well, here we are. Had a grand day." We couldn't understand the stony silence that greeted our remark until someone almost shouted " Good day my foot. Don't you realise that you've had the impoliteness to keep 30 people waiting about for a whole hour just because you did not plan your walk so as to get back at the proper time. We are not amused. If you want to forget the clock don't use communal transport; come in your own car. Another time we shall leave 15 minutes after the time arranged and you will be left behind to find your own way back." Rather crestfallen we crept into the bus. On the way back my neighbour told of one of their party who had not bothered to take

a warm thick pullover in his rucksack and had to " borrow" from others. I thought " Well, I'm not the only fool. That's something."

That night I had another dream. You have guessed? I remembered all my now considerable mountaineering experience and felt that there must be surely little that I didn't know. So before long again I was out in the hills and this time it was summer. We had a grand day, one of those days one looks back on—pleasant companions and lovely views and country. We got back to the house where we had dumped our spare kit and the others started to change. Oh, how I longed for a nice cup of hot " char." There it was, the nice hot tea in the Club urn, awaiting our return. Some kind person had somehow managed to scrounge some tea, sugar and milk, and how much we all appreciated it.

And that night I dreamt again and found that I had nothing more to learn. At last I was a REAL MOUNTAINEER!

ANON.

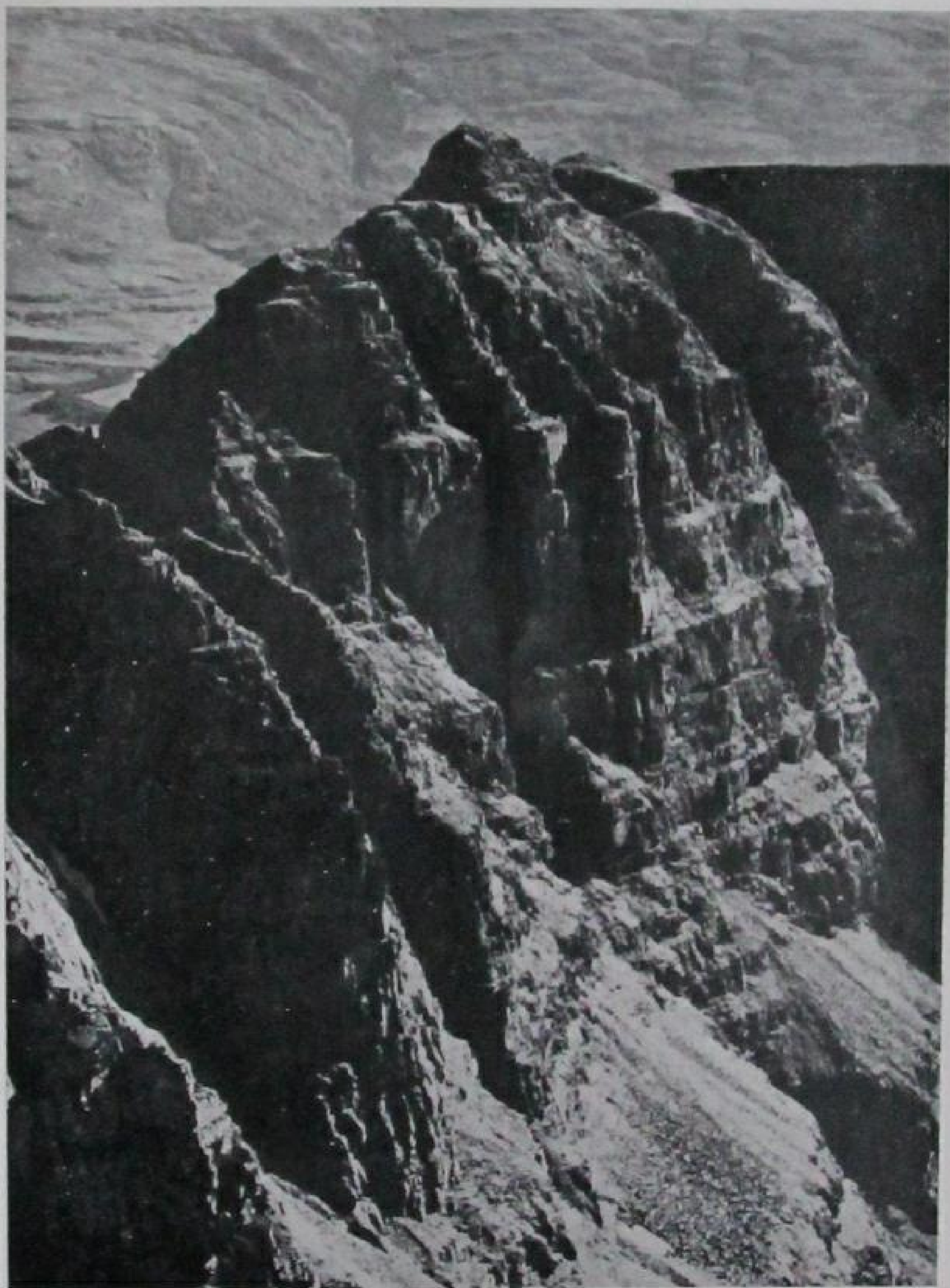
A Rock-Climb In Torridonia

In common with what one hopes is a very large number of other enthusiasts, my brother Allan and I have an unqualified regard for the splendid mountains of Wester Ross, and it was with the rarest anticipation that we found ourselves again, after an unconscionable lapse of years, on the Torridon road at the gap between Beinn Eighe and Liathach. The fact that it was raining hard, curiously failed to obscure the mountain or to have any affect on our high spirits. On this occasion we were not Liathach-bound, but we knew him of old and his hoary sandstone must have blushed at the appreciative nods, winks and pointings which punctuated our tramp along the Coire Dubh Mor track. Ben Eighe, with which we were to be concerned, suffers in comparison with its splendid neighbour in this locality, especially as the northern corries of Liathach come into view, the Meall Dearg stub often floating clear of the mist like an errant Suilven. With some difficulty we refrained from crossing over left to the Grey One, and held the track fortified by the knowledge that those who persevere have adequate reward in this case. You have guessed? Yes, we were bound for Coire Mhic Fhearchair, that incomparable fastness on Beinn Eighe's north-west corner.

The track ends without deterioration or other apology, and committed us to a tussocky moor traversed right-handed round the featureless shoulder of Sail Mhor, which, as usual, was exasperatingly longer than either memory or the best map allows. Two shocks no less, await the traveller in circling this shoulder. The first occurrs when, rounding yet another bulge of vegetated inadequacies, the Sail suddenly shows his teeth. A precipitous sandstone buttress swoops menacingly out of the sky, and from the slash of Morrison's Gully a scree, so subtly curved as to suggest movement, licks with red tongue the corrie lip. Climbers slink past these cliffs, as past Carn Dearg of Nevis, with justification in their minds but shame written broadly on their backs. We were conventional and pressed on to the rim over which a white stream is borne on a shield of slabs. Besides we knew what was next. The shock was no less. A few steps up, and in front lay that small loch of blessed memory, a green pool lapping its clean edging stones nervously, and beyond, eye compelling, the Triple Buttress of Coire Mhic Fhearchair. This is the last word! Three vast buttresses, massive, brown, and handclasped below, silvered, swaying and attenuated above, stark as Egyptian colossi, crowd a submissive sky.

It was with positive relief that we got down to the commonplace of route selecting, reducing the formidable trio to ledges and cracks, perhaps pitches and traverses. The left or East Buttress and the Central Buttress have been fairly climbed over and about, not in your Lakeland manner, of course, where routes are often very close to one another, but sufficiently to check a little the contempt which the crag only too obviously shows for its admirers.

The Western Buttress, however, has only one route, made in 1919, and though sufficiently difficult in all conscience this is far from direct. Our intention was to make a new route on the West Buttress and, if possible, to keep roughly to the centre. The problem is blatant enough. The Buttress lifts up with no quarter like the side of a house for 400 feet of sheer Torridon sandstone, devoid of the usual broad ledges though the bedding is quite clear. The lower section of quartzite which succeeds is more broken and easier, but the final third is uncompromising metallic stuff. We trudged to the cliff base, the crags lurching with the most engaging aerial perspective as we approached, put hand on the rock, and roped up at a prominent angle, the more rightward of two which slit directly up the sandstone about a third of the way from its left, retaining gully. The angle was so constituted that it protruded on our left throughout, and provided a variable and sometimes questionable support in tackling the slabby gutter which was the portion of our right hands and feet. As is our usual practice, Allan, as second, started off to find an anchor at half-pitch distance to protect me beyond that, and I watched him weave slowly upwards, groping a good deal more than his wont. At 50 feet and 100 feet he had not found a respectable anchor, though an apprentice stance proclaimed itself from the left of the slabs, and he called me up. Somewhat warily I followed, not finding things at all easy, and since my brother's stance was hardly adequate for one, moved on ahead without halting. "If you're going to fall off, do it now," instructed Allan, "then you'll hit the scree before I take the weight." Thus fortified, I grappled with the immediate prospect. Handholds of a sort existed for the left hand, flat hand for the right on the slabs, faith and friction in the ratio 9 to 1 for the right foot. I made very slow progress for about 50 feet, and then had an awkward time with a bas-relief beak of typically rounded sandstone which bulged into our line of way. The best people stand upright in their holds at these crises, but since conforming meant abandoning both hand and foot contact, I tried to act like a veneer over the convexity. Eventually at a height of some 200 feet from the base



