

THE LOMOND MOUNTAINEERING CLUB JOURNAL.



EDITORIAL:

In this issue we have included one or two articles by members which we believe should prove interesting and informative. We hope this type of contribution will become a feature of the journal as the best medium for circulating general information on mountaineering.

All notices should be sent to the Editor, H. GRANT, 12, CLINCART ROAD, GLASGOW, S.2.

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APPRECIATION:

When we stood round the low-roofed kitchen of the Shepherd's house in Glencoe on that momentous Sunday morning of September, 1939, listening to the declaration of war through the radio, it seemed to me as if the Club was doomed. Indeed it would have been had it not been for you valient members who have kept it in existence through these years of trial and vexation.

When I was called up and had no word from the Club for a few months, it seemed to me as if the Club has disintegrated like so many other Clubs. Then one day I heard from one of the members that it was still in existence. Not only that - an excellent journal arrived by post. From that day onwards I had a new feeling in life - a realisation that after I am released from the Forces there will be in existence an enthusiastic band of mountaineers whom I can join and climb the wonderful hills as in days of old. Yes, I appreciate very much the work which has been carried on by those members who have been left at home to bear the fiery torch. They can have the satisfaction of knowing that their efforts have not gone without praise.

When one is encased entirely in the atmosphere of war it is a most refreshing thought that outside the world of war there are men and women with balanced minds who are carrying on civilisation in order that those in the forces may come back to a sane thinking world. If it had not been for those folk, such as yourselves, carrying on these organisations the whole world would be engulfed totally in disaster.

Yes, my friends, it gives me great satisfaction to know that at these beautiful sunny weekends, on the distant hills, are small companies of cheerful people wandering wherever they will - and some day I will join them.

W. BOLTON.

GARBH BHEINN OF ARDGOUR (2903 ft.)

Now that the travel ban is lifted from the Ardgour district, it seems in order to draw attention to this fine hill and the possibilities it offers for future pioneering. Garbh Bheinn well merits the enthusiastic description of the West Highland Guide, and I can add little more than a few observations made during a visit in July, 1939 with Andrew Sanders (Creag Dhu).

We crossed Loch Linnhe at Corran, joined the Glen Tarbert bus for about six miles, and descended to the bridge of Glen Iubhair. For the two miles of our walk up Glen Iubhair the going was easy with little increase in height until the last half mile. At a point just above the junction of the allt a'Garbh Coire Mhoir with the Iubhair Burn we crossed the latter and pitched our tent in the angle between them. This camp-site gives a fine view of the hills enclosing Glen Iubhair, but is too much overshadowed by Garbh Bheinn's lower slopes to give a full view of the crags.

Next morning Garbh Bheinn was swathed in thick mist. We climbed up the steep course of the Allt a'Garbh Coire Mhoir and at a point several hundred feet above the camp we discovered some fine sheltered caves on the right bank (ascending). The caves should provide a good bivouac in settled weather. At a point where the crags began to loom through the mist, we steered North as recommended in the "Guide" for the best approach to the base of the Great Ridge. However, after a steep climb on vegetation and featureless crags, we gained the summit ridge and guessed we had overshot the Great Ridge.

The summit cairn was soon reached, and here we found ourselves in an unusual and tantalising situation. The upper limit of the mist was only a few feet above us and it is likely that another 10 to 20 feet of altitude would have landed us in bright sunlight. By a curious inversion of temperature, the summit was like a steam-bath after the cold mists of the crags, and each time the mist thinned there was a wave of heat and a brilliant flash of sunlight.

We removed our shirts, ate and smoked and then started off on another attempt to locate the ridge. We knew that it lay directly below the summit and it was a simple matter to reach the col at the head of Garbh Coire Mhoir, and descend from there to the south side of the ridge. About halfway down the mist quickly cleared and revealed a fine array of crags bounded by the sweeping profile of our ridge. Travelling fast lest the mist return, we were soon on the lower crags and embarked on a splendid climb. To compensate for the almost too accommodating nature of the rock, there is an abundance of sensational corners and a continual sense of exposure; but there are other places where a shirtless climber is apt to deplore the ruggedness of Scottish Scenery. The views of the unclimbed Great Gully were intriguing enough to suggest a later visit, and the same can be said of other unclimbed crags on Garbh Bheinn's East and North faces. As luck would have it our exploration was cut short by another onslaught of mist, and there was little else to do but retrieve our shirts and return to camp by way of the Bealach Feith'n Amean and the headwaters of the Iubhair Burn.

