

to have quite found herself, and her drawing was somewhat defective. Miss MacAndrew showed a pleasant sketch of a lake near the Simplon. Her mountain pictures were also excellent, but we think she might with advantage put more colour into her work.

Miss Rosa Wallis gave us two of her captivating studies of flower-decked alpine meadows, and the alpine flora was also prettily depicted by Miss Thomas.

Miss Helen McAlpine and Mr. Carelli showed Dolomite pictures full of characteristic colour, and some pleasing work was exhibited by Miss Ogle and Mrs. Stephens.

We should not omit to mention an exceedingly interesting chalk drawing of the Grandes Jorasses by Mr. Arnold-Forster. An example of Elijah Walton must have recalled old times to many of our senior members.

Mr. Spencer's work grows more interesting each year. His long experience of photography has made him a master of composition and he chooses his subjects with the eye of a mountaineer. The red seals that appeared on his frames during the exhibition were sufficient signs of the popularity of his work. The 'Petit Dru,' with rolling mists surrounding the peak, and 'Les Charmoz' were his most successful exhibits.

A very interesting set of beautifully executed metal plaques was sent over by Monsieur Jan Joulin of Lyons, in which silver, copper, aluminium and other metals were artistically used to represent well-known mountain scenes. These attracted much admiration and formed a striking novelty in an exhibition of paintings.

The heartiest thanks of the Club are once more due to Mr. Spencer for devoting so much time to getting together such a representative and delightful collection of pictures.

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## IN MEMORIAM.

COLONEL J. W. A. MICHELL.

(1840-1927.)

COLONEL MICHELL was one of the oldest members of the Alpine Club, to which he was elected, in 1882, on a purely Himalayan qualification. He had a very extensive list of exploration and mountaineering expeditions in the Himalayas, Kashmir, Yarkand, etc., in the years 1860-2, 1864-5, 1869-72, 1875 and 1877. He was

one of the last remaining officers of the old East India Company who were transferred, after the Mutiny, to the present Indian Army.

Colonel Michell served in the Bhutan war, 1865-6, the Duffla campaign of 1874-5, and the Sikkim operations of 1888. At the time of his election to the Alpine Club he was a major in the 36th Bengal N.I., and retired as a colonel in 1897.

He read a paper to the Alpine Club entitled 'Twenty Years' Climbing and Hunting in the Himalayas' ('A.J.' 11, 203 *et seq.*), and another interesting contribution, 'Exploring in Sikkim Himalaya,' will be found in 'A.J.' 15, 111 *et seq.*

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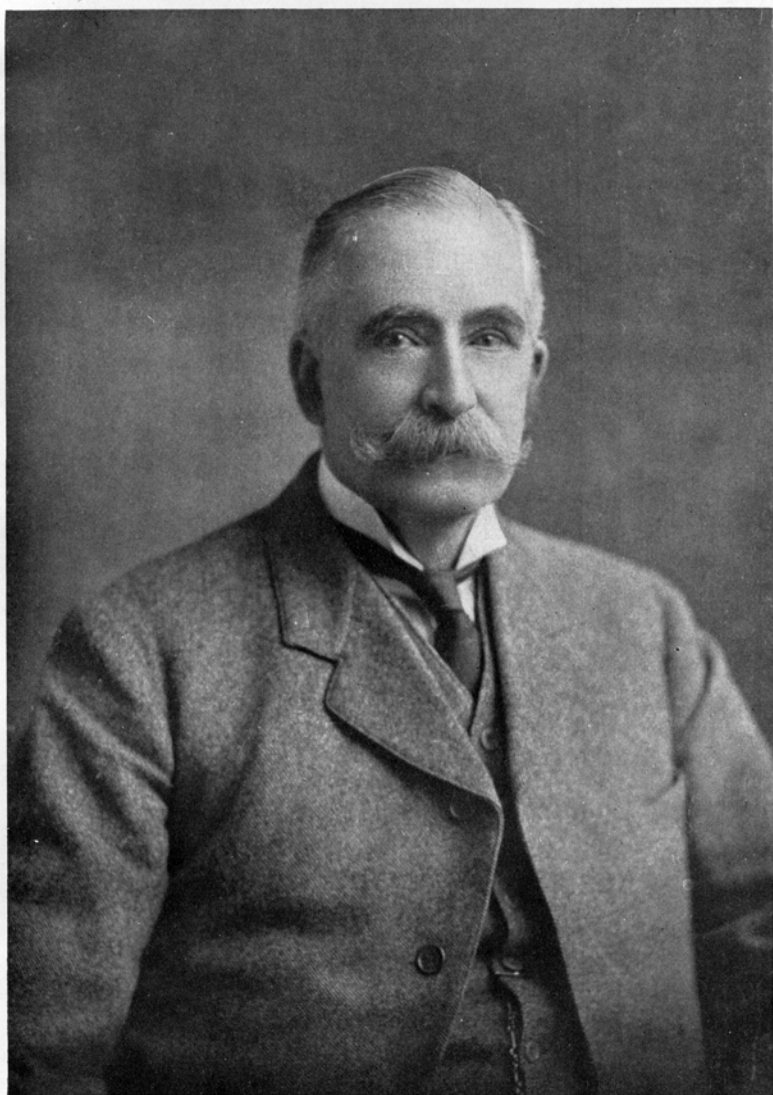
### PHILIP FLETCHER.

