

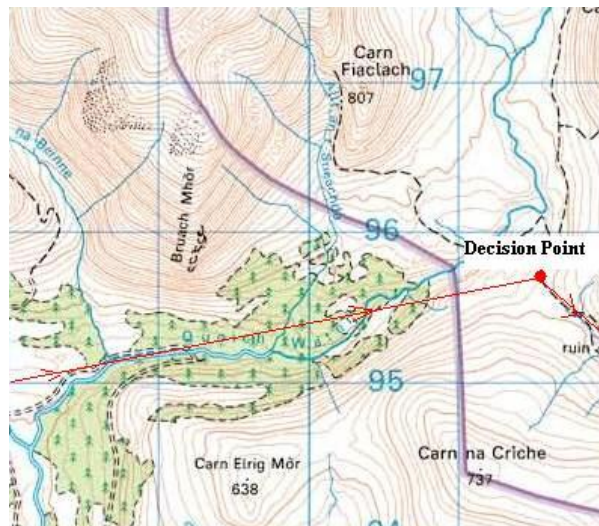
**A Cairngorm Diary**  
**24th -29th July, 1932**  
Written 'en route' by  
**James Nicoll Kerr Henderson (1908-1989)**

**Friday 29<sup>th</sup> July, 1932**

Wakened at 8 a.m., after a very sound sleep, I was so stiff and sore that I was almost afraid to rise. However, porridge and sausages made things better, and, as it was a lovely morning, we loitered over our departure, taking some photographs and leaving our card - an acknowledgement of the shelter. About 10.45 a.m. we set out over heather and bog, up Glen Quoich for about 3 miles.

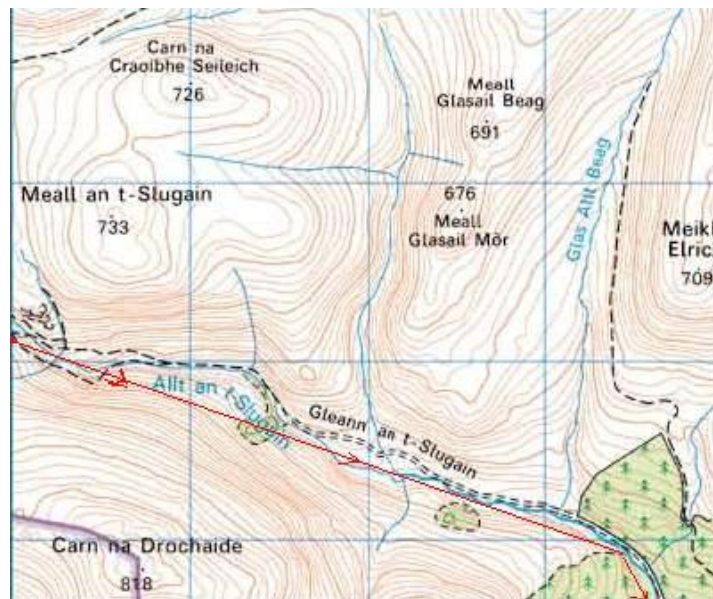


It was a real toil getting up that Glen but by 12.30 p.m. we'd reached the path which leads up to Ben an Bhuid. There we stopped for lunch and a 'pow wow'.

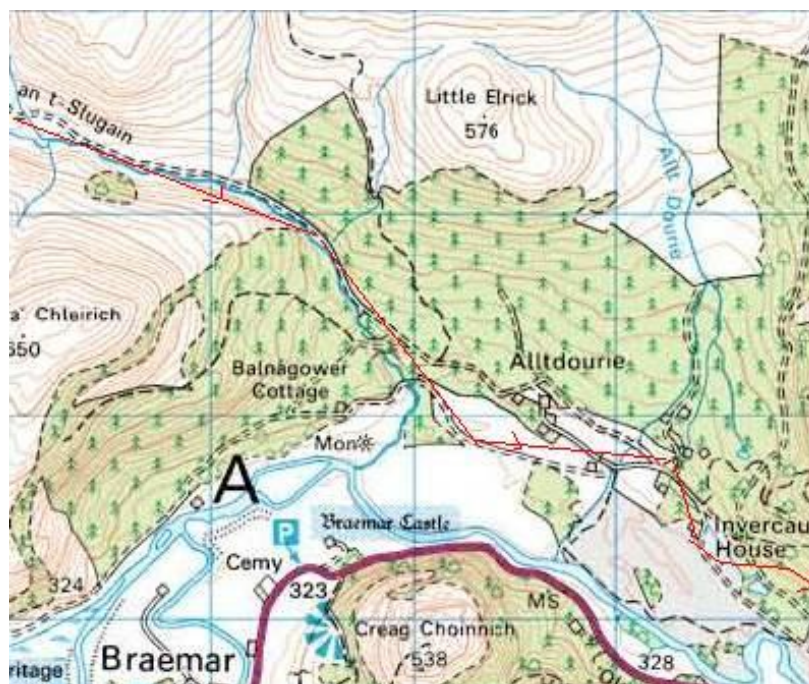


It transpired that we both felt that we were asking too much of ourselves as the climbs, at best, would take 5 to 6 hours, and even then a resting place for the night had still to be found. Slugain Lodge was only about 2 miles away but we'd no idea what it was like. So we swithered - would we admit defeat and make discretion the better part of valour? Our exchange of looks said it all. It could not be done in safety, especially if we hit any snags en route. Decision taken! Thus, at about 1 o'clock, we both lay down on a heather bed and slept ingloriously and unabashed for almost 3 hours.