There is a picture of Garbh Bheinn facing page 14 of the "Guide". Our camp-spot (Firewood and Heather) is marked by "J" in the diagram and the caves are situated a little downstream from "I" in the centre of the picture.

J.B. NIMLIN.

RUM AND EIGG.

Members climbing in Glen Brittle this year may be interested in taking advantage of the motor-boat journeys made by Ronald and Donald McDonald, lobster fishermen from Soay. The McDonalds come into Loch Brittle and will arrange to take parties to Rum, Eigg or Loch Scavaig. Of particular interest is the opportunity afforded of visiting the little known rocks on Rum and Eigg.

Rum has five gabbro-topped summits over 2,000 feet - Allival 2365, Askival 2659, Trallval 2300, Ashval 2552, and Sgurr Nan Gillean 2503. Information on climbs is scanty though the S.M.S. Islands Guide may be consulted with profit. To explore the rocks it would be necessary to stay on the island and, although Rum is a deer forest and visitors are not welcomed, there should be no objection outside the shooting season to camping in the hills. Arrangements to be taken off again could be made with the McDonalds.

Eigg is a friendly island and unlike Rum food supplies can be obtained, and, if necessary, board and lodgings. The island could be visited on the way back from Skye and the journey to Mallaig completed by the steamer which calls at Galmisdale on Wednesdays. The outstanding feature is the Sgurr of Eigg, an impressive tower of columnar pitchstone porphyry. Rock climbing information is again scanty and there is undoubtedly room for new and exhilarating routes.

The McDonalds go to Mallaig each Wednesday for supplies and last year proved willing to come round to Loch Brittle to take a party with them. A small party which would not justify the journey to Loch Brittle they would no doubt pick up at the ferry landing opposite Soay and six miles from Glen Brittle. In fine weather this is a more interesting journey than overland route and offers a continuous panorama of what is, to the rock-climber, the finest of all mountain scenery.

P.L. MCGEOCH.

CLUB MEETINGS.

Annual General Meeting, 1945.

The Annual General Meeting was held at the new Club Rooms on 7th February, 1945, Twenty-one members were present and, as usual, Mr. Harvey was in the chair. The Treasurer, Mr. Bell, submitted his report for 1944-45 and once again the Club faces the coming year in a sound financial state. Mr. Harvey then moved a vote/

vote of thanks to the Secretary and Treasurer for their work during the past year.

The Office-Bearers for the year 1945-46 were then elected and are as follows:

President.

J. Harvey.

Vice-Presidents.

R. Hutchison

Mrs. J. Nimlin

Treasurer

J. Bell.

Secretary.

C. Finlayson.

Journal Editor.

H.W. Grant.

Committee Members.

P.L. McGeoch.

J.B. Nimlin.

Trustees.

A. Hutcheson.

J. Harvey.

Auditors.

A. Slack.

W. Russel.

A motion for revision of the Constitution was moved by C. Finlayson and after considerable discussion it was decided to leave the matter in the hands of the Committee.

MEETING, MARCH 7th, 1945.

Mr. M. Travers, in recognition of his service to the Club in past years, was elected an Honorary Member.

An application from Capt. Tom Lightbody and his wife for membership was unanimously accepted and we take this opportunity of welcoming them to the Club.

The constitution as drafted by the Committee was passed after a few alterations had been made.

MEETING, APRIL, 4th, 1945.

A notification was received from the Secretary of the British Mountaineering Council inviting the Club to become affiliated to this body. A lengthy discussion followed but as no decision was arrived at, the matter has been held over until the next meeting.

CLUB NOTES.

