

ALPINE NOTES

	Year of Election.
THE ALPINE CLUB OBITUARY :	
Gotch, H. G.	1876
Hopkinson, Sir Alfred	1887
Weston, The Rev. Walter	1893
Withers, Sir John J. (C. 1904, S. 1909-11, V.-P. 1925, P. 1932)	1893
Slater, Dr. C.	1895
Wyatt, J. W.	1902
Dent, Dr. H. L. R.	1903
Tweedsmuir, His Excellency the Lord	1906
Wood, Col. Henry	1919
Meakin, W.	1922

WOOD YUKON EXPEDITION, 1939.—The third Wood Yukon Expedition to the St. Elias Range formed, as did its predecessors, part of the research programme in air survey which has been conducted for a number of years at the American Geographical Society of New York. Its purpose was to complete an air mapping project begun in 1935 and 1936 and to carry out certain experiments aimed at simplifying the field procedure of a mapping programme in unexplored mountainous country.

The 1939 party consisted of four members: Mr. and Mrs. Walter A. Wood, Mr. Roger Drury and Mr. Anderson Bakewell. Travelling to Skagway, Alaska, by boat and thence to Whitehorse, Y.T., by train, the party then flew 150 miles westward to Kluane Lake. From Burwash Landing on this lake equipment and supplies were transported by pack-train in four days to a camp on the right bank of Wolf Creek Glacier, which drains the eastern slopes of the main range and up which we had travelled in 1935 to climb Mt. Steele (see *A. J.* 48. 81 *sqq.*). Base Camp was situated at the sharp bend of the glacier a mile or two below our Camp VI of 1935 (see map, *A. J.* 48. 82). From this point we branched off from our previous route and made our way across the stagnant mass of Wolf Creek Glacier, at this point about two miles wide. It was necessary to back-pack all of our supplies for two months across this glacier, whose surface is so dissected from erosion and melting that we feel sure that its equal would be hard to find anywhere in the world. Loads averaged about 60 lb. per man and eight round trips were necessary before our Advance Base Camp on the western bank had been consolidated. An idea of the type of going we had to contend with may be gained from the fact that each of us completely wore out a pair of boots during the relaying.



Air photo, W. A. Wood.]

MT. WOOD (15,880 FT.), ST. ELIAS RANGE.

Camp 3, situated below clouds at extreme lower left; about 4000 ft. emerges above the clouds.

[To face p. 128.]

Above ABC (Advance Base Camp) we stocked three camps, at 7200, 9200 and 10,300 ft. on Mt. Wood (named after Major Z. T. Wood, commanding the R.C.M.P. in Dawson in 1898). During this advance the weather was consistently bad. We were held at Camp 2 (9200 ft.) for four days while a blizzard raged, and after returning to ABC for more food were again confined for two days at the same camp before moving up to Camp 3 (10,300 ft.). No sooner arrived there than another blizzard set in and for a week we were confined to our tents. During the height of the storm the wind velocity at times reached a probable 75 m.p.h., and for long periods we could do nothing but listen to the howling of the gale and the wild flapping of the tent walls. One of us emerged from a tent at the height of the storm to secure a tent guy but never achieved his objective, being blown flat before a step could be taken. On the evening of August 24 the weather cleared to reveal the ridge above us. Where, on our arrival, the cornice had overhung the eastern slope, now it had completely reversed itself and dominated the western face. Our food was now sufficient to last only two more days without a descent to lower camps and we knew that, were we to go down for more, we would probably not be able to return in time to profit by the extremely short periods of good weather which seemed to come regularly every eight days and last about 36 hours. Also, so much new snow had fallen and drifted down on to the gentle head snows of the catchment basin below us, that progress downward would be difficult enough without thinking of climbing upwards with heavy loads. We therefore planned to make our bid for the summit on the 25th should the weather behave.