(1847-1927.)

PHILIP FLETCHER, who died at Worplesdon, Surrey, on June 11, in his 81st year, had been for all his last years a keen member of the Alpine Club. He began climbing late in life: his first season, which included the Breithorn, Monte Rosa, and the Matterhorn, was 1889; but he kept it up for many years, and in 1906, when at the age of 60 he climbed Mont Blanc and made his third ascent of the Matterhorn, he had been up nearly all the recognised peaks of Switzerland, and was a well-known and welcome visitor at many of the climbing centres. At Arolla more especially, which he visited again and again, and where he had climbed every peak round, most of them three or four times, he was a familiar figure. He loved the place, and more than one guide there, as well as the little English Church, benefited by his liberality.

Mountaineering was perhaps the chief of his pleasures: it gave him many happy holidays and a store of memories for his old age. He enjoyed to the full the scenery and the long days in the high air and the sense of strength matched against natural obstacles which is the mountaineer's delight. He had the additional satisfaction of feeling that he could hold his own at the sport with much younger men, who admired his skill and experience and envied his powers of endurance. At the same time his generous appreciation of their activities made him a welcome companion, whether on Swiss mountains or scrambles among the rocks of Wales.

This is no place for an account of his life at home in Lancashire, where he was a member of an old-established colliery firm. But those who knew him in Switzerland will be glad to know that as he was there so he was at home, a genial and generous friend to all alike, interested in other people's doings, and expecting them to be interested in his, with a warm-hearted simplicity of character which endeared him to all sorts and conditions of men and women in the colliery village where most of his life was spent. He was a liberal benefactor of his parish and of the church which his father had built



Phot. T. Chidley.

PHILIP FLETCHER.  
1847-1927.

in it, and many good causes and many individuals benefited by his generosity. Alike at home and abroad he went about doing acts of kindness; he was a man full of sympathetic human interests, with a high standard of personal conduct, a great Christian gentleman.

F. F.

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H. D. MINCHINTON.

(1887-1927.)

THERE has probably been no more devoted follower of mountaineering who has worked in the Himalayas than Major H. D. Minchinton of the 1st (K.G.O.) Gurkha Rifles.

Nor do I think, considering the claims on him, and the ties of an officer serving in India, and also taking into consideration that he was a man of very little, if any, private means beyond his pay, that more could have been accomplished by anyone.

He never received outside assistance in any of his expeditions until he joined Major Mason's expedition to Shaksgam in 1926.

Minchinton was entered to mountaineering in Switzerland when quite young, and I believe had the advantage of instruction from the late Mr. C. D. Cunningham.

I do not think that he accomplished anything of special note during the few times that he visited the Alps.

But he had already acquired considerable skill in handling ordinary snow and rock problems before his arrival in India.

He was then lucky enough to be appointed to the 1st Gurkhas, whose station at Dharmsala is on the lower slopes of the great Dhauli Dhar Ridge which divides the District of Kangra from the Chamba State.

No man with a taste for the mountains could find a more wonderful home, and from that year—1907—until the present year he spent all his spare time in exploring and climbing the mountains surrounding his own station.

But further than that, he was so placed as to be within reach of far grander country beyond the Dhauli Dhar Range itself.

Moreover, in that regiment there is a tradition of exploration and mountaineering, and Major Minchinton received encouragement from two at least of our members belonging to it, the present General Sir Herbert Powell and Brig.-General E. D. Money, both of whom belong to the Alpine Club.

Major Money joined him in most of his earlier climbs, and between them they trained a considerable number of very useful Gurkha Riflemen.

The climbs done by parties from Dharmsala were often extremely long and trying from the point of view that they were invariably handling new ground.



H. D. MINCHINTON.  
1887-1927.

The peaks on the Dhauli Dhar Range were conquered one by one, and finally the highest point, now always known as the 'Matterhorn,' was ascended.

All this gave a mixed and varied experience, until just before the War, 1914, when Major Minchinton was enabled to take a longer leave, and pushed his explorations through Bhara Bhanghal into Lahoul and Zanskar.<sup>1</sup> That journey, carried out entirely with the help of his own men, is very typical of what can be done by an expedition not more highly equipped than that of an ordinary officer's shooting trip.

As will be seen by reference to his account, he made a number of very interesting climbs, and covered a great deal of very strange country.

But in that country of innumerable peaks of third-rate Himalayan importance, the points reached and the passes crossed convey very little to the ordinary reader.

There is one point in Major Minchinton's career which is worth referring to. Major Money (as he then was) was able to influence the military authorities to such an extent that a grant was given him to clothe and equip a small detachment of Gurkhas, to train and ground them in mountain work, and to teach them the use of the rope and ice-axe, and how to handle simple snow problems.

Major Minchinton at that time was Major Money's assistant.

However, this training came to an untimely end at the time of the Frontier troubles of 1908, and when normal conditions were re-established the grant was never renewed.

During the War Major Minchinton saw varied service, alike in France, Mesopotamia, Palestine, and on the Indian frontier. He was very severely wounded in the left arm at the Dujaila Redoubt on March 8, 1916, in General Aylmer's last attempt to relieve Kut, and received the Military Cross.

I do not think he ever recovered the full use of this left arm, and it was always a serious handicap to him in the mountains.

Subsequently he visited New Zealand, making some small climbs from the Hermitage. He made also an interesting journey through the hills of Tasmania.<sup>2</sup>

In 1926 he joined Major Mason as his second in command on his exploration of the Shaksgam, and it is perfectly well known that the success of the party, so far as overcoming the physical difficulties of the mountains was concerned, was due to his knowledge, keenness, and enthusiasm.

It is pleasant to think that he leaves behind him in his regiment some officers who, having profited by his example and enthusiasm, are succeeding him in keeping up the tradition to which he himself succeeded.

C. G. BRUCE.

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<sup>1</sup> *A.J.* 28, 382-94.

<sup>2</sup> *A.J.* 37, 38-46.

[Captain J. W. Rundall, 1st (K.G.O.) Gurkha Rifles, writes from Kohima, Assam, dated June 27 :

‘ . . . I hope that you will be able to find space in your next issue for a few words “ In memoriam ” of a very gallant gentleman. . . . Major Minchinton was a true son of the mountains, full of the real spirit of *bonhomie* and *joie de vivre* ; nothing ever seemed to depress him, and his loss to the regiment, both as a soldier and climber, is quite irreparable. On the mountains his pace and endurance were astounding, while as a “ Khud runner ” he could knock spots off men half his age.

‘ He was to have joined me this summer in the Oberland, and we had made extensive plans for the exploration and climbing of the giants of Bhara Bhanghal and Lahoul in happy years to come. . . .’]

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#### RAYMOND BICKNELL.

(1875-1927.)

RAYMOND BICKNELL was born on January 3, 1875, and was educated at Wellington College and at Christ's College, Cambridge. After some years of land agency he entered the employment of the Newcastle Breweries, and in 1916 became a Director of that Company. Not long after leaving Cambridge he married Miss Phillis Lovibond, who shared and encouraged his enthusiasm for the mountains.

Norway first attracted him, and while still an undergraduate he had in the course of two summers climbed a number of Norwegian peaks. In 1897 he had a most successful season, during which he made the first ascent of Mjöltnir by its S.W. side (previously descended by Slingsby), the first ascent of the N. ridge of Store Midtmaradalstind (this is still known as Bicknell's route), and one of the earliest traverses of Store Skagastolstind. Then followed ten years during which he could not climb, but in 1908, 1909, and 1911 he was back in Norway. Hitherto he had climbed with Ole Berge or any other guide whom he could pick up, but from 1908 onwards down to 1924 he climbed guideless and as leader of his party. By the end of 1911 he had acquired a knowledge of the Jotunheim which could be rivalled by few and a considerable experience of neighbouring districts. The most remarkable feat of these years, perhaps of his whole career, was the first ascent of the gully between Manden and Kjaerringen, in the course of which he was cutting steps in hard ice continuously for over nine hours.

In 1912 he went for the first time to the Alps, and he was so impressed by them and by the more complicated problems of their ascent that he never again returned to Norway. His first Alpine season was spent in the Mont Blanc district, but the weather was so bad that even the ordinary climbs presented conspicuous difficulties.



RAYMOND BICKNELL.  
1875-1927.



RAYMOND BICKNELL.



R. B.

J. N.

A FEW HOURS BEFORE THE ACCIDENT.  
(S. and Central Aiguilles d'Arves in background.)

Next year was better and he made what is believed to be the second ascent of the N. face of the Plan by M. Fontaine's route and found the N.W. ridge of the Ober-Gabelhorn in a condition that gave full play to his icemanship. From this period onwards he went more and more frequently to the Lake District, which could be reached easily from his home, and also made occasional visits to North Wales. He soon became very familiar with the difficult rock-climbing of these districts.

In the early part of the war he was over age for military service, but when the age limit was raised he at once obtained a Commission in a special service battalion of the Royal Marines. From the Armistice to 1924 every summer found him in the Alps. In these years he was at the height of his powers and climbed a large number of the great peaks of the Mont Blanc district, the Oberland, the Valais, the Dauphiné, and the Graians. The season of 1920 was particularly successful, and included a great week during which he made the third ascent of Mont Dolent from France by the Brèche de l'Amône, descended into Italy, climbed the Grandes Jorasses, and returned to France over the Col des Grandes Jorasses. But fate was soon to restrict his physical abilities. In the winter of 1924-5 he all but succumbed first to typhoid, then to appendicitis; phlebitis followed, and for a time it seemed probable that serious mountaineering would not in future be possible for him. In 1926, however, he was again in the Alps, but this time with a guide. Though still somewhat lame he traversed the High Level route and succeeded in ascending some big peaks. In 1927, again with a guide, he crossed a number of passes and peaks from Saas to the Dauphiné and found that his old powers were rapidly returning. He had been going so well that when after a month his guide had to return home he felt himself strong enough to lead his party up the S. Aiguille d'Arves. To those who have climbed with him it must be hardly credible that he can have fallen for any other reason than some sudden physical failure resulting from his illnesses of 1925.

He was elected to the Alpine Club in 1911, before he had ever been to the Alps. From 1920 to 1923 he was a member of the Committee, where his services were of great value, and in 1926 the Club elected him to the Vice-Presidency. In addition to occasional notes he contributed to the *ALPINE JOURNAL* two papers on Norway, entitled 'Two Norwegian Couloirs' (vol. 25), and 'The Horunger' (vol. 34), which every climber contemplating a first visit to Norway should read, and three papers on his Alpine experiences, 'The North-West Ridge of the Ober-Gabelhorn' (vol. 28), 'Mont Dolent and the Col des Grandes Jorasses' (vol. 33), and 'The Jungfrau from the Wengern Alp, Schalligrat, and other climbs in 1923' (vol. 36).