Heartiest congratulations are extended to Alf Slack on his recent marriage and to Bill Bolton on his engagement. Alf was married on April 12th and Bill hopes to be married early in July.

Letters have arrived from the following members - Bill Bolton, Sam Drysdale, Norrie Guy Tom Lightbody and Bill Walker.

All these lads are unanimous in their desire to get back to the/

the hills again and we trust it will not be long now until their hopes are realised. The hint passed on by the Editor that Charlie McAteer might soon be running the bus again seemed like a harbinger of peace to them.

LIBRARY.

We are greatly indebted to Mrs. Arline Smith, widow of Jack Smith, who has very kindly donated the sum of £5 towards the provision of a complete set of Guide Books for the Library. This amount was realised from the sale of Jack's climbing gear and Mrs Smith expressed the wish that the money should be utilised in this manner. Complete sets of Guide Books are not at present available but the money has been left aside until they can be procured when they will be inscribed to Jack's memory.

CLIMBING LITERATURE. - recommended by J.B. Nimlin.

"Pyrenean" by J.B. Morton. Glasgow Public Library ⁹¹⁴ 6.
Not sensational, but an engrossing book of the hills and valleys of the French-Spanish frontier and their inhabitants.

"20 Years on Ben Nevis" by Kilgour. Glasgow Public Library ⁹¹⁴ 121.
Very interesting history of the trials and adventures of the meteorologists who lived in the Observatory.

"Hills Sleep On" by Dorothy Cannan.
Villanous spies versus heroine in the Himalayas.

"Lady of the Heights" by Dorothy Cannan.

"Brenva" by Graham Brown.
Thrilling pioneer work on a hitherto unclimbed wall of Mont Blanc.

SKI NOTES.

Ski-ing had a brief season this year but members seized the day to brush up their rusty technique.

Alf Slack and Peter McGeoch had two ski-ing trips in the Campsie one of which was a trek from Blanefield to Lennoxton via Earl's Seat on deep but rapidly thawing snow. Without skis progress would have been extremely difficult.

J. Harvey and the Nimlins spent two week-ends on skis above Torrance. On the second of these the party were on their way home after a fine days ski-ing when a telegraph pole loomed out of the darkness. Harvey managed to avoid it but John Nimlin, heavily handicapped with a pack full of logs, ran into it. Fortunately, he was none the worse of his experience.

On the Saturday, A. Slack, A. Kay, A. & R. Hutcheson, made the ascent of Stob Coire Sgriodain. The climb was straightforward but snow conditions poor. The remainder of the party spent the day ski-ing.

Sunday found the entire party on Meall Cian Dearg. Bad snow conditions held up one section and it was 4.30 before they reached Stob Coire Eassain, having climbed Stob Coire Mheadoin on the way. The descent was made by way of an excellent glissade from Stob Coire Mheadoin. Members found this little known ridge interesting enough to recommend a visit to it.

R. Hutcheson together with his wife and son used the Monday to climb Chno Dearg, thus completing the high tops on both sides of Loch Treig.

BEN LUI., March 3rd and 4th.

Members: R. Young, J. Stevenson, and P. McGeoch.

Camped at Coninish in a rain storm and on the Sunday climbed Central Gully on hard snow. The gully was just a walk.

CAIRNGORMS. March 10th to 13th.

Members A. Slack, R. Hutcheson, A. Kay.
(Extract from Shelter Stone Book)

10.3.45. Arrived 3 p.m. having left Aviemore at 4 a.m. and spent an hour or two asleep in Rothiemurchus before starting the ascent of the Lurchers Crag. A strong wind rose as we crossed the plateau. The snow on the plateau was softish but it was harder as we descended the F. Buidhe, and it was steep enough with our heavy packs. After a "drum up" at the Shelter Stone we ascended Ben Mheadoin in a strong wind.

11.3.45. Left the stone 10.30 a.m. for Castle Gates Gully. The snow was very hard after a frost last night. We encountered an interesting ice-pitch near the summit of the gully. The snow on the plateau was iron-hard as we walked to Ben McDhui. The sun came out as we left the gully and shone from a blue sky. A haze prevented distant views but the Garbh Corrie showed up to advantage. A cold breeze prevented sunbathing. Three glissades took us down to the frozen shores of Loch Etchachan and after testing the ice we walked round the edge back to the stone.