E. King

"AM FASARINEN"; THE NARROW RIDGE CONNECTING THE TWO HIGHER PEAKS OF LIATHACH

the angle on the left opened a gash sufficiently wide to insert a knotted rope and a foot, as an anchorage for my bored companion. He made less fuss coming over the bulge. The support of some kind of belay was a helpful basis for me to proceed, though there was no let-up in the inclination of our problems. The angle shallowed into a bay where progress was a slow scurry between aloof holds. A number of minute sloping ridges on the right tempted a traverse but I resisted what could only be a temporary concession. A large slab washed diagonally by recent rain and dried in patches needed delicate footwork, but gave out at a complete impasse, a slab overlapping from above which overthrust a dripping sneer at our presumption. A rounded projection immediately below it served to bring up the other half. It was some time before he came into my view, and flowed at me faceless and incongruous till the last step. You'll need a piton, or a dry day, or both,'' was his instant and accurate summing-up of the overhang. I tried three times to make the next few feet but somewhat half-heartedly, as the knob which had served as our last belay was quite hopeless for the next move. I was glad to come down from the projection, and this time even brother Allan was not anxious for me to fall off. It was rather provoking to be well over half-way up the sandstone bluff and to be faced with a distasteful descent, but there was no alternative. We couldn't climb the overhang that day, we couldn't traverse, we weren't even sure whether we could descend.

Now the high priests of mountaineering have long maintained that one should not climb anything one cannot descend, and also, fortunately for their theory, that descending is the easier as it is aided by gravity. Since we subscribed to neither aspect of this proposition, we were unsupported by the moral stiffening which is the portion of the righteous, and disappointed the pundits further in that we resisted an all-too-anxious gravity with might and main. The downward prospect was most exhilarating, and our progress was rather like walking down a main road on one's heels. We crept laboriously in turn to our only intervening anchor, grumbling at the impossibility of abseiling. The last step of over 100 feet without any support was the most trying and for some reason, then apparent but which escapes me now, we kept close together. After what seemed a couple of interglacial periods we put foot on the scree, straightened our necks, and phewed at the deliverance.

Our first thought was for something to eat, our second for our further intentions. Allan, who had not previously been on West Buttress, was anxious to get to the top

somehow, and as we had expended over two hours on the abortive attempt on the sandstone base, it was decided to sidestep this by using the gully to the left separating us from the Central Buttress. This gully was that used by the ubiquitous Collie in making his pioneer route on the Triple Buttress, and is perfectly easy as far as the quartzite junction. We followed the right hand branch of the gully as far as this point, and gained the West Buttress again via a peculiar gallery reminiscent of some of the precarious water channels which supply remote Alpine hamlets. The quartzite was steep enough, but compared to our graceless performance of the morning was engaging in the profusion of its ledges and cracks. About this stage I realised that Allan, who alternates between laconic monosyllable and rhetoric, was going to be loquacious. We reached what we had anticipated from below to be a fine hackly arête replete with gaps and gendarmes, to find it impressive enough but a series of steps and walls rather than pinnacles, and everywhere ruinous. Our passage over its insecurities was punctuated, where breathing allowed, by an argument of long standing as to the relative merits of Beethoven and Brahms, the inconclusiveness of twenty years being no deterrent to heated controversy. The arête solved our immediate difficulties of concentration by disappearing Pied-Piper like into the upper cliff. Here was worthy metal. The buttress is beautifully fashioned and consists of what architects might consider a clustered rectangular column, the foremost facet of which is a magnificent lancet door of slab, hereafter the "Door." The true way obviously lies directly up its front from the superseded arête, but we made a long easy traverse right handed to the corner of the buttress, where one joins what is presumably the 1919 line. At once the work became serious again, and we muscled up a steep crack to a ledge, from which it appeared we might have done better, if easier is synonymous with better, to have started further round the corner. We held to our route over steeply inclined slabs giving out at the final surge of precipice, then traversed leftward over some awkward and exposed ledges to the right edge of the Door at mid-height. I was for using the thickness of the Door, while Allan was equally in favour of a vast slab which poured directly on us. Though the Door thickness starts with an overhang, I realised I had better tackle it promptly to forestall these revisionist ideas, and with the aid of teeth and eyebrows got into touch with the mere verticalities above. Where the upper curve of the Door begins to make the vasty vacuum behind the shoulder blades seem less insistent, the

situation is most exhilarating. The Door width is fractured by a series of parallel cracks of which these near its edge are, in places, complete gaps windowing the rocks below. On the very apex is a capstone, defying all the law of probalility. It is greatly to be regretted that the rapidity of erosion here is only too obvious, and slides, blocks and pillars of quartzite litter every less steep section. To sit on the crest of the Door was a justifiable end in itself, and I commended it to discerning pole squatters. I brought up Allan, and as he appeared over the curve of slab his right thumb indicated that his slab alternative was well lost. A strenuous chimney brought us, all too soon, to the end of the difficulties and to a loose seree. We realised suddenly it was late afternoon, and in a moment stepped up on to that thick turfy toupee which Beinn Eighe wears hereabouts in recompense for his baldness elsewhere. We flung ourselves in its pile within a few feet of the edge of the invisible and already improbable cliff which had occupied our day.

F. F. Cunningham.

Torridon—Late April 1950

THURSDAY at 1 p.m., and I stood outside Achnashellach station viewing with some misgiving the pass over to Torridon. Dark and threatening Nimbus clouds were spilling over the hills amid frequent squalls of rain. My imagination was left to picture the view as the wind blew me up a good path to the summit, nearly to blow me back at a sudden corner. Down from the dreary snow-strewn hills the glen seemed a new world. The inevitable evening sunshine breaking through onto the loch: woodland flowers on the track to Inver Alligin. Spring seemed to have begun—but not for long.

The next morning up Beinn Alligin and along the ridge with the aid of a compass and the companionship of a pair of bootmarks, which had exhaustively covered the area before me. The summit was cold and it was snowing. Down for lunch and then round the Glen up the west side of Liathach. I spent some time watching two figures climb the Northern Pinnacles—decided they were boulders—and walked on.

Saturday dawned fine with frequent snow showers. I wound slowly up through the moraines of the Torridon Forest to the foot of Beinn Eighe. The ascent of Sail Mhor was more rapid. Then onwards, along the ridge until confronted by an unexpected buttress of rock*—a protruding shoulder of the great cliffs in the Coir Mhic Fhearchair. A gully on the south face, however, gave a good scramble to the summit of Coineach Mhor. The ridge along to Sgurr Ban took nearly three hours. Soft snow lying over the wet rocks made progress slow. A fine scree-run to the foot of the hill made up for lost time and I arrived at the Kinlochewe Hotel for supper.

Next day the departure for Slioch was later than usual. Soon it became evident that the weather was changing. The wind was veering North and the cloud was very low. Conditions, however, became worse than expected. Compass due North led me straight up to the summit of Sgùrr an Tuill Bhàin. Turning along the ridge towards Slioch, I was suddenly confronted with a strong wind driving the snow with considerable force into my face. Visibility deteriorated to some ten yards and in gusts—I just turned about. After some effort I somehow found myself before the summit cairn, and turning my back to the storm, descended the corrie as fast as possible. It was snowing by the side of the loch and next day the white landscape gave the appearance of mid winter.

M. E. BARLEN.

*Ceum Grannda (Ugly Step).

Red-Letter Day on Ben Nevis

A RED-LETTER climbing day—the coincidence of perfect weather with a "classic route" ascent—dawned for two of us one spring morning in Glen Nevis. I was wakened by the unusual brilliance of the sunlight on our tent, and I looked out to find every leaf and grass-blade, even the guy-ropes, outlined in the cold fire of sunlit frost. We were up, fed, and on the move to the Ben Nevis hillside track at a pace to match the swiftly striding day.

Already the frost had melted and colour was flowing back into the landscape: for spring was in the glen, with the songs and movements of birds in the alder fringe by the burn and little outbursts of primroses in the sheltered places. But we were already thinking of frost, snow, and ice in their great stronghold on the Ben's northern face.

We climbed up to the basin of Lochan Meall an t-Suidhe and turned from the track towards the high, rocky corner at the entrance to the Mhuilinn Glen. As we rounded the corner and entered the shadows of the north face we stepped from spring into deep winter.

The face reared upwards in a 2000-foot wall of snow and ice-encrusted rock. On its lower levels the milder winds had licked the snow from the steepest places, but on the upper 1000 feet the freezing mists had painted an unbroken layer of fog-crystals on the ribbed and folded rocks so that the shadows alone betrayed their contours.

The wild magnificence of the crags was impressive, but what held our attention was the great upthrust of Tower Ridge, looming against a drifting cloud, balancing on its narrow, indented crest a mountain way unrivalled in the Highlands. Already, plodding up the snowslope below its western flank, we were weighing the strength of its defences.