Great stuff! .... Fresh again, we set out across the Quoich and the moor, down Glen Slugain and past a roofless lodge which had been the planned sleeping place if we'd done the peaks.

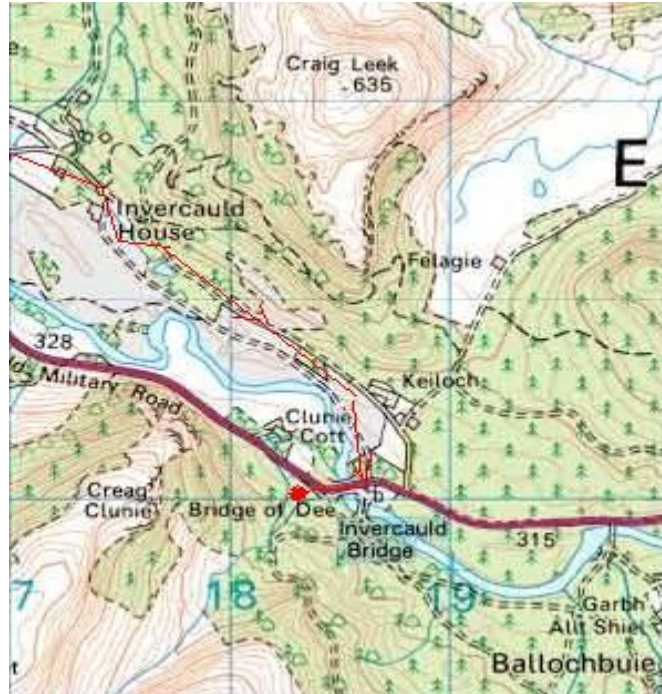


When, not long after this, we met four ladies in the glen, we suddenly realised that these were the first humans we had seen since the Wednesday! As we swung downhill, Deeside looked so perfectly natural and did not belie her name of Royal. Then Lochnagar became visible away in the South-East. After another four or five miles down the glen, we traversed a private estate and spied the main road running parallel to the River Dee in the valley to the South, while, about 3 miles to the West, Braemar lay basking in the summer sun. Several lodges, all empty, and their grounds were taken in our stride - we hoped they didn't mind - but the crowning bit of cheek was when we walked into the grounds of Invercauld House and marched out down its main driveway! What a lovely house in the Scottish Baronial style, a well kept estate and so thickly wooded too.





Indeed Deeside is remarkable for its abundance of firs, birches etc. Its grazing sheep look very healthy too. Little wonder with such rich pasture to nurture them. Reaching the main road at about almost 6 o'clock, we were greeted immediately by an Alexander's bus en route from Ballater to Braemar. But by this time the pangs of hunger were getting stronger. So we climbed a dyke, sat down by a stream running into the Dee, and thereby disposed of another tin of salmon.



The 'troops' were in much better fettle after that, and, after a much needed wash, it was agreed on both sides that we looked almost normal and respectable again.



**J.J. Walker Deeside**

**29th July, 1932**

**J.N.K Henderson**

So, just as the sun was beginning to set in a blaze of glory we stepped once more onto the 'King's Highway'. It was nearly 9 o'clock, and about 3 miles from Crathie, when we struck an inn. Unanimously we decided to do ourselves proud and sleep on a soft bed. But a few more photographs were snapped in the failing light before bed-time ....



**Crathie Church - July 1932**



**River Dee near Crathie 29th July, 1932**

## **Cairngorm Epilogue – 30<sup>th</sup> July, 1932**

Outdoor life somehow loses its charm when civilisation approaches; and nature is not nature when disturbed by rattling cars, chimney smoke and milestones! Well we'd reached 'Journey's End' and after all 'variety is the spice of life.' And what have we not had over these last six days in the Cairngorms? We've walked, we've climbed, we've descended, in blazing sun, in mountain sleet, in mists - aye, and in hail too. We've spoken to not more than a score of folks and otherwise it's been just we two, absolutely isolated and self-reliant. Every meal has been satisfying, and nary a blister between us, and clearly, despite our strong shoes becoming a delicately lighter shade than when we started out, they've stood the test. 'Esprit de corp' has been excellent, though perhaps this was due to the fact that we both had the ability to pity ourselves to a large extent and cast no blame. There was never a cross word between us and many a bright one. It has been great, and though arduous, it is really one form of hard work that is uniquely enjoyable.

**'When can their glory fade'?**

**All these unforgettable experiences! Wow!**