

a great height, and by themselves very nearly gained the top of the *north-east* or untriangulated summit of Kabru. It is most probable their height was 23,900 ft. at least. There is no perceptible difference in the height of the two chief peaks of Kabru. It seems possible the N.E. is the higher.

We also passed very near the site of the camp whence another very plucky climb was made in March 1883 by Mr. W. W. Graham, with Imboden as sole guide. This is a fine sharp peak, mainly rock in summer, and looks about 18,500 ft. high.

THE LATE MAJOR BERNARD HEAD'S EXPEDITIONS IN
THE DART DISTRICT, NEW ZEALAND.

By H. F. WRIGHT.

ON November 23, 1910, Major Head,¹ with the guides J. M. Clarke and Alex. Graham, made the first ascent of Mt. Aspiring, the highest mountain S. of the Haast Pass, which had defied all efforts of climbers to scale it.

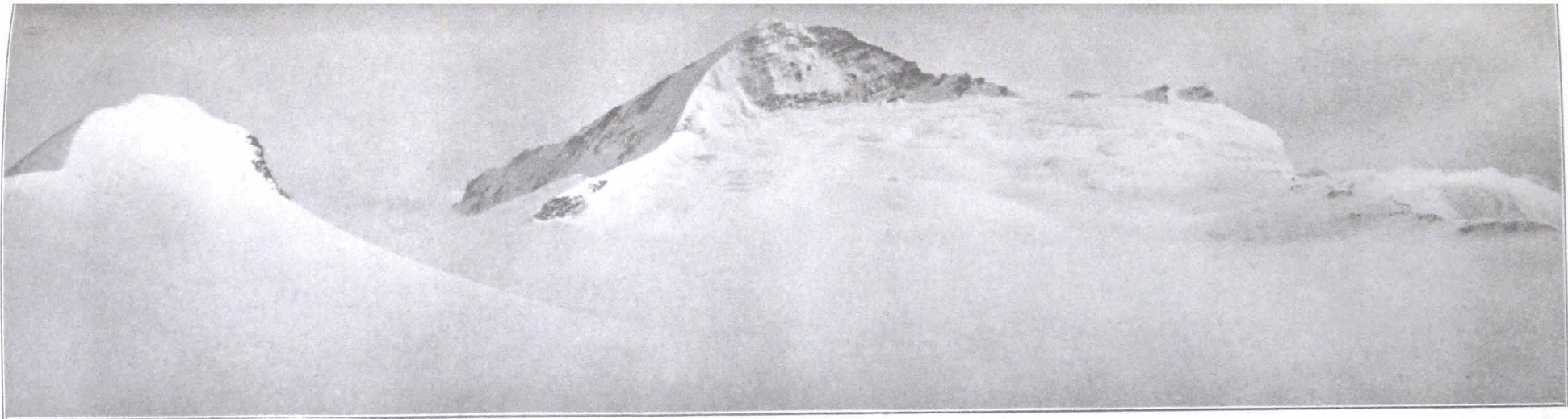
This success formed a fitting introduction to a comparatively unknown Alpine region of the Southern Alps. The wonderful array of unclimbed peaks and unexplored country visible from Aspiring deeply impressed Head's party.

In December 1911, with the guides J. M. Clarke and J. P. Murphy, Head crossed from the West Matukituki over a high saddle, which he named the 'Cascade,' on to the Upper Dart Basin. This expedition made the first descent from the Cascade down the Dart River to Paradise. The extent and character of the Dart Glacier (inadequately shown on existing maps) determined Head to put in a summer in this region.

On January 1, 1914, Head arrived at Paradise. He collected ample stores, and had with him the following party—guide J. M. Clarke, the late Lieut. C. Ferrier (killed at Ypres, November 1914), and F. Leonard, Government Surveyor. The work of the latter was to survey the Dart Glacier and correct existing maps.