From the beginning the ridge showed its quality by producing a crevasse, or *bergschrund,* some 40-feet deep and six feet wide running like a great ditch between the lowest rocks and the snowfield. It showed not only the surprising depth of a Nevis snowfield, but the near-Alpine conditions which often prevail on the northern face of our greatest mountain. Its crossing provided a nice problem in balance-climbing.

We climbed first by a long snow corridor between two reefs of crag, then took to the rocks, gaining the crest of the ridge in about 400 feet of climbing. Here we found ourselves in the centre-piece of the great wall. On either side and behind us the ridge dropped steeply to the snow-fields at its base; above, it rose in a succession of narrow

ribs and rock towers to the overhanging bulges of the summit cornices.

We could see that the snow on the crest had hardened under the action of sun, wind, and frost, and that we would have to start the time-consuming routine of step-cutting at a much lower level than we had expected. Nevertheless, we made two hours of fast progress by avoiding the snow wherever possible and climbing the open rock faces. Then the rocks became more and more ice-encrusted and our ice-axes went into action.

We cut hundreds of steps. Obstacles loomed up, and gradually fell away beneath us. So we scaled the steep rise known as the Little Tower and carved upwards to the base of the Great Tower which sits astride the ridge and presents a system of defences varying in strength with weather and season. In order to examine the situation and to straighten our backs for the first time in several hours we cut a shelf in the snow and sat down.

It was now 5 p.m. and we had been five hours on the ridge. Our altitude was about 4000 feet—1700 feet above the *bergschrund.* Out beyond the shadows of the crags the sun shone from a cloudless sky and there was a rare stillness in the air. Rare, because the upper levels of Ben Nevis are open to the Atlantic winds and, even in quiet weather, stirred by the rhythmic tides of the air-currents peculiar to the high places.

We looked for a while at the main defences of the tower and saw no chink in their armour. But on the eastern side, overhanging the depths of Observatory Gully, was the narrow ledge leading to a flanking route which sometimes yields when the other defences of the tower are unassailable.

We decided to try this side-door approach. Traversing along the ledge and rounding a dizzy corner I climbed over some ice-encased blocks to a slab which leaned like a massive buttress against the final wall of the tower. My partner quickly followed and anchored himself on the awkward tilt of the slab while I started to climb the wall.

There was no more than 60 feet of height to the wall, but under its ice-mail it promised a pitch of sustained difficulty. The holds were hardly more than scratches in the frosty skin, yet sometimes the axe blows disclosed a natural hold in the rock beneath to which I clung and enjoyed what could best be described as "a strenuous rest."

It was during these pauses, when four finger-tips and two boot-nails held the body in dramatic suspension high over Observatory Gully, that the mind registered its sharpest impressions: the universal downfall of rock, snow,

and ice; the mass of a snow-cornice bulging against the sky like a petrified cloud; the serene glow of sunshine on the crest of the precipice.

I struggled upwards there for an hour, and then a blaze of sunlight heralded the top of the wall and the first level place I had seen on the ridge. Sitting on a cushion of snow with my back against the cairn that crowns the Tower, I pulled in the rope until my partner had inched his way up the wall and slumped down beside me. We sat for a while on this little island of security; eating, smoking, and contemplating until the lengthening shadows reminded us of the speeding day and the problems yet to come.

The ridge was level for a few more yards, then it narrowed abruptly until it became a mere dyke between two grim, ice-plastered gullies. Halfway along the rock structure had collapsed, leaving a gap beyond which the dyke reared up again in a frost bearded face, 25 feet high and no more inviting than a raised drawbridge.

We edged into the gap, beating a track in the snow and sweeping clouds of snowy debris into the funnels on either side. There was little freedom of movement on the narrow causeway and no hope of outflanking the obstacle. Keenly aware of the emptiness below, I started to cut the estimated pattern of holds required for the first few feet of the ascent, then took off my gloves to give my fingers the utmost grip on the shallow holds—and hoisted myself upwards.

The climb presented an even greater concentration of difficulties than the wall of the Tower. Frequent pauses to rest the axe arm and restore its blood circulation brought no respite to the other limbs as they strained to keep their close contact with the crag. There was one tense moment when the axe tipped off my woollen helmet and sent it swooping downwards to some remote resting place in the Mhuilinn Glen. I stole a rash glance over my shoulder to watch its flight, and saw, in cold reality, the meagre extent of the belaying-platform from which my partner controlled my life-line.

Then I came at last to a hold I could grasp rather than finger, and with its aid pulled myself into a safe recess at the top of the wall. Fifteen minutes later my companion stood beside me. The 25-foot wall had cost us another hour, and a greater expenditure of energy than the previous 1800 feet of climbing, and during that hour the sun had set quietly behind stark western peaks, so that twilight had gathered on the crags.

Between us and the top was a 300-foot slope which, in summer conditions, is no more than a scramble over

tumbled rocks and screes; but that night, under its covering of steel-hard snow, it promised another tough session of step-cutting and checked our natural impulse to rush the last defences of the ridge. Each ledge and projection was moulded by its cap of snow into the vast sweep of the precipice.

We felt a mounting tension, and hewed our steps with increasing care. A rising breeze sent feathers of snow whispering down the slopes, and the darkness deepened until a sliver of moonlight lanced the shadows on the tip of North-east Buttress. Then we mounted the last steep rampart to the cornice. Thrusting an arm into a cleft below it, I hacked a deep gash in its lip and wriggled through to the plateau.

The long accumulated tension disappeared like a wisp of snowdrift. The mind, released from the groove of intensive physical effort, expanded to the boundless horizon. Wave on wave of white peaks eddied outwards to the edge of space. Every capricious design of wind-fashioned ice was sharply revealed in the moonlight. Beneath us, as the moonlight crept over the salient crags, the cold beauty of the precipice was being reborn. We stood entranced, beyond the reach of time and care.

Then we returned to actively practical things and started the long descent to the lights of Glen Nevis, suddenly aware of our hunger, our fatigue, and the prospect of a weary 130-mile overnight drive to Glasgow. Yet time has so erased these harsher memories that they are almost forgotten. Only the struggle and the vision won have assumed the permanence of abiding reality.

John Nimlin.

The Northern Face of Ben Nevis with Tower Ridge

Photo by W. Warnock

Invitation To Snowclimbing

There are many for whom the word 'snowclimb' means little more than something mentioned with great reverence in a bus. Next winter they should make their first attempt before old age changes indifference into complete scepticism. Equipment? It can be bought. Weather? Don't wait for a fine day; they are so rare that this can only be regarded as an evasive excuse. Frostbite? Remember that you are just as warm at the end of the day as those gallant gentlemen who spend their hours before the fire at Ryvoan bothy. Even the annual walk up Cairngorm loses its satisfaction. The pleasures of a climb must be experienced to be appreciated. A day can, however, be made or marred by the knowledge or ignorance of certain basic principles. For the enthusiast nothing could be better than to read the excellent Pelican edition of Barford's 'Climbing in Britain.' The remainder might glean something of value from this article.