The morning of the 25th dawned crystal clear and still and was followed by a sunrise such as one rarely sees even in high mountains. Giving the sun time to warm the air a little, we left camp at 6.30 A.M. and started up the corniced ridge. Immediately fathomless powder snow slowed us down to a snail's pace and, as the ridge steepened, we moved even more slowly, as the snow had to be cleared away and steps cut in the underlying névé. Thus we progressed until nearly noon, when we reached the only rocks seen on the entire climb. They were little comfort, being too steep and exposed to climb. They were only passed by dint of a long bout with the ice-underlain 60° slope forming their northern margin. Though but 250 ft. high, an hour and a quarter was required to leave them below us.

We now emerged on to the easy upper slopes of the mountain, where the climbing is comparable to the Col du Midi route of Mont Blanc. Here the snow was slightly better, though one went in to one's knees at nearly every step. Towards 2 P.M. we noticed a fresh wind blowing snow off the ridge above, and it was not long before it had increased in velocity to a point when the entire upper slopes were a seething mass of blowing snow. From the summit a tremendous snow plume stretched towards the N.E., extending at least a mile from the highest point. We held a council of war and decided that even if we were to reach the top, survey operations would have been

out of the question. Toes were becoming numb from long hours in deep snow, and so at 3.45 P.M. at an altitude of about 14,000 ft. we reluctantly turned back and floundered back to Camp 3, which we reached at 6.45 P.M. The following day Camp 3 was evacuated, and on the 28th we arrived in ABC.

Mt. Wood, under good snow conditions, is an easy mountain. I think though that one will have to be fortunate to find it in good shape. The St. Elias range receives the full brunt of storms originating in the Gulf of Alaska, and these pound relentlessly on the range throughout the summer months. Difficulties of approach rule out all attempts save from the E., and since this is the case one will have to contend with masses of powder snow blown on to the E. face from the westerly winds. Since these winds are moist one will be likely to experience wind-slab conditions on the upper slopes, and even though these slopes are the easiest on the mountain they are nevertheless steep enough for avalanches to form on the last 1500 ft., as we witnessed throughout the summer. One may curse the weather in these mountains, but, to use the words of Bradford Washburn, 'were it not for this amazing deluge, these mountains would never present to the climber their magnificent snow-festooned ridges and enormous glaciers'—and for that reason 'a first ascent will for ever be a prize well worth the winning.' (See *American A. J.* iv. 1, 1940, pp. 1-8).

WALTER A. WOOD.

DR. O. E. MEYER.—We regret to learn of the death on November 22, 1939, of Dr. Oskar Erich Meyer, Professor of Geology in the University of Breslau. He was a distinguished Alpine writer, the best known of his books being *Tat und Traum*. A review of his book *Berg und Mensch* appeared in *A. J.* 51. 163.

SUMMER ACCIDENTS IN THE ALPS.—*Die Alpen*, December 1939, p. 479 contains an analysis of summer accidents in the Swiss Alps. It is noted that more accidents occurred during the period 1935-1938 in the foothills than in the High Alps. The majority of these accidents happened on mountains close to large towns, as on the Salève, Rochers de Naye, Mythen, and Säntis. In the High Alps two-thirds of the accidents took place on rock. Falls into crevasses accounted for 11 fatalities, and 20 people perished owing to bad weather, including 9 on the Eiger.

HANS SCHLUNEGGER.—On July 28, 1939, there occurred the death of this well-known Wengen guide, head guide of the Lauterbrunnen valley and President of the Bernese Guides' Association. He was engaged in traversing the Lohhörner with an experienced party with whom he had often climbed. The whole party had already roped down between the *Zipfelmütze* and the *Daumen* when it was found that the rope had caught round a rock. Schlunegger climbed up to detach the rope, fixed a sling on a jutting piece of rock, and then after

fully testing the sling he began to descend, holding the doubled rope in one hand while using the other hand for holds on the rock. It appears that as soon as the full weight of the rope came into play the sling gave way, and Schlunegger fell down the south face of the peak.

Schlunegger qualified as guide in 1911, in which year he made the first ascent of the Jungfrau by the N.E. arête with Herr Albert Weber.

See *A. J.*, 26. 344.

From *Die Alpen*.