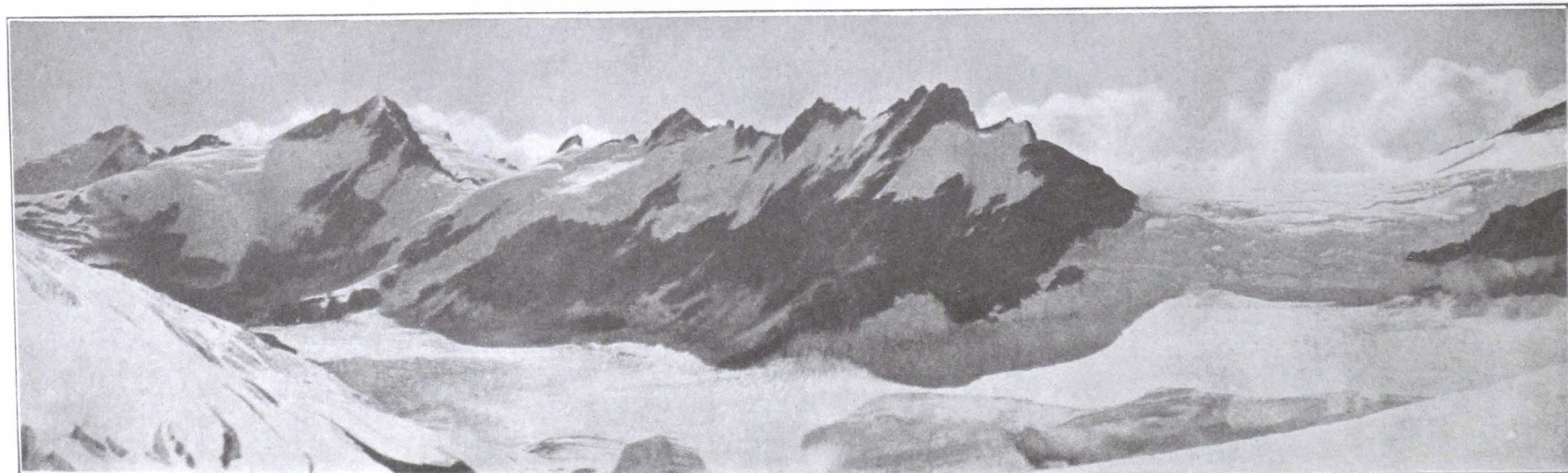
Head established a camp at Chinaman's Flat and waited patiently for the Dart River to fall, but it was January 26 before fording was possible.

¹ Major Head was killed in Gallipoli in 1915.



B. Head.

MT. ASPIRING from Quarter Deck Saddle.



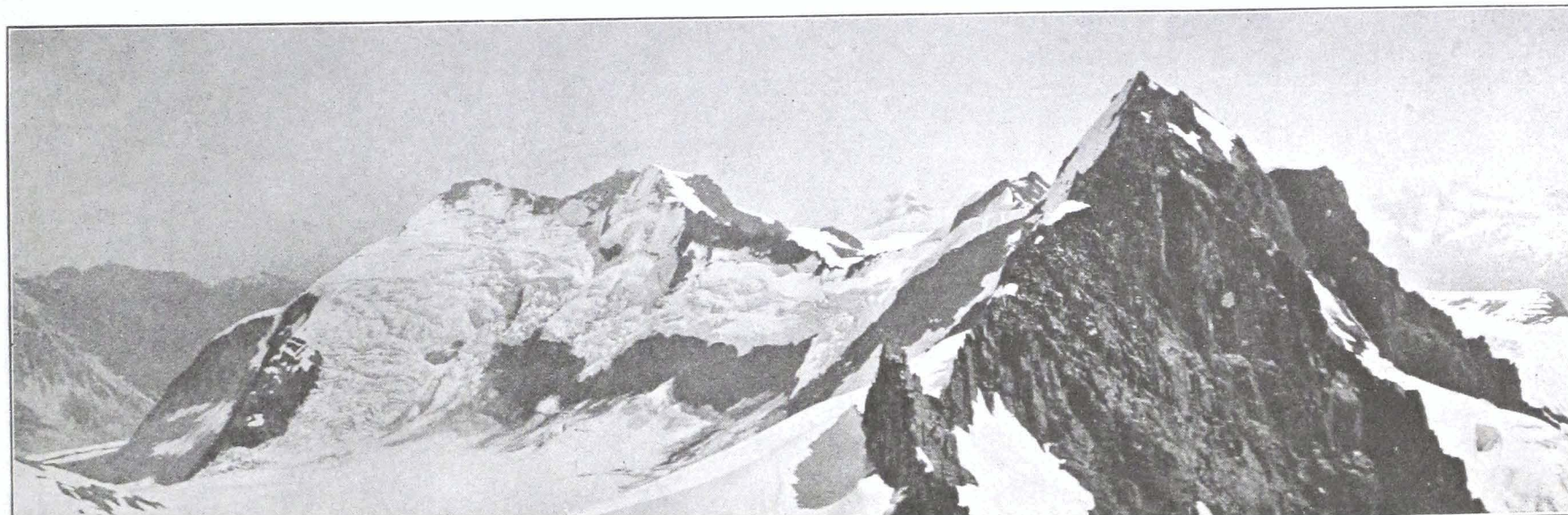
B. Head.

LOOKING ACROSS WHITBURN FROM MT. EDWARD.



B. Head.

MT. EDWARD from Joe's Saddle (about 7,000 ft.).



Between January 27 and February 9 the party were busy packing stores, cutting tracks, and erecting a base camp at Cattle Flat. This was the farthest point up the Dart to which it was possible to take horses, as it is rough country covered with dense bush.

From February 8 to 13 the party were busy penetrating the bush as far as Snowy River. Head's notes refer to 'coming back wet,' 'nastiest bit of bush I have ever travelled in,' 'clothes and hands torn,' etc.

I had arranged with Major Head to join him on the Upper Dart, after I had completed my work on Earnslaw. Along with J. Robertson I made first ascent of the W. peak of Earnslaw and Centaur Peak. Robertson then returned to Dunedin, and on February 12 I was joined by J. R. Simpson. We rode to the forks of the Rees and Hunter Rivers, thence we swagged through saddle to Snowy River. We descended that rugged gorge to the Dart, and on the 15th, making our way down, we made an almost dramatic meeting with Head's party on a difficult bench covered with dense bush, midway between Snowy River and the Whitburn.

Head has left a rough diary, with brief entries of his daily movements, and it is from this and my personal recollection I have compiled this short article.

Trig 'J' is located on a high spur near Cattle Flat camp. This was the farthest point surveyed. Leonard was able to establish a trig N. of Snowy River. From there the work of surveying the Dart Glacier was carried out. It proved the glacier to be fully four miles long from snout to névé, and not a mere dot as shown on maps. This important work was carried out between the 16th and 21st.

The Dart River comes away in one large body from a fine ice-cave. The terminal face has the appearance of having receded recently. Head named the tributary glaciers on S. face of Mt. Edward, Hess and Hobbs.

On February 21 ascents of Anstead and Tyndall were made from Cascade Saddle (where Head had his high camp) by the writer and J. R. Simpson. These were first ascents from the Dart side; but it is a moot question whether Tyndall had not been partially ascended previously from the West Matukituki.

On February 22 the whole party of six ascended the three domes on the divide between the Dart and West Matukituki. Head called this the 'Governor's Ridge,' and the three peaks Plunket, Islington, and Liverpool, after the three last N.Z. Governors.

From Liverpool the party looked down on the W. coast and the Arawhatta system. It was clearly evident that no dual range, Barrier and Dividing, as shown on the maps, existed. Liverpool afforded fine views of Aspiring, Edward, and a vast array of virgin peaks, including Moonraker and Stargazer, lying in the basins of the Arawhatta and Waiatoto Rivers.

On February 24 F. Leonard and J. R. Simpson returned to civilisation *viâ* Snowy River. The reduced party of four returned to Cattle Flat.

On February 26 the writer and C. Ferrier made an ascent of an unnamed peak on Forbes Range from Cattle Flat. This peak was named 'Clarke,' after the guide.

March 1 was St. David's Day. Head's notes state: 'Had St. David's dinner—oxtail-soup, herrings in tomato, rabbit, corned beef, asparagus, plum-pudding, anchovy paste. Drank health in lime-juice, and made Wright, Clarke, and Ferrier eat onion in place of leek.'

Bad weather and the fixing of a secondary camp on the Flat, opposite mouth of the Whitburn, occupied the party until March 2.

On the 3rd the Dart River was successfully sparred in a wild gorge. This is always a ticklish proceeding, as the river is uncrossable otherwise.

On March 3 and 4 the Whitburn Glacier was traversed. It proved a most beautiful and interesting glacier some four miles long. It was almost entirely clear of surface débris, was most symmetrically crevassed throughout its entire length, and had its terminal face closed by narrow rock gates.

On March 6 first ascents were made of two unnamed peaks on the left of the Whitburn, which were named by Head, Marion Tower and Brownlow Tower.

On the 7th and 8th attempts were made on Mt. Edward; but were unsuccessful owing to bad weather, and the party running short of provisions returned to Cattle Flat, whence I had to return to Dunedin.

It was decided I should attempt the ascent of a bold rock peak on the Forbes Range S.E. of Cattle Flat camp. Accordingly, on March 9 I started with a light equipment and bivouacked at 6,000 ft. At 2 A.M. the following morning I began the final ascent, reaching the top at 7 A.M. This peak I named 'Head,' after our leader. Two minor rock towers on N. side of Head I also climbed, naming them 'Ellie' and 'Moirá' peaks. I reached the Dredge Hut that night, and next morning forded the Dart and thence to Paradise.

On March 10, Head, with Clarke and Ferrier, returned to the Whitburn. On the 11th they made the final ascent of Mt. Edward from the head of the Whitburn. This was the culminating point of the expedition. It is a beautiful snow-peak and affords a magnificent outlook. The only lengthy entry in Head's diary was made on the summit, and I give it in its entirety :

' Day gorgeously fine, and the atmosphere crisp, and clear, and still. The view, particularly along the main range N.E. and S.W., absolutely superb ; Mt. Cook, Tasman, and Malte Brun standing out distinct and sharp amidst an array of first and second class peaks. Away in the far N.E. nearly every peak and snow-field of the Cook group could be individualised, whilst Aspiring in the foreground was a most perfect picture. To the S.W. the view was almost equally fine. The peaks, precipices, and glaciers of Lydia, Tiber, Victoria, and of our own group, were clear-cut and interesting-looking.

' To the E. and southwards the valleys of the Matukituki and Rees lay at our feet, while just beyond, the hill slopes of Lakes Wanaka and Hawea are plainly visible. A good portion of the head of Lake Wakatipu and the Glenorchy surroundings seemed surprisingly near.

' To the westward a perfect maze of fine peaks and glaciers of all dimensions appear endlessly, and beyond those the green W. coast bush, and beyond the bush, the long roll of the Pacific.'

On the 11th they ascended Lydia. On the 12th and 13th they traversed the high elevated plateau lying between Lydia and Mt. Maoriri and the Whitburn and W. coast.

It was the minor peaks rising from either side of this elevated plateau that had caused the variations in the E. and W. coast surveys.

This practically finished Head's work on the Whitburn. He has named quite a number of peaks and glaciers which will be shown on future maps. One fine peak on the right of Whitburn he called ' Ian,' after General Ian Hamilton.

He was occupied until the 26th in dismantling his camps and effecting their removal to Paradise.

On the 27th and 28th he made an expedition up the Rees, but bad weather prevented the accomplishment of anything further.

It was Head's intention to return and put in another season in the Upper Dart ; but the war claimed him, and he finished his last climb on the heights of Gallipoli.