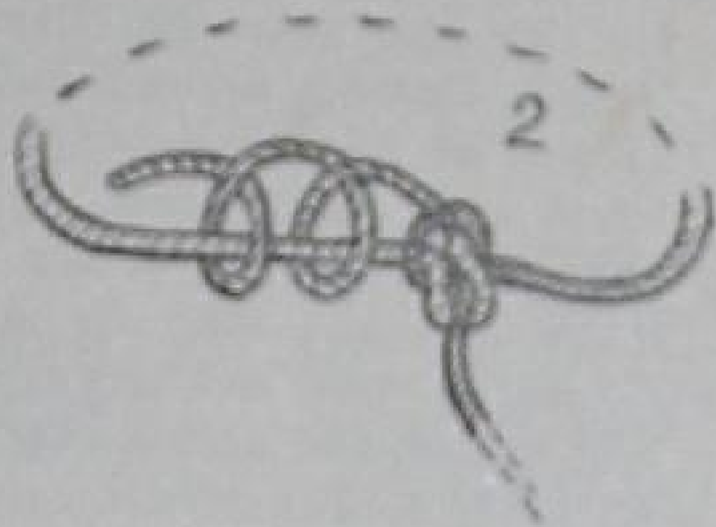
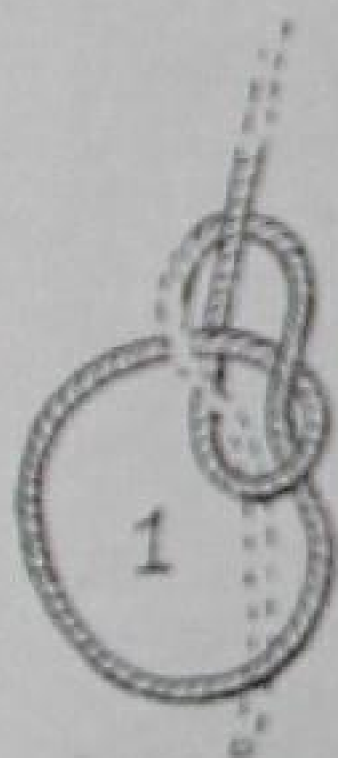
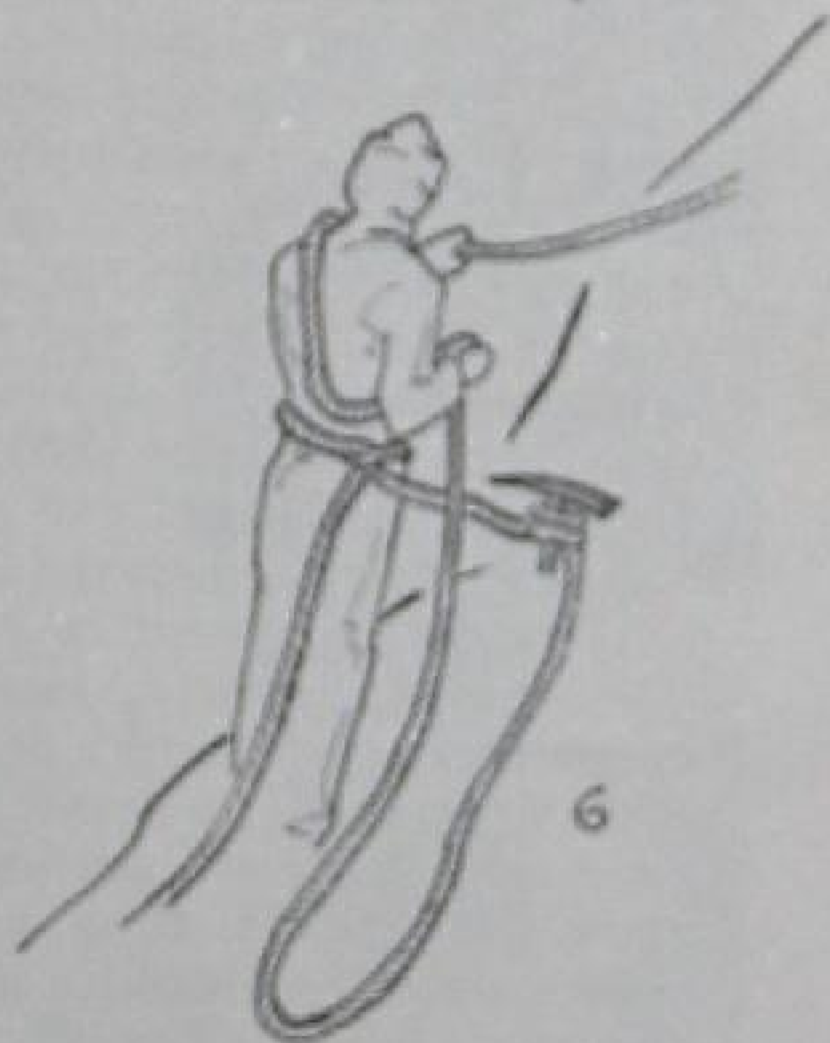
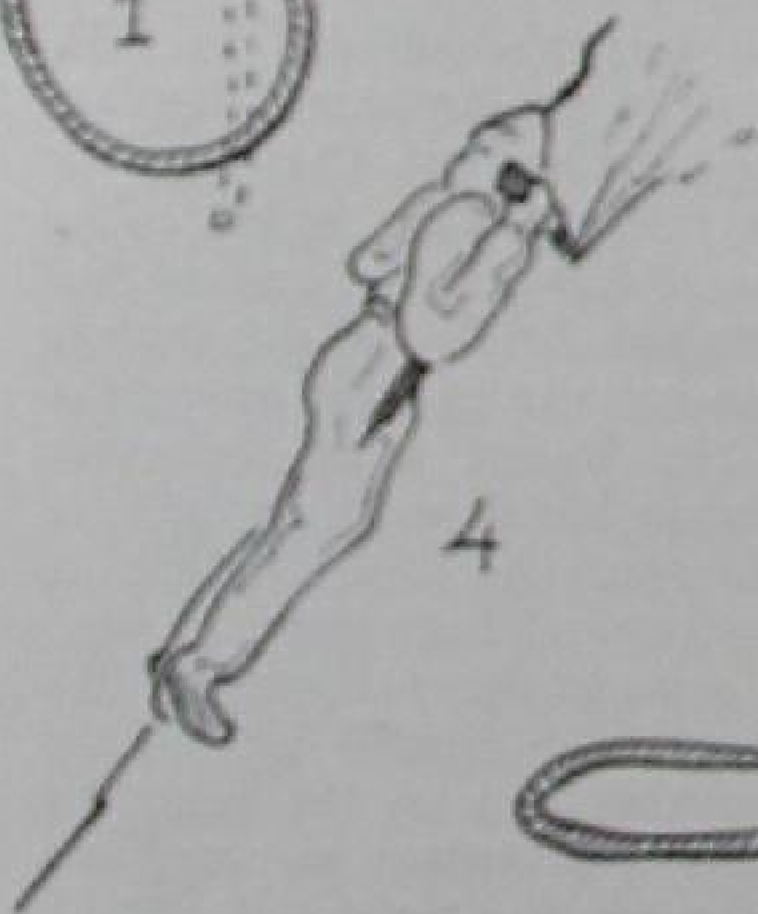
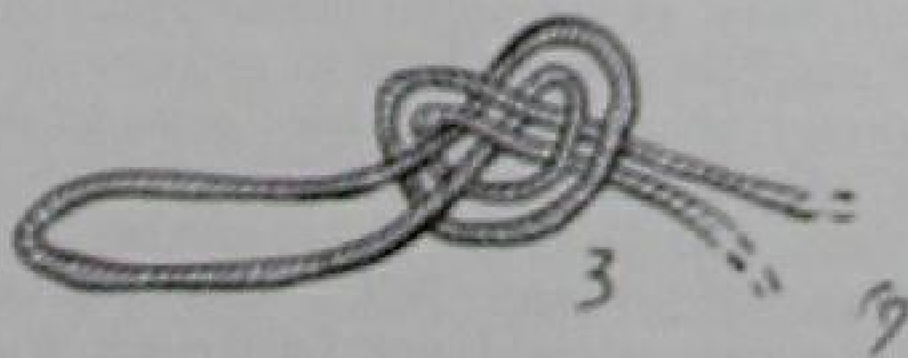
On setting out for a snowclimb you should choose an experienced and knowledgeable leader in whom you can confidently trust. Fortunately such individuals are generally provided and, if approached with caution, will prove surprisingly adaptable. If you value a night's sleep try to avoid mention of the 'vent.' The leader will choose the route and determine the snow conditions. A fresh fall will be soft and generally unsafe in a steep gully. A hill always requires a few days to 'settle down,' until the snow becomes hard and steps need to be cut on the slopes. Ice can provide a formidable obstacle and cause considerable delay, especially if coated by a thin layer of snow and not located till near the summit. On a short day foreknowledge of ice might well result in a change of route. Once a start has been made, the urge is to go on. The final decision must again be made by the leader. If the route leads over rocks, a thin coating of ice known as verglas may make the climb impossible unless it can be chipped off. In early Spring a south-west wind may produce a sudden thaw. Avalanche conditions may be gauged by the softness and colour of the snow. The tracks of stones, lumps of ice, and broken cornice will be observed at the foot of the gully. As late as May, a sudden north wind may freeze the climb safe once again. Experience will rapidly bring acquaintance with the many snow and weather conditions.

Once the leader has chosen a climb you may rest assured that the snow is unlikely to move by itself. From now on you do the moving and every effort must be made

to insure that it is in the right direction. At a suitable point the party will rope up. Nylon is gradually replacing hemp as the standard rope. It is both lighter and stronger though with a greater tendency to fray than its older counterpart. Two climbers form a good party for a rapid ascent. Three or four is the best number for early climbs. In the latter case two ropes can be used to advantage to prevent the ascent becoming monotonously slow. The leader and the rear man should use a bowline (Fig. 1) drawn fairly tight, to allow for expansion, and secured by some further half-hitches (Fig. 2). For the middlemen an overhand know (Fig. 3) will generally suffice. The rope should not be allowed to drag across the snow and any to spare can be carried, neatly coiled, in the hand, to be let out as required.

The ice axe is a vital weapon for any climb. In the hands of our ancestors it was highly lethal, and this point might well be remembered before being driven home by experience. It should be carried in a manner neither to pierce one's own anatomy, nor to brain the man ahead, in case of a slip. If not in use, sling it from your pack, or carry it, point foremost, under an arm. On gentle slopes and in soft snow, steps may often be kicked, using the axe as a support by plunging it into the snow ahead. Whenever in use the strap (sling) available should be used as a safeguard. In case of a slip the axe will then always be at hand. If you should lose control on a hard slope, it is relatively easy to stop by lying above the axe and, with the weight of the body, **gradually** forcing the pick into the snow (Fig. 4). Any sudden jab will inevitably force it out. Without your axe you are left to the tender mercies of gravity.