PLACE-NAMES IN VAL D'AOSTA.—*Le Alpi*, November 1939, contains a review of a book by Abbé G. Henry, the well-known vicar of Valpelline, entitled *Vieux noms patois de localités valdôtaines*, which may be of much interest and profit to students of Alpine nomenclature. It was published in Turin last year. The same number gives the record of activities by Alpine troops of the Turin Division, which includes ascents of the Grandes Jorasses, Gran Paradiso and Grivola.

MARCO POLO MANUSCRIPTS.—In *A. J.* 51. 304 it is stated that our late Honorary Member Sir Filippo de Filippi afforded much helpful encouragement to Professor Benedetto in his publication of Marco Polo manuscripts. Professor Benedetto informs us that he was not acquainted with Sir Filippo de Filippi until after the publication of his work on Marco Polo, which was published under the auspices of the Comitato Geografico Nazionale Italiano.

A MATTERHORN RAILWAY.—In view of the recent rumours concerning this project, it is recalled that the idea dates back to 1859, in which year it was proposed to construct a tunnel through the interior of the mountain to the summit, thus avoiding all danger from falling stones, ice, and vertigo. The calculated length of this tunnel, which would have windows at certain points, was to be from 12 to 15 kilometres, with an average gradient of 1 in 10, the total cost being estimated at 900,000 francs ; the work to be carried on simultaneously at several points, both in summer and in winter, and to take some four years for completion. A variation which proposed an external railway received little popular support.

From *Die Alpen*.

HONOURS TO GUIDES.—Two 'Giovanni Servais' prizes have been awarded to Evaristo Croux of Courmayeur and to Luigi Pession of Valtournanche ; to the former for rescuing two persons on the Brenva route on the night of August 3-4, 1938 ; to the latter for rescuing one traveller from a position of grave danger on the S. face of the Matterhorn on August 24, 1938, after his companion had fallen.

From *Le Alpi*.

CORRIGENDUM.—In *A. J.* 51. 327 (note on the Polish expedition to Nanda Devi) the name 'Trisul' should be read as 'Tirsuli peak.'

IN MEMORIAM. A. E. BARKER.—I should like to add a few words to L. W. Clarke's In Memoriam notice of A. E. Barker in the last number of the JOURNAL, particularly as to his formation and leadership of a party of climbers at Rowhead, Wasdale Head, in the years after the last war. I was lucky enough in 1923 to meet him for the first time, at Arolla, where he was engaged in a series of guideless climbs with his party, largely members of the Midland Mountaineering Club. I did no climbing with him there but was invited to join him at Rowhead for the following Easter, a particularly snowy and icy season, when his determination to get his somewhat inexperienced followers up and down their climbs, whatever the hour and in the most unpleasant conditions, filled me with respect and admiration.

In the early days of our acquaintance, Barker often seemed somewhat formidable, even severe, but as time went on he gradually relaxed and thawed and became a many-sided and delightful companion and a lengthy and most conscientious correspondent. A gift from him was likely to take the form of a set of his Alpine photographs or a water-colour sketch of some favourite Alpine view. In the Lakes he was never happier than when leading a large party up such old climbs as Deep Ghyll, the Professor's Chimney or the Great End gullies in snow and ice, the North Climb on Pillar or the Napes ridges of Great Gable, and many of us learnt or greatly improved our rock-climbing under his leadership. On off days he delighted in long walks, such as the Mitredale round and the Four Passes. His knowledge of Cumberland and especially of the Wasdale district and its local personalities was very complete and dated almost from his boyhood. His wife, who often joined the Rowhead Easter party and occasionally climbed with him, had been the daughter of the Vicar of the parish and had nursed him to recovery after a bad fall from one of the Overbeck Chimneys in his early days. Her best remembered exploit was a descent, alone and equipped only with an umbrella, of Broad Stand when it was covered with ice.

Gradually from a party of about four, the numbers at Rowhead began to increase. Relations and friends, even wives, were admitted and in some years as many as twenty or more were crammed into the archaic little cottage, the arrangement of beds and bedrooms being a source of considerable cogitation to Mr. and Mrs. Whiting. No one who experienced the delights of 'Little Wase' will ever forget them.