12.3.45. Today we plan to carry our packs over the Saddle on to Bynack More and down to Ryovan from whence two of us have to leave in time to catch the 1.15 a.m. at Aviemore. At the time of writing, preparations for departure are in progress and a swell breakfast fills the cavity under the stone.

(Extract from Ryvone Bothy Visitors' Book.)

13.3.45./

13.3.45 Arrived here at 3.45 p.m. after leaving Shelter Stone at 10.45 a.m. with Alf Slack and Robert Hutcheson by way of A'Choinneach and Bynack More, Visited the Barns of Bynock en route.

Alf and Robbie left here 7.0 p.m. last night to catch the 1.a.m. train leaving Aviemore. Weather is now looking unsettled.

ARCH. KAY,

GLENCOE., March, 17th & 18th., 1945.

Members: J.&.M. Haining, J. Stevenson, A. Slack, and P. McGeoch.

Camped at Elliot's in a Glencoe Gale. Heavy rain in the morning kept party off the hill. However, a look-see was taken at Clachaig Chasm which was climbed until the first big waterfall dampened the thought of further progress.

During recent months, probably when the thaw set in, there has been a large rock slide in the Chasm. The debris from this slide (estimated at 100 tons) blocks the bed of the Chasm for about ninety feet and has wiped out two small pitches. The tail end of the slide extends to 150 ft. from the start of the Chasm proper.

CRAIGMINNON., March 17th & 18th.

Members: J. Harvey and A. Kay.

In spite of very bad weather this party managed some climbing on Craigminnon. The rock faces on this hill, although short, provide some technical problems and members interested should consult Harvey who is an enthusiast of this district.

BUACHAILLE ETIVE., 24th to 26th March.

Members: W. Gordon, T. McGuinness, F.&.H Grant.

H. Grant arrived early on Saturday and spent a leisurely day exploring the Buachaille in brilliant warm sunshine. The following day the party climbed Crowberry Gully in sleety rain. The gully held a remarkable amount of snow and, consequently, many of the rock pitches were never seen. The climb took about 3½ hours and the only outstanding features were the small seracs on some of the pitches and the deep crevasses between the snow and the rock walls.

The party returned home on the Monday in glorious weather.

EASTER MEET.

BEN LUI.

Members: J. Harvey, Mr. & Mrs. Nimlin.

J. Harvey/

J. Harvey spent the Saturday at Callander and joined the Nimlins at Tyndrum on Sunday morning. This day was spent indoors in foul weather but a break in the sky on Monday tempted J. Nimlin and J. Harvey to Conninish and Lui. Central Gully was climbed amid showers of snow and hail, the party descending by the same rout. The gully was in fairly good condition but avalanches of hailstones and high winds on the summit made this a strenuous day.

CAIRNGORMS.

Members: J. Stevenson, A. Kay, A. Hutchison, R. Hutchison, J. Shanks, D. Easson, and P. McGeoch.

A camp was made at the last trees of the Rothiemurchus Forest which gave shelter from the gales of wind and rain squalls which characterised the week-end.

Despite the adverse conditions R. Hutchison climbed Sgoran Dubh on the Saturday and with other members climbed Braeriach on the Sunday. Snow for this district and season was sparse though what there was in the corries and on the summit was hard packed and the cornices at the head of Coire Brochain would, in better weather have provided satisfying climbing.

Regret was felt at the destruction by the Army of the Upper and Lower Bothies of Glen Ennich. By way of compensation they have built up with rocks the path leading to Cairn Toul from Loch Ennich.

Another matter for regret was the extent of the Timber Felling operations in the Rothiemurchus. Several hundred acres have been denuded and left waste-land. The hauling operations have turned the road leading down by Loch an Eilein into a quagmire and this road is definitely not recommended as a route either to or from Aviemore. It is to be hoped this area will be re-aforested.