Mountaineering was the dominating passion of his life. When possible he would undertake long and arduous expeditions, the achievement of which would call for the exercise of his full powers.

When these were impracticable he would climb lesser mountains or preferably cross easy cols, for he never liked to tie himself to one centre. When conditions were too bad even for these he would walk over grass passes in rain or snow. When he could not get to the Alps he would go to the Lakes or North Wales. For single days he would go to the Northumbrian hills and moors. No one has more ardently sought the delight of the hard-won ascent, but to him the mountains were not a mere glorified gymnasium. In bad weather as in good he loved their form and colour, the slowly changing perspectives of the long hill walk as well as the near detail of clean-cut slab or delicately moulded snow.

He was in every sense a great mountaineer. Before each season he would plan carefully the climbs he proposed to make and familiarize himself with their history (it was indeed for this purpose that he compiled the index to the later volumes of the *ALPINE JOURNAL* which is shortly to be utilized by the Club). He was a born leader, and in the general plan of campaign as well as in the actual working out of each ascent his friends always followed him readily—even when his arrangements involved such inconveniences as a bivouac without special equipment on the Schallijoch or the ascent of a 4000 metre peak as a training climb. The efficiency which brought him such success in his career was noticeable in his management of the details of the night in the hut and of the early morning start. He had the temperament and the skill of the great master of mountain craft. While his massive build militated against his being in quite the first rank of rock-climbers, there can have been few amateurs who were his equals on ice or as all-round mountaineers. No one who has ever seen it can forget the sight of his purposeful back as with the short pick of his antiquated axe he would cut his way up some formidable ice-slope, or the resourceful caution with which in storm and gathering darkness he would steer his party into safety. The hard common sense which was such a conspicuous feature of his character enabled him to weigh chances and risks in a just balance, and often to snatch a victory where others might have been deterred by apparent rather than real difficulty or by the loudly announced sentiments of their predecessors. For such laurels as fall to the mountaineer he had nothing but contempt, especially when those laurels were earned by expeditions where the dangers were outside the climber's control, or, to use his own words, by 'those mistakes which it has now become the fashion to classify as variations' on great routes.

But beyond this Raymond Bicknell was an original and dominating personality, at once masterful and lovable. He had supreme qualities, a courage to think out his own opinions and to abide by them, combined with human kindness and utter loyalty. He possessed a unique type of humour which he sometimes employed with devastating effect against pretension or sham or slackness of thought. There was a bigness about him—physical, mental,

spiritual—so much so that he seemed to many of us to be almost a permanent part of the universe. Whatever he did he did with his might, whether it were the climbing of a mountain, or the study and photography of medieval architecture, or the organization of a week-end camp with his family on the Cheviot, or even the driving of a motor-car.

Mountaineering no longer stands in need of defence or justification. We know that its risks are small, infinitesimal when compared with the reward it offers. But now here, now there, the great mountains exact their price. In Raymond Bicknell we recognize the essential good, developed year after year by the toil, the struggle, the danger, the beauty of the hills. The foreknowledge that from him some day the price was to be exacted would, we believe, have caused him no hesitation, have drawn from him no complaint. To us remain the memory and the regret.

C. A. E.

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PHILIP SCOTT MINOR.

(1861–1927.)

LIKE many other Northern members, Philip Scott Minor seldom, if ever, attended a club meeting with the exception of the Annual Dinner, so that, although elected sixteen years ago, he was probably almost unknown to the majority of members of the Alpine Club. But amongst the mountaineering fraternity in the North of England no man was better known nor more liked than he. He was a general favourite. It was not that he ever did any heroic climb, he was content with the ordinary 'difficult' gullies of the Moss Ghyll type for preference. Nor did he rank with his fellow-townsmen, Woolley and Pilkington, as an explorer, but he was a most enthusiastic lover of the mountains and one of the most companionable men who ever walked.

He was probably the most popular man in the Rucksack Club, his sociableness and his never-failing enthusiasm contributed greatly to that club's success, and he carried the same characteristics into the Fell and Rock Club. In 1918–19 he had the satisfaction of being President of both these clubs at the same time.