Amongst those who, during the decade after 1925, climbed with him or were members of the Rowhead Easter party were the late G. Ednie, L. W. Clarke, the brothers Herbert, Edwin, Walter, Harold, and Arthur, R. J. Brocklehurst, A. W. Brown, A. D. Williamson, my brother E. L. and my son P. J. F. Pilditch, Bell, Douglas, Rathbone and Gaskin and myself. As time went on he gradually climbed less, and others took over his place in the lead, including some of the above-mentioned, reinforced by R. A. Fanshawe, Geoffrey Barratt, F. A. B. Everington, J. Medlycott and others. He will be remembered with gratitude and affection by all of us as a notable character and as the

founder of the Rowhead Easter party, which continues to flourish to the present time.

P. H. PILDITCH.

VENEZUELAN ANDES.—First ascents of Pico Bonpland and Columna S. Peak. The writer accompanied by Mr. K. W. Barr made an expedition into the Sierra de Merida in the first half of February 1940. In the last year Pico Bolivar appears to have developed into a tourist route. A party of 15 students from Merida in the charge of a Jesuit Father is said to have reached the summit. We followed their example. This year Camp II was pitched under the Timoncito Glacier on the site of last year's Camp III, and a Camp III was made east of the summit of Pico Bonpland beneath the snout of the Plasuela Glacier.

The ascent of Pico Bonpland (since Barr had been taken ill) was made alone on February 3. On the following day the ascent of Columna S. Peak was made from the east by way of Blumenthal's route up the Hermanas Glacier, also alone. Three admirable hillmen again accompanied us, Domingo Peña, sirdar, Ventura Sanchez and Theophilo Zerpa.

The name of Pablo Aguirre should be added to that of Jagenberg on p. 75, l. 5. On p. 89 add to 'Maps and Literature' the following: *Excursionismo y Alpinismo, Historia de su Evolución*, by Dr. Alfredo Jahn. Boletín de la Sociedad Venezolana de Ciencias Naturales, no. 39, 1939. Caracas.

A. E. GUNTHER.

NEW ZEALAND NOTES.—This year the Christmas Holiday weather can no longer be reviled. Starting with a three-day Nor'wester in traditional fashion, it then relented and gave a succession of five cloudless days, during which many parties reached their objectives. Much activity took place in the Rakaia and Waimakiriri valleys. A new high-level route was achieved from the Clyde to the Perth, as suggested in Mr. Pascoe's *Unclimbed New Zealand*. In the Godley ascents were made of Mt. McClure and Mt. Moffat, and a crossing of Sealey Pass to the Wataroa. In the Mt. Cook district Silberhorn was climbed from a camp on Glacier Dome. Further south the N.Z.A.C. held a successful camp, attended by over 100 members, including the ever-young veterans, Harper and Mannering. All the peaks round Mt. Aspiring were scaled, and no fewer than five parties tackled Mt. Aspiring itself with success. Altogether this must be regarded as an exceptionally auspicious opening to the first war-season.

A FAMILY OF GREAT GUIDES.—The Bernese Oberland and the Valais have produced two families of guides, the generations of which have added lustre to Alpine history from the Golden Age of mountaineering to the present day: at Grindelwald the Almers, from Christian to his great-grandsons, and at St Niklaus the Lochmatters, from Joseph-Marie to his grandsons.

The Lochmatter family came from the Upper Valais. We first hear of them as a family of three brothers, all guides: Franz (b. 1825), Joseph-Marie (b. 1833) and Alexander (b. 1837). The two eldest, particularly Joseph-Marie, play a considerable part in the conquest of the high peaks. Franz left St. Niklaus somewhere about 1860 and settled in Macugnaga, where he started the small Monte Rosa hotel, well known to the climbers of that time, and he shared in many ascents, including the first ascent of the Lyskamm in 1861; today there are no Lochmatters left in Macugnaga. His youngest brother, Alexander, accompanied Whymper on several occasions when he was engaged on minor expeditions, but he soon laid aside the ice-axe and opened the Hôtel-Pension Lochmatter at St. Niklaus.