When cutting steps envisage neither a baroque staircase nor a giant's causeway. Their purpose is to afford as rapid an ascent as possible up a slope. The minimum of energy should be used. Cutting can prove exhausting work, especially on longer climbs. It is unnecessary to gouge snow terraces in the mountain-side—remember those behind, who have to wait amid a constant bombardment. An energetic swing is not required. The weighty head will do most of the work by itself. In addition it is important to keep a good balance. Two or three well placed jabs should suffice. Much will depend on the condition of the snow and, if it should prove really crisp and firm, one cut sideways with the broad (adze) end might be sufficient to make a safe step. One should always stand upright; clinging to a slope only increases the chances of a slip. It is often better to cut two steps ahead, permitting less stoop and a much freer position. The step should

5

2

1

6

4

3

slope slightly inwards especially on hard snow or ice where a kick will make little or no impression. (Fig. 5.)

A secure resting position (belay) between each pitch is of **vital** importance. It must be such as to safeguard your own position as well as a moving man. The shaft of the ice axe must be driven into the snow for its entire length, leaving several inches on which to attach the rope. If not at one spot—try another. Often a great deal of force may be needed. The loop (bight) of an overhand knot made in the *active* rope (between the man on the belay and the man in motion, about two feet from the former) should be slipped over the head of the axe (Fig. 6). The use of the active rope is important : otherwise in case of the second man slipping while breaking the leaders fall, their combined impact on rope and axe might be too strong. Three or four turns of rope round the shaft will generally make a good belay instead of the former method. On ice it is difficult to obtain satisfactory belays and a leader will generally ask for additional rope to reach a safer stance further up, should one be available. Any man moving on ice should be belayed with exceptional care. Steps are more difficult to cut. Greater energy is required and the feet can never feel as secure as on snow. Two axes might be used to advantage.

During the ascent it is the leader's job not to fall. The second, however, must always be prepared for an emergency, and should help by letting out the rope to match the leader's speed and prevent any jerks. The rope must be free from knots and can be run out on the snow. It should then be gripped firmly in one hand, passed over the shoulder and under the oppsite arm into the next hand. (Fig. 6). If the leader slips the rope should be hauled in rapidly during his descent so that he will not have so far to go below you. At this juncture a sound axe belay is obvious to safeguard both men, in case the second should be unable completely to arrest the leader. On a steep slope only one man should be moving at a time, and it is the duty of the man on the belay to be prepared for any fall. When bringing up another man, the rope should not be drawn too tight : it is not provided to haul one up except in an emergency. Moreover, the foot of a climb is often the occasion for some lunch, and one rarely benefits from a rest period to digest it. The rope should be watched constantly, insuring that it is at the right tension to stop any fall immediately. In tight corners the climber can always ask yon to take the strain. You must keep your mind on the job and not admire the scenery when all attention should be rivetted on the rope. In case you are about to come off, it is

Lord M. Douglas-Hamilton

Snow Climbing on the Steep Face of a Corrie

advisable to give a warning shout. The sound of your voice may have a steadying affect on yourself, besides serving as a timely warning to others; should you softly and silently vanish away, it might come as a considerable shock to the man above.

When descending, the same points largely apply. Cutting steps below foot level is more difficult and requires considerable experience. It is often quicker to go down sideways on a zigzag course to get a better view of the route. The leader must always be belayed securely from above. There is always a greater risk of the last man slipping. Steps tend to crumble, and heels should dig well in with the body leaning slightly forwards to obtain firmer footholds. The ice axe should always be ready to hold any fall, or to belay a second man. Carelessness may result in unnecessary accidents which should always be avoided.

The glissade is the quickest method of descent. There are three methods—standing, sitting, and uncontrolled. Often the three follow each other with amazing rapidity. In the latter case the ice axe should always be ready to arrest progress. The leader will determine whether a glissade is possible. Snow can turn to ice overnight and, unless the gully has been climbed that day, careful testing will be necessary. Needless to say, the invisible or the unknown should never be attempted. For a standing glissade the feet should be a few inches apart, the legs stiff and slightly bent. Speed and balance must be controlled by the body and by inflections of the heel and toe of the boot. The axe is used as a rudder and a brake.

In case of emergency it is essential to bring some extra clothes. Even if you do not need them, they may prove useful to someone else. If reduced to immobility for a considerable period, additional cover is of vital importance.

Every hill should be approached with a sense of respect. Accidents are rare to those who realise dangers and face up to them with coolness and resolution. Over-confidence and rash undertakings lose their glamour when the lives of others are involved. The safeguards mentioned above are always maintained and remain ready to meet any emergency. Much depends on you: we hope this article will induce many more to join up in snowclimbs next winter.

The snows are calling.

M. E. Barlen.

Is He A Climber?

"You've frequently been over 9000 feet and yet you say that you're no climber? !"

The conversation which led up to this questioning statement began by my being asked one day on Speyside whether I climbed, and when I replied quite truthfully that I didn't, my interlocutor continued, "You surprise me; had I the luck to live here surrounded by hills as you do I should have climbed every one of them."

"Ah, I thought you were referring to Whymper stuff, ropes and ice-axes and things—I often walk over these hills."

"Pretty stiff walking I'd call it."

"Why yes, it can be quite stiff, but its a matter of habit, I suppose. Ordinarily I lived at an altitude many times greater than the highest of these—you see I was a Gurkha."

It was from this opening that the remark followed that caused such astonishment about my being no climber, but the statement that I had frequently been over 9000 feet was quite an ordinary statement; height is a relative matter. In Nepal the herdsmen commonly pasture their cattle and flocks at 9000 feet.

I was asked a good deal about Nepal, the country of the Gurkhas, where men carry on their calling at such heights. The Gurkhas are not unique in this. The hill Dogras and Garhwalis live much the same way. Garhwal (where a Scottish mountaineering party is now climbing) is a district similar in character to the foothills of Nepal. It is in this that Nepal is unique that it rises so far above the levels at which these hillmen usually live. It is indeed the most mountainous country in the world. Switzerland possibly has less low-lying ground but the Swiss Alps, magnificent as they are and clad in everlasting snow, are dwarfed by the stupendous heights of the Himilaya in Nepal. Everest, Kanchenjunga and Makalu, three of the four highest mountains in the world, all of them over 27,000 feet, are in Nepal. But these eminences are outside the lives of the people; so is the belt of flat land, hot and malarial, which Gurkhas returning to their homes from India hasten to cross. When it is added that the average width of this belt is thirty-two miles and that the whole width of Nepal is only one hundred miles one begins to realise that their homes are situated in a geography totally different to ours. The Gurkha lives not horizontally as we do, but vertically.

His villages are on the pleasant uplands, on the middle heights between the mosquito level and the perpetual

snows—the majority of them are probably between 4000 and 6000 feet. A map gives little indication of the distance that has to be traversed between two places in country such as this. It shows the aerial distance and the contours will suggest the rise and fall but no more.

A traveller from Spey-bay to the top of Ben Rinnes traverses 20 miles and climbs something over 2700 feet; in Nepal it is possible in 20 miles to climb 20,000 feet. The slopes are prodigious. Every field is built out from the mountain side into terraces and steps that are frequently no more than a yard wide, so steep is the fall. The people habitually look down from their houses into villages 3000 feet below them, and turn to lift their eyes to the hills 10,000 feet above them. We said earlier that these extreme heights are outside the lives of the people but the people cannot remain uninfluenced by them. Such magnificence must impress itself upon their characters and colour their philosophies.

It is sometimes possible for a Gurkha to visit a neighbouring village across a valley following a contour back into the mountain and out again but unless this route offered very special advantages he would almost certainly take the direct route down and up again. That to him is the natural way and he would not think of it as arduous. Gurkhas, although they spend their lives climbing, don't climb consciously (except such as may have acted as porters on Everest expeditions—expeditions that would have been impossible without them).*

Although it would not occur to him to claim to be a climber, the Gurkha has always been associated in our minds with mountaineering and it may be for this reason that his performance on a hill is, at first sight, or to the uninitiated, disappointing. He takes a hill slowly and plods up in a laborious fashion, but his art is seen in his endurance; he can keep this pace for hours on end, often carrying on his back enormous loads suspended from a brow-band. He shows a particular skill, too, in the speed with which he can, when pressed, come off a hill. He plunges down the steepest slope with confidence, his sturdy knees never failing him. Ascension being his ordinary mode of progress he does not consider it an achievement to gain altitude even if this altitude be several thousand feet and on acclivities that would cause us, accustomed as we are to surprise landscapes, to regard them with a horrified astonishment.

A Gurkha, except he be a professional, does not climb: he merely walks on mountains.

"GORAKH."

(* It is assumed we have no Sherpa readers.—Editors.)

CARN LOCHAN (Coire-nan-Lochan Face).

This is very much a Moray Mountaineering Club view.

"**A**"—Unclimbed East or No. 1 Buttress.

"**B**"—The Vent. First climbed (in winter conditions) by our members J. Geddes, R. F. Stobart, E. M. Davidson, Miss Helen Harrison and Miss Mae MacBain. First climbed in summer conditions by F. F. Cunningham and A. G. MacKenzie.

"**C**"—Central Buttress. The well-known Central Crack route is the dark angular line starting above the middle of the Slab.

"**D**"—Ewen Buttress. First ascended by our members E. M. Davidson, Fred Davidson and the late John Ewen.

"**E**"—Savage Slit. First ascended by our member R. B. Frere and by J. D. Walker. This slit is not visible in the photo.

"**F**"—West or No. 4 Buttress. First climbed by our members C. Ross, Dr Brewster and President D. Banks.

D. R. Forrester

"Cairn Lochan," Cairngorms

From Scaut Hill To Sgurr Nan Gillean

"The first field meet of the Moray Mountaineering Club will be held on Sunday, 21st February, 1932, when a bus will leave from the Plainstones, Elgin, at 8.15 a.m. for the Meikle Balloch of the Cabrach road." So read the notice, and so on that day was born the Moray Mountaineering Club.

But let us turn back the clock a little. The idea of forming a club, with the aim of encouraging mountaineering and forming a bond of union among lovers of Scottish hills was conceived by Edwin M. Davidson. His friend and fellow-member of the Scottish Mountaineering Club, John Geddes, needed but a hint of what was on the Davidson mind to go into collaboration with him, while that veteran of the hills, Finlay MacKenzie, was obviously the man from whom to seek guidance if the ambition were to be realised. The trio had the support of G. R. Thomson, John Black, and J. Crawford Shiach. They met to discuss the project on 15th November, 1931, elected Finlay MacKenzie as President, John Geddes and John Black as Vice-Presidents, Edwin M. Davidson as Secretary and Treasurer, with the others as members of committee, and decided to invite all interested to attend a meeting twelve days later. At that meeting 28 members were enrolled and Mrs Finlay MacKenzie, James Luckas and Arthur J. McCaskie were asked to join the committee. Before 11th December when Mr Wm. Marshall ("Mam Suim") delivered a lecture on mountaineering, equipment, hill-behaviour, etc., the roll was 50 strong. The following month Edwin Davidson gave an illustrated lecture on the Black Cuillin—surely a touch of humour in this choice of subject since the vast majority of those present had a long way to go ere they could hope to set foot on the Cuillin! But with that aim in view the infant M.M.C. went forth to test its legs on Scaut Hill, Carn Allt a' Chailginn, Cook's Cairn and Cairn na Bruar.

This club was no band of experienced climbers. Of the 27 who attended that first meet, half a dozen probably were experienced mountaineers, a few more had a slight acquaintance with the higher Scottish hills and the rest were absolute novices. The party was comprised of individuals from various walks of life, whose ages ranged from teens to sixties and for the most part were strangers to each other.

And so to Scaut Hill. The weather was most unkind, the wind and hail combining to make as severe as possible this test of potential mountaineers. The leaders must have had an uneasy few hours—this was the first opportunity

they had had of estimating the staying power of their followers, the bus was already on its way to wait at Tomnavoulin, and the party had to be got there. However, whatever the leaders' thoughts and fears may have been these were admirably concealed, the novices responded to the encouraging attitude of the experienced, and Mrs MacKenzie not only "mothered" the ladies but was an inspiration to all. Conversation was not easy, visibility was such as gave only brief glimpses of the many hills and glens between us and the horizon, and the individuals who were experiencing hill-walking for the first time could hardly be blamed for wondering as they plodded on (each with a stick) if, after all, this "mountaineering" was perhaps rather an over-rated pastime. But once down into the comparative shelter of the lovely Glen Suidhe they began to take a less poor view of the past few hours. Indeed, for most, it had been something of a revelation of an ability to endure hitherto unsuspected in themselves and ere Tomnavoulin was reached plans were well ahead for the purchase of boots, windproofs, etc., the better to defy any adverse conditions at the next and following meets. Not one novice now even thought of ending his or her mountaineering career abruptly on account of the day's inclement weather.

In the bus we changed into the dry shoes and stockings the notice advised we should bring with us and, all aboard, we proceeded down the A'anside. But gradually the inner glow of achievement proved insufficient to counteract the physical discomfort of wet clothing and a rather shivering company welcomed the suggestion of a halt at Aberlour for tea. The reader can but imagine the effect on mine host of either hotel as the Sunday evening peace was disturbed by an invasion of bedraggled human beings. In 1932 climbers did not go to the hills in bus loads and this was probably the first occasion in Scotland that they had done so. The lady of the house, somewhat pitying us for our queer idea of pleasure, apologised for her unpreparedness for such a large party but hastened to bring forth the tea, loaves and jam requested. We sat round one long table, the pharmacist at one end dispensing tea from immense pots, frequently replenished, while the schoolmasters sliced loaves of bread with mathematical precision. The discomfort of the damp clothing was forgotten, the strangers of the early morning had weathered the storm together and now over this simple meal they were a happy, jovial company of friends. The M.M.C. not only came into being that day, but had instilled into it that spirit of good companionship that was to characterise it down through the years.

A month later we went to the Ladder Hills and after a lecture on map and compass reading in Elgin the first meet to the Cairngorms was held on 8th May. That indeed was a remarkable day. When we arrived at Glenmore Lodge in the morning the trees were snow-laden and from each branch myriad crystal drips fell glistening in the sunshine; here and there the greens and browns coming through the pure whiteness on the undergrowth; the high corries were reflected in the calm and deep blue Loch Morlich. It was as if to greet us Dame Nature had raised the curtain on an enchanting scene and beckoned us to enter and explore the realm of mountains.

The first party moved off towards Cairn Gorm while the private cars returned to the Sluggan Pass entrance to convey the bus party to Glenmore. Snow lay deep on the higher slopes and mist still enshrouded Cairn Gorm as the advance party reached the summit, guided by Mrs Finlay MacKenzie, while the President took up the rear. But soon the sun came through and for the next three hours the climbers basked in its hot rays—some of them even enjoyed a nap on the snow. (This particular day was, incidentally, remarked upon by other climbers in journal and press articles as being unique in their long experience of Scottish mountains). The second party of over 20 in number and led by the Secretary made the ascent by the Fiacaill Coire Lochain — no mean feat under the icy conditions and comparatively few of them adequately equipped. All glissaded into Coire Cas and thence to Glenmore Lodge where tea was served. Very sunburnt the company left for home but ere the last moved off the sun had gone, mist obscured the mountain tops and in the calm evening snowflakes were again gently, very gently, settling on the trees. Dame Nature had dropped the curtain again but that glimpse we had been given of a mountain day at its best for the club's first Munro was a real incentive to go forward and discover more and more of this Scotland.

For the next three meets, with the exception of the Braeriach one, the club travelled by specially chartered train, some 60 or 70 members and friends attending on each occasion. By rail we went to Achnasheen, Kincraig (for the Sgoran Dubh) and Achnashellach. We again went by train to Garve for Ben Wyvis in 1934 and for the Fannichs and Braemore hills in 1935.

In the interval between these and besides days spent on Ben Rinnes, the Buck of the Cabrach and several moorland walks (all of which afforded ample time for map and compass instruction to an ever-increasing membership), meets of several days' duration were held at Glenmore Lodge.

The first was at Hogmanay 1933 and the next in April 1934, the Lodge being rented from the Forestry Commission.

By this time the tottering infant stage of the club was past. Snow-climbing technique was demonstrated on Ben Rinnes and rock-climbing practised at Covesea and Primrose Bay. The members had been patiently but surely schooled by the few in mountaincraft and long ere Glenmore Lodge was reached small parties of confident, competent climbers were striding out on their own initiative. The days of the carefully shepherded but all too large party were over. Here let it be said again how much the club owes to the founders who in the first years guided, instructed and encouraged all-comers. But for them many would never have known the pleasure of days spent on the hills nor seen the remoter parts of our land.

And so from Glenmore Lodge went forth the snow-climbing parties. The gullies of Coire an t' Sneachda and Coire an Lochain were charted and named, and each evening enthusiasts gathered round the chart to stake their claim on a gully for the morrow's assault. The demand for a place on the hempen line always exceeded the number of ropes available and those not fortunate enough to get one consoled themselves by having an "easy" day walking to the Shelter Stone or the summit of Braeriach. Members came not only from Moray to attend these meets but from Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Glasgow and England, so that in time the Lodge became regarded as the family home of the M.M.C. and the weeks spent there a family foregathering under the happiest of atmospheres. The prelude to every day was the sight of that well-known skier from Aberdeen toasting his morning roles at the dining-room fire. After breakfast the bustle of outgoing hill parties, setting off amid a chorus of good wishes from the less energetic who always assembled on the steps for this ritual before preparing for their own leisurely day on the loch or in one of the passes. Home from the hill in time if possible for lounge tea—always there were Mrs Cameron's home-baked scones!—and the day's climbs were done all over again by a fireside or on an evening stroll. The dinner gong at eight brought the houseparty together round the two long tables. The day was complete and, in the soft glow from the table lamps, radiantly happy faces reflected the joy of all in having lived it. The pleasure these Glenmore occasions gave justified the work they entailed to the organisers but, nevertheless, all who attended remember with gratitude the unsparing efforts of Helen Harrison and John Geddes to ensure the highest possible degree of comfort for all. To achieve

"We're All Right—His Pipe's In."

this, and in addition to catering and accommodation arrangements, they annually had transported from Elgin coal, linen, extra cutlery, crockery, blankets, etc., and even some beds. Mr and Mrs Cameron, of Glenmore, had charge of domestic arrangements and very efficiently ran the house for us.