He was always a great fell walker and had acquired an intimate knowledge of the Welsh and Cumberland hills. He did not begin rock-climbing till he was turned forty, and climbed in Switzerland for the first time (except for a 'tourist' ascent of the Wetterhorn) in 1906. On that occasion, *inter alia*, he traversed Mt. Blanc with two amateurs and a porter. His best season was in 1911, when in a fortnight of good weather he climbed Lo Besso, Zinal-Rothhorn, Ober Gabelhorn, Matterhorn, Monte Rosa, the Dent Blanche, and just missed the Dom through a storm. In that year, his fifty-first, he was elected to the Alpine Club.

Of full height and heavily built, he was somewhat slow in walking, and used to say that when at a height of over 10,000 ft. it required a microscope to see him move. But he always 'got there' sooner or later, and it was always a joy to be in his company. In climbing he was steady and absolutely reliable, especially in descending steep rock.

After the War he visited the French Alps two or three times, contenting himself with the smaller peaks, but he continued to visit our own hills at every opportunity, and raised his total number of ascents of Snowdon to about 120, including three ascents in one day at the age of fifty-seven.

It may be mentioned that he held the degree of LL.B. (London University). He had to wait for his final examination some time because he was too young, and in due course he passed first in all England.

H. E. S.

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MAXIMIN GASPARD.

(1864-1927.)

FEW of us who have seen this famous guide in recent years would have recognized in that paralysed form the once picturesque and athletic figure, the dominant personality and 'splendid swagger' so characteristic of Maximin, second son of Pierre Gaspard. For, in the heyday of his renown, some 30 years ago, he stood in Dauphiné in a class almost by himself. His one possible rival, often his companion, was his cousin, the still active Joseph Turc, 'le Zouave.'

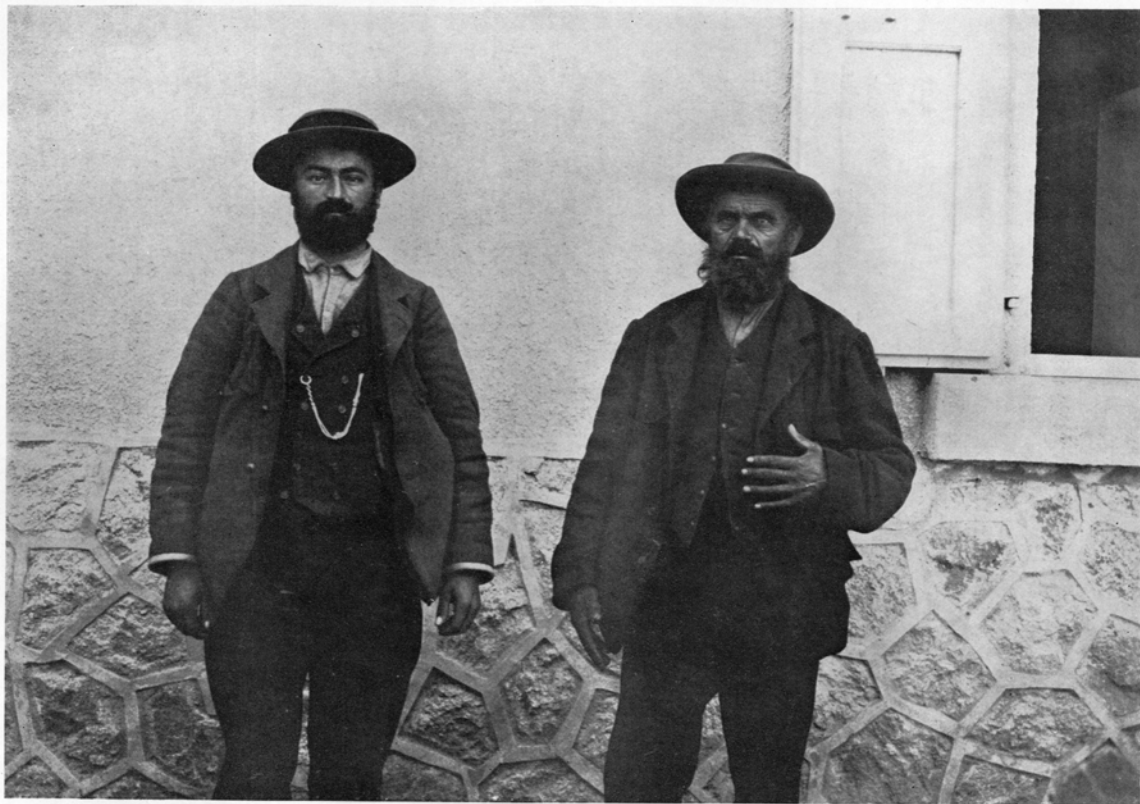
If, at that date, practically all the great Dauphiné peaks had been conquered, still, the early nineties were the epoch when climbers began to seek out the most difficult routes, and in that pursuit Maximin became pre-eminent. He was the leader of some of the most adventurous mountaineers of the period, of whom the best known are MM. C. Verne, A. Reynier, Eugène Gravelotte, and our own members, Messrs. F. E. L. Swan and Alfred Holmes.