It was Joseph-Marie who was to be the founder of the line of famous guides, who with the Pollingers and the Knubels have brought such glory to their mountain village. Franz, at Macugnaga, left two daughters, but no son: Alexander had two sons, one of whom, Julius, became a guide and died early. Joseph-Marie married Joseph-Maria, a sister of Aloys Pollinger (the Pollingers came from Uri). Ten children were born to these two, six sons and four daughters. Every one of the sons, Alexander, Joseph, Rudolf, Raphael, Franz and Gabriel, was a climber of the highest class, though Alexander was killed on the Dent Blanche when he was only twenty-one and never had a chance of showing his full powers.

In 1868 the name of Joseph-Marie Lochmatter became famous for his ascent of the Matterhorn with his great friend Peter Knubel and the Rev. J. M. Elliott. It was the first time since the tragedy of 1865 that a party had ventured to reopen Whymper's route. It was the sixth ascent of the peak and the second by the Zermatt face. In the years before his death, when still comparatively young, in 1882, Joseph-Marie carried out a long series of first-rate expeditions. It is unfortunate that so little is known about him. His *Führerbuch* cannot be found and it probably disappeared in the tragedy that ended his life on the Dent Blanche. There is no document in existence which tells us about this valiant mountaineer and we have to search the records left by various climbers to glean a small sheaf of references to his doings. Among his employers we find the names of Leighton Jordan, Tyndall, Güssfeldt and other well-known climbers. In 1873 he is in Dauphiné with the Rev. C. Taylor, T. Cox, W. M. and R. Pendlebury, F. Gardiner and the guides Peter Baumann and Peter Knubel (first ascents of Le Râteau and Les Rouies, and the second ascent of Pic Central of La Meije). In 1874 Jean-Antoine Carrel and he are Whymper's guides when he climbs the Matterhorn again; in 1876 with Peter Knubel there is an attempt on the Dent Blanche by a new route and in 1879 with Joseph Imboden he is Mr. Percy Thomas' guide in an attempt on the then unclimbed Aiguille du Géant and in the second ascent of the Aiguille du Chardonnet (the first by the now usual route from the Glacier du Tour); in 1881 we find Joseph-Marie in Dauphiné again, this time with W. E. Gabbett and Aloys Pollinger, and he appears also



Photo, Emile Gos.]

RAPHAEL LOCHMATTER.
Born 1876.



Photo, Emile Gos.]

GABRIEL LOCHMATTER.
Born 1881.



Zum frommen Andenken

an unsern innigstgeliebten Vater

Joseph-Marie Lochmatter

Bergführer in St. Niklaus

geboren am 27. Oktober 1837 ;
gestorben am 12. August 1882 auf dem Dent Blanche
und an den teuren Bruder

Alexander Lochmatter

geboren am 13. Mai 1861 ;
gestorben am 12. August 1882 auf dem Dent Blanche

Hat der Tod uns auch geschieden,
Unsere Liebe schied er nicht ;
Teure Seelen ruht im Frieden,
Unsre Liebe stirbt ja nicht.
Wir hoffen auf ein Wiedersehen
Mit euch vereint in Himmelshöhen.

Süßes Herz Jesu, sei meine Liebe ! 300 T. Abl.

Süßes Herz Mariä, sei meine Rettung ! 300 T.

Druck von J. Sterren, Vev

MEMORIAL CARD OF JOSEPH-MARIE AND ALEXANDER
LOCHMATTER.

to have made in this year what was, according to Coolidge, the seventh ascent of the Dent Blanche and the sixth ascent of the Zinal Rothorn (and the first traverse from Zermatt to Zinal according to Javelle) with F. Gardiner and A. W. Moore. On August 12, 1882 he was killed on the Dent Blanche with his eldest son Alexander, who was acting as porter, and his employer W. E. Gabbett.¹ The accident happened a short way below the summit on the W. side. The bodies were found on the upper Ferpècle Glacier and must have fallen about 800 metres. The circumstances of this tragedy remain a mystery.