In 1934 the club went to Glen Affaric. The long walk up the glen from the Dog Falls did not deter the climbers and their reward was the fine views they had from the summits of Sgurr nan Ceathreamhan, Mam Sodhail, Carn Eige, etc. From Lewis to Ben Nevis, from the Cuillins to the Culbins, all was clearly visible on this perfect day. A few months later we went to Creag Meagaidh. The view was nil; the Secretary led the party to the summit in a gale and hailstorm; very wet we descended to Laggan Hotel there to be confronted by a couple of press photographers—the only instance of the press pursuing us and they had to choose such a day!—but a day that ended with singing more lusty than usual and led by the doctor from Forres at the piano.

Other memorable meets include that to Kinlochewe on a lovely May week-end in 1935 when 60 members spent the Saturday night at the hotel there. In October of the same year a very wet day on the Monadhliaths preceded a very pleasant hour or so in the comfortable lounge of a Newtonmore hotel when club badges, designed by Mr E. S. Harrison, made a first appearance and were presented. A May day on An Teallach when wintry conditions still lingered and made good sport of the traverse of the ridge. At one point the various parties met and a regular pulley service developed as some went up and others down the rocky pitch that conditions had made the use of ropes a necessary precaution. The Glenstrathfarrar meet, long remembered as "the hot day," entailed a lengthy glen walk in blazing sunshine which blistered many even before the ascent. A patch of snow near the summit was as popular as an oasis in the desert and it is doubtful if Loch Bunacharan ever had so many swimmers in it as plunged in that late afternoon before the long hot trek back to Struy. At a later date these hills were again the objective of a meet but the approach to them then was by Glen Orrin. On that occasion it was slightly less hot but went down in history as "the tea day," a brew coming off the primuses every hour. A Lochaber meet attracted many and Ben Nevis was ascended from all angles, one party of eight reaching it via the Aonachs and Carn Mor Dearg. The Glen Shiel hills, the Grey Corries, the Kinlochewe hills, the Cairngorms, Lochnagar, etc., etc., were all explored.

The 1939 Glenmore meet was particularly successful. Mr and Mrs Odell were present following an illustrated talk he had delivered to us in Elgin on the first ascent of Nanda Devi in which he had shared the honour with H. Tilman of reaching the summit. While at Glenmore he took two 16-year-old members (hill veterans) on a snow and rock climb, led a party in doing the No. 1 Buttress of the Sgoran Dubh, and studied the Barns of Bynack with a geologist's interest.

Annual dinners, lectures and other indoor functions form an integral part of the club life and we have been fortunate in having several distinguished climbers as lecturers. To mention but a few pre-war speakers—Mr Alex. Harrison (then Secretary of the Scottish Mountaineering Club)—on "The Alps"; Mr J. A. Parker (to whom all Cairngorm lovers are indebted)—on "Mountains in Scotland, Japan and America"; Mr Robert M. Adam (of The Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh, and renowned photographer of scenery)—on "Scottish Mountain Flowers"; Mr Noel E. Odell—on "Everest" and later on "Nanda Devi"; Mr F. Spencer Chapman—on "The Ascent of Chomolhari"; Mr Ralph F. Stobart—on "Spitzbergen."

Apart from the founders and the four Past Presidents, Messrs MacKenzie, Geddes, Humble and Crowley, many have contributed towards the building up of the club and the recognition of it in mountaineering circles. They are all too numerous to list here but among them one recalls the names of Alex. Henderson, John Ewen, and Ralph Stobart (who could talk of his experiences at Spitzbergen and on the Alps, on entomology and olfactics; who led many meritorious climbs on snow and rock, if necessary standing in well-nailed boots on his tall son's head to help over a difficult pitch; wrote our club song; introduced to the club his friend Mr Odell; and on one occasion took home with him from a Cairngorm meet a whole anthill in a tin supplied by Mrs Garrow, the better to study the insects' habits).

With the outbreak of war the club went into abeyance and on its resuscitation in the autumn of 1945, under the renewed presidency of John Geddes, it was necessary in many respects to re-build anew, changed circumstances generally rendering this no easy task at times. Many members had left Moray, many newcomers were welcomed into our midst. At first, meets on the lesser hills were arranged (though the Cabrach one in March, 1946, proved as severe a test of endurance, if not more so, than its predecessor of 14 years earlier). An Teallach, Glen Shiel, Glen Affaric, Creag Megaidh, Kinlochewe, Ben Nevis, the Cairngorms have all been re-visited, and in addition over-

night meets have been held at the Rough Bounds, Kinlochewe and Glencoe, the latter on a perfect June day. Snow and rock climbing is again attracting enthusiasts, as also is ski-ing.

In 1947 Mr Odell was persuaded to talk again on the Everest expeditions and Lt.-Col. F. Spencer Chapman gave a vivid description with lantern views of his wartime experiences in Malaya. Once more we are fortunate in having local members of outstanding ability whose contributions to club activities both on and off the hills are greatly appreciated. G. R. MacKenzie's "Cairngorm Fantasia"; David Forrester's photographs, lantern views and narrations; Frank Cunningham's illustrated lecture on "The Alps" and J. W. Hayne's on his experiences as a glaciologist in Greenland are memorable post-war features.

The club, with acknowledgments to the editors, has already published two journals and many bulletins; also has formed collections of lantern slides, photographs and books (the latter housed in Elgin Public Library).

Some 340 individuals have joined the club since its inception and we are privileged to have in the roll book the names of members of the Himalaya Club, the Alpine Club and the Scottish Mountaineering Club. The average membership strength stands about 100.

On the expiry of his second presidential term John Geddes was made the recipient of a gift from the members, acknowledging the ardent part he had played in the club achieving its aim . . . 'to encourage mountaineering and form a bond of union amongst lovers of Scottish hills.' Mr Luckas continued to act as Treasurer from 1933 until 1947, while the original Secretary and father of the club, Edwin Davidson, has seen his idea of 19 years ago become a mature reality during his long term of service in his official capacity.

It is a far cry from Scaut Hill to Sgurr nan Gillean and it has taken us a long time as a club to reach the Black Cuillin, but it has been a pleasant journey. Hot days, cold days, dry days and wet days—but never a bad day. We have met many interesting personalities by the way, have enjoyed their company and have profited by their experience. Now to the members from Forres we are indebted for arranging the Skye meet with the opportunity it offers as a real mountaineering venture and as another happy family foregathering. We approach the Cuillin along with a President who was one of those young members attending the first meet—David Banks—and as we do so we think of the club's not inglorious past and are resolved, by maintaining its best traditions, to see it go forward to an even greater future.

MURIEL FLETCHER.

MEETS—1950.

Date	*To*	*Attendance*
Jan. 15.	Cairngorms.	28
Feb. 26.	Cairngorms.	14
Mar. 19.	Cairngorms.	23
April 17.	Cairngorms.	16
May 7.	Ben Nevis.	33
June 4.	Lochnagar.	28
June 23-25.	Skye.	42
July 9.	Larig Ghru.	31
Aug. 6.	Glen Cannich.	25
Aug. 26.	Cairngorms.	

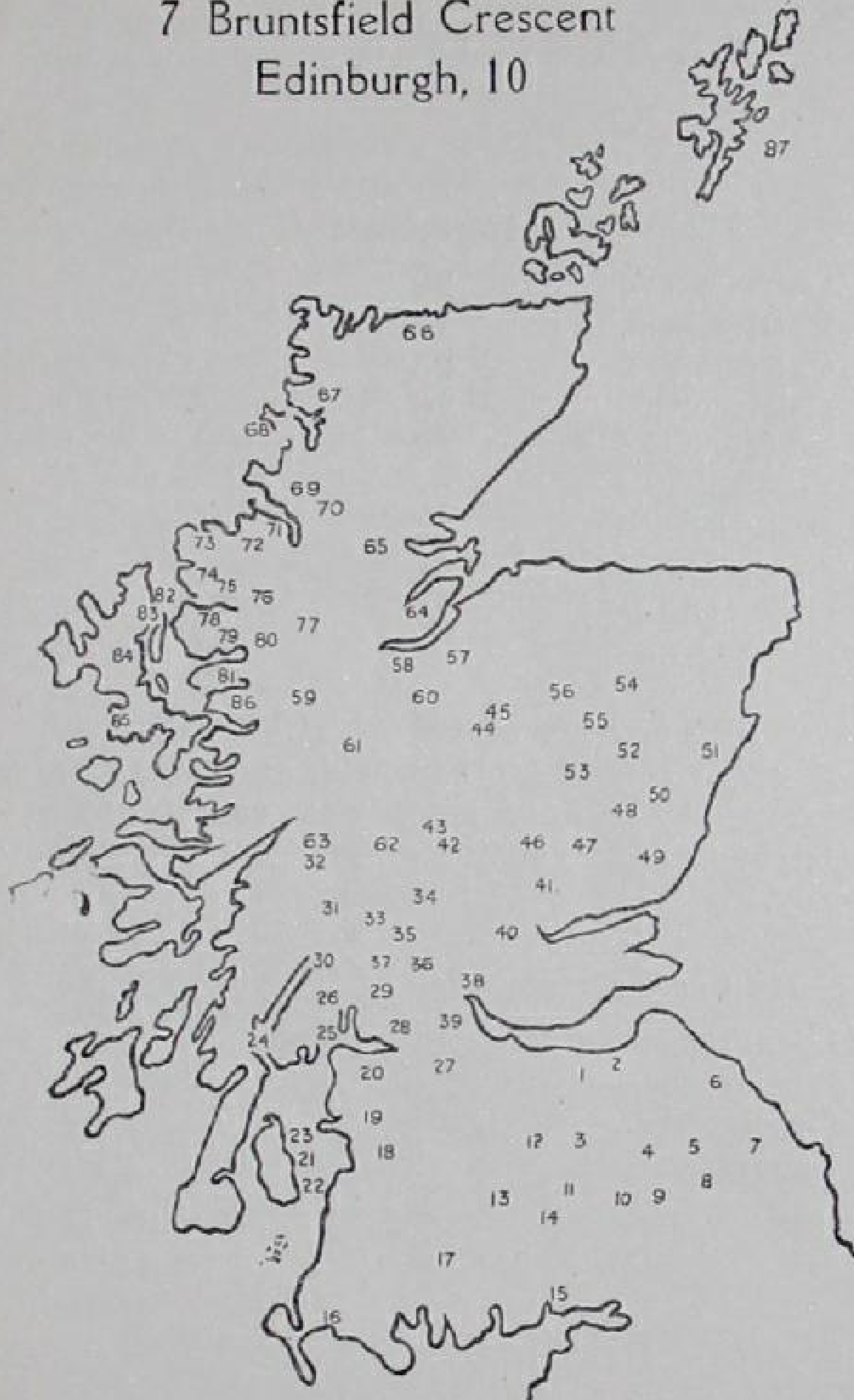
Guests have included members of H.M.S. Fulmar, Lossiemouth, of Royal Engineers, Pinefield, and boys from Gordonstoun School. The July meet was employed in assisting the Cairngorm Club in the carrying of materials to Corrour Bothy.

Proposed meets for the remainder of the year are:—

Sept. 17.	Loch Lochy and Spean Bridge.
Oct. 8.	Ben Wyvis.
Oct. 29.	Cairngorms.
Nov. 19.	Cairngorms.
Dec. 10.	Cairngorms.

The Scottish Youth Hostels Association

7 Bruntsfield Crescent
Edinburgh, 10



1 Edinburgh (Hailes)
2 Edinburgh (Brunt)
3 Barns
4 Broadmeadows
5 Melrose
6 Coldingham
7 Kirk Yetholm
8 Ferniehurst
9 Snoot
10 Thirlestane
11 Chapelhope
12 Cormiston
13 Wanlockhead
14 Auchen
15 Cargen
16 Stranraer
17 Kendoon
18 Corraith
19 Crosbie
20 Ske morlie
21 Brodick
22 Whiting Bay
23 Lochranza
24 Tighnabruaich
25 Strone
26 Loch Eck
27 Glasgow
28 Loch Lomond
29 Inverbeg
30 Ardgartan
31 Dalmally
32 Glencoe
33 Crianlarich
34 Killin
35 Monachyle
36 Creag Dhu
37 Loch Ard
38 Dunblane
39 Fintry
40 Perth
41 Birnam
42 Strathtummel
43 Fothergill (Struan)
44 Kingussie
45 Aviemore
46 Kirkmichael
47 Glenisla
48 Glen Doll
49 Auchmithie
50 Phesdo
51 Faughside
52 Ballater
53 Braemar
54 Lumsden
55 Corgarff
56 Tomintoul
57 Inverness
58 Buntait
59 Glen Affric
60 Alltsaigh
61 Loch Lochy
62 Loch Ossian
63 Glen Nevis
64 Strathpeffer
65 Carbisdale Castle
66 Tongue
67 Eddrachillis
68 Achmelvich
69 Achininver
70 Ullapool
71 Badcaul
72 Aultbea
73 Carn Dearg
74 Opinan
75 Craig
76 Inver Alligin
77 Achnashellach
78 Lonbain
79 Kishorn
80 North Strome
81 Kyle of Lochalsh
82 Staffin
83 Uig
84 Harlosh
85 Glenbrittle
86 Glenelg
87 Lerwick

HOSTEL CHARGES.—The charges are uniform throughout all the Association's hostels, as follows:—

Overnight Accomodation

Juveniles - - - - - -	per night 1/-
All others - - - - - -	per night 1/6

The annual membership fee varies according to age at date of payment of fee, and is modified in certain cases if renewing, as follows:—

Age	Per Annum
Over 5 and under 16 years (Juveniles) - - - -	2/-
16 years and over, but under 21 years (Juniors) -	5/-*
21 years and over (Seniors) - - - - - - - -	10/-*

*Modified to 3/- and 7/- respectively if renewing without break of membership between 1st October and 31st December.

HAY'S COACH HIRERS

PHONE: ELGIN 7561

Coaches for Private Hire

PRIVATE PARTIES CATERED FOR
DISTANCE NO OBJECT

MODERN UP-TO-DATE BUSES
with Efficient and Courteous Drivers

ESTIMATES FREE ON APPLICATION

Garage:

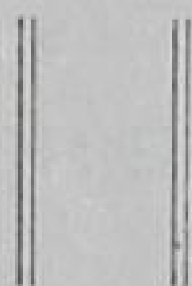
South College Street, Elgin

Wm. Low & Co. Ltd

Grocers

and

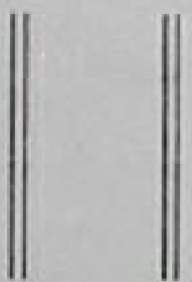
Provision Merchants



Fruit

and

Confectionery



126 High Street, FORRES

Phone—FORRES 80.

BOOKS - MAPS - GUIDES
OF INTEREST TO MOUNTAINEERS

OBTAINABLE AT - -

DAVIDSON'S
BOOKSELLERS
144 HIGH STREET, ELGIN

S.M.C. Guide Stockists

AVIEMORE - - INVERNESS-SHIRE

THE AVIEMORE HOTEL

Offers you all the comforts of a well-appointed Country House.
Central Heating. Hot and Cold Water in every Bedroom.
Exceptionally well equipped with Bathrooms.
Within easy reach of the Cairngorms which afford excellent ski-ing during the Spring months.

Special Terms quoted for Ski-ing Parties.

Apply HUGH ROSS, Manager.

Telephone:
AVIEMORE 211 (2 lines)

Telegrams:
"AVIEMORE HOTEL, Aviemore."

THE FORRES LAUNDRY

A FIRST-CLASS FAMILY LAUNDRY

TAYLOR BROS.
FORRES
MORAYSHIRE

Telephone
FORRES 19.

Telegrams
"TAYLOR BURNSIDE FORRES."

GARVE HOTEL, Garve, Ross-shire

This Hotel is situated on the main road to the West Coast and among some of the finest scenery in the Highlands. An excellent centre for touring.

Rail Station
5 Minutes Walk

Telephone:
Garve 205

Cars
For Hire

Running Water in all Rooms — Electric Light throughout

Free Fishing for Hotel Guests on Loch Tarrie and Salmon Fishing on River Blackwater

BOARDING TERMS—Pension per day £1 4s
,, per week £8 8s

W. D. MACKENZIE, Proprietor

Milk
"Certified" and T.T.
from Attested Herds

Greshop Dairy

108 High Street, Forres

Phone: Forres 69

Wear a
"Grenfell"
Regd.
Garment

RAINCOATS
AND
SPORTSWEAR

Edwin M. Davidson
Maker of High-Grade Clothes
24 South College Street, Elgin
Tel, No. 7165

The Hawker, Tout or Litter Lout
Are people we could do without.
The people that we really like
Do not leave traces of their hike.

* * *

Do not furnish the savannahs
With empty skins of old bananas.
Do not decorate the crags
With soiled remains of paper bags.
When you leave, do not bequeath
Your odds and ends upon the heath.
The sweet appearance of the battles
Is not improved by broken bottles.
In short, you happy, careless sitter,
Do not scatter here your litter.

* * *

God grant to all who for a space
Enjoy the pleasures of this place,
That they may have enough of grace
To leave at last without a trace.

[*Advert. (unpaid) by the Editors!*]

Watch Repairs a Speciality

Speedy Delivery

——:o:——

JAMES A. BANKS

145 HIGH STREET

FORRES

——:o:——

Agents for Ingersoll and Newmark Watches

Phone No. 278

SKI EQUIPMENT

BY

CAMPBELLS RUBBER Co. LTD
18 BRIDGE STREET
ABERDEEN

PHONE 20157 GRAMS 'RUBBER'

PRINTED AT THE
"NAIRNSHIRE TELEGRAPH"
OFFICES, NAIRN