The following is a list of some of Maximin's most important first ascents or new routes :—

- Pic du Glacier Carré
- <sup>1</sup> La Meije (by the W. arête and N.W. face ; from the N.)
- Brèche Joseph Turc
- Brèche Maximin Gaspard
- Grande Ruine (W. arête)
- Pic Bourcet (N.E. summit)
- Roche Méane (Tête Carrée)
- <sup>1</sup> Les Écrins (from the Glacier Noir)

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<sup>1</sup> According to my friend Monsieur Lory, Maximin had made 60 ascents of La Meije and Les Écrins, respectively.



Phot. Alfred Holmes.

MAXIMIN AND PIERRE GASPARD, PÈRE.  
(About 1890.)

Mont Pelvoux (from the N.W., Glacier Noir)  
 Le Coup de Sabre  
 Col du Glacier Noir  
 Les Bans (from the S. ; from the W., or Valgaudemar)  
 Vaxivier  
 Les Rouies (from the S.)  
 Pic d'Olan (N. summit, from the S.)  
 Pic des Souffles (first ascent of all three summits)

while, outside Dauphiné, his greatest exploit was probably the first traverse of the dangerously rotten arête connecting the Grande Casse with the Grande Motte. This expedition, like many others included in the list above, has never been repeated.

Maximin was above all a 'Dauphiné' guide; he never left it willingly, and, it must be confessed, was never as great a leader when away from his own mountains.

As a rock climber he was brilliant in the extreme as well as absolutely safe. On ice and snow, like most Dauphiné guides, he was little more than mediocre. As a pathfinder or discoverer of routes he has seldom been surpassed. The writer will always remember his graceful and rapid execution of any rock problem, and no cragsman was ever more finished in his movements. His younger brother, Dévouassoud, carries on the family traditions.

Like all of us, Maximin had his faults. A born leader of men and expeditions, completely fearless, he was often overbearing in manner and reckless in execution. Success was only too apt to carry him off his feet. Still, with many virtues, one could easily forgive what were almost *les défauts de ses qualités*.

He died at St. Christophe on June 5 last. Death, after such prolonged suffering, must have come as a relief.

The name of Maximin Gaspard will live. The Glacier Noir's incomparable *cirque*, grandest and grimmest scene of the whole range of the Alps, will, ages hence, bear testimony to his deeds.

E. L. S.

## NEW EXPEDITIONS.

### *Mont Blanc Group.*

MONT BLANC, 4810 m. = 15,782 ft., B.I.K., FIRST ASCENT DIRECT FROM THE BRENVA GLACIER. September 1-2, 1927. Messrs. F. S. Smythe and T. Graham Brown. Left Torino hut 03.30 *en route* to Col du Trident and Upper Brenva Glacier. It was decided on account of soft snow on Glacier du Géant to postpone the ascent for 24 hrs. and ascend the Tour Ronde, whence it is possible to see the lower part of the face, which is invisible from the Torino hut. Ascended from Géant Glacier to E. Col de Toule and traversed