There is no need to make mention here of the outstanding merits of Joseph-Marie's sons, particularly Franz and Joseph. They were initiated in their mountain craft in childhood by their uncle Aloys Pollinger or Peter Knubel. Later on, the brothers Lochmatter travelled with the eldest of their cousins, the famous Josef Pollinger, and very quickly made conquest, not only of the high peaks, but also of the hearts of all who had dealings with them, a conquest that is an even severer test of character. They had received an excellent education from parents anxious to do all they could for their children, and nature had endowed them with a special distinction and a charm which account for the enthusiastic appreciation in which these young men of the mountain are held by the *élite* of climbers of our time, particularly British climbers.

Three of the Lochmatter sons have shared in the exploration of distant ranges of the world: Joseph in the Cordilleras of the Andes, Raphael in the Caucasus, Franz five times in the Himalaya.

These sons of Joseph-Marie have made generous provision for the future of the race in begetting a grand total of twenty-two sons and probably as many daughters. Only three of Joseph-Marie's grandsons are guides: Joseph's son Erwin, and two sons of Rudolf, Hermann and Xavier. With their uncles Raphael and Gabriel, they are worthily upholding at St. Niklaus the honoured name of Lochmatter.

The writer of this rather bald notice will be grateful to anyone who can send him any sort of information about the guide Joseph-Marie Lochmatter. It is a kindness and a tribute we may render to a family so completely worthy of our respect and sympathy, to try to gather together the fragments which may help us to reconstruct the life of its founder, who died before his time in tragic circumstances.

CHARLES GOS.

LAHUL EXPEDITION 1939.—Six members of the National Union of Students (four English and two Austrians) decided to form an expedition under the sponsorship of the N.U.S. for the exploration of the Central Lahul group in the Punjab Himalaya.

The members of the expedition were: Miss Hilda Richmond (Leeds), Messrs. Donald Comber, Frank Hollick, Robey Johnson, Fritz Kolb and Ludwig Krenek as leader.

¹ *A. J.* 11. 98.

After careful consideration the final selection fell on the Lahul group by reason of (1) scant financial reserves, (2) a strictly defined time-limit (11 weeks London-London), (3) no alternative but to choose the monsoon months.

Lahul was reported to be out of reach of the monsoon and actually we found the weather very favourable for mountaineering. Its accessibility led to successful climbing even though the outbreak of the war shortened the time at our disposal by a fortnight; for scientific research, the geographical and botanical work was curtailed considerably in consequence. This handicap however was not so serious with regard to the zoological research conducted by Dr. Hollick.

The distressing news of the outbreak of war did not reach our Base Camp until September 11, and to make things worse we were destined to experience yet another and more personal tragedy. At the very end of our expedition, on the day when the coolies arrived at Base Camp in order to evacuate it, Miss Richmond whilst washing was fatally injured by a falling stone. The accident occurred in a small gully about 500 yards away from Base Camp, to which she had climbed in search of water since the neighbouring spring had frozen during the previous night.

The Lahul mountains will be found on Sheet 52 H. The country surrounding the Milang river and including the highest peaks of Lahul was the area of our activities. As far as we know, only Bruce and Minchinton had ever done any mountaineering in Lahul hitherto,² but the Milang district was not covered by them.³

Hollick and Kolb preceded the main party by about a fortnight. In addition to technical preparations for our expedition, they explored the country from Dartse (on the map 'Darcha') with a view to finding the most suitable route for the main party, and established a preliminary camp at the confluence of the two branches of the Milang river. This particular spot is shown on the map as a junction of two glaciers, but only the glacier of the N. branch comes near it, whereas the glacier of the S. branch ends more than three miles higher up.

The main party left Manali on August 21, 1939 and on the 27th left Dartse with 20 coolies recruited from the village, in addition to one cook and three Darjeeling porters. The crossing of the southern Milang river presented great difficulties, but Base Camp was reached two days later. Its site was on the N. bank of the Milang Glacier at a height of about 14,400 ft. The name Milang Glacier is used only for the big ice stream coming down the N. branch of the Milang valley. This glacier is fed by branches here called N., Central and S. Milang Glacier.

At the point where the dividing ridge between the N. and the Central Milang Glaciers branches off from the main ridge, Mulkila, the highest

² See *A. J.* 28. 415, 31. 51 *sqq.*; *Himalayan Wanderer*, pp. 233-242.

³ According to an article which appeared in the daily press in September 1939 some mountaineers from Lahore undertook an excursion to Lahul, but we had no means of ascertaining further particulars.

mountain of the group, is situated. Its height is given on the map as 21,380 ft. : its location, however, is inaccurately given. On September 7 we climbed this peak from a camp established at 18,880 ft. on the Central Milang Glacier after nine hours of difficult rock and ice along the S. ridge.

The second highest peak, 20,800 ft. (apparently unnamed) lies on the ridge S. of the S. Milang Glacier. The ascent was made on September 10 from a camp (19,100ft.) on the S. Milang Glacier after negotiating two smaller summits from the E. and ascending a very steep ice slope followed by a final ridge (6 hours).

Besides several other minor ascents two peaks (18,500 and 19,000 ft.) immediately N. of the Milang Glacier were scaled, as well as Chellagoosi (19,200 ft.), the first peak on the ridge separating the two branches of the Milang valley.

The group returned to Manali on September 21, 1939.

L. KRENEK.

THE REV. WALTER WESTON.—On learning of the death of our distinguished Member, the Japanese Alpine Club has sent the following telegram to the Alpine Club :

‘Japanese Alpine Club regrets to learn that Reverend Weston passed away.—Uramatsu.’

It will be recalled that the Rev. Walter Weston, whose In Memoriam notice will appear in our November number, was the first Honorary Member of the Japanese Alpine Club. In memory of him, a number of coloured slides of the Japanese Alps have been presented to the Alpine Club, which we acknowledge with gratitude.

A VETERAN SKIER.—In a leading article under this title *The Times* of April 4 refers to the death of Mrs. Huber at the age of 79, who took lessons last year in the new Swiss technique. In the company of Christian Klucker, then aged 73, she ascended the Ago di Sciora at the age of 63, and she continued to climb until within a few weeks of her death.

SIGNOR GIUSEPPE SELLA.—We regret to report the death last autumn of this distinguished engineer, son of our Honorary Member Cavaliere Vittorio Sella. Our sympathy is given to the family which has contributed so largely to mountain exploration.

A HISTORIC VISITING-CARD.—Mr. G. W. Young informs us that he possesses a visiting-card printed ‘William Penhall, Trinity College,’ which was found on top of the Dürrenhorn. On this card there is also written : ‘6th Sept. 1879. 8.30 A.M. Guide Ferdinand Imseng,’ and on the reverse, ‘With A. F. Mummery and Alexander Burgener.’ The writing is the same throughout, presumably Penhall’s. The card was found in 1887 by Oscar Eckenstein with Matthias Zurbriggen, and presented to Mr. Young by Eckenstein’s sister in 1938. Apart from

the combination of illustrious names, it proves finally that Penhall and Mummery had climbed the Dürrenhorn and not the Nadeihorn (see *A. J.* 10. 340).

FLORENTIN CACHAT.—We regret to learn of the death, at the age of 90, of Florentin Cachat of Les Praz, Chamonix, *doyen* of Savoyard guides. His son Auguste is President of the Chamonix Guides' Association.

GIFTS TO THE LIBRARY.—Mr. G. P. Baker has presented to the Library a copy of Mr. A. O. Wheeler's book *The Selkirk Range*, with accompanying portfolio of maps, bound in half red morocco. This copy was originally presented by the author to Edward Whymper. Major Wetherall, nephew of Professor T. G. Bonney, has presented certain autograph letters addressed to Professor Bonney by some of the pioneers of mountaineering, including John Ball, T. W. Hinchliff, William Mathews, A. W. Moore, F. F. Tuckett, and others.

We acknowledge these gifts with gratitude.

PAINTINGS BY M. ALBERT GOS.—At 10 Chemin Dumas, Geneva, there is a permanent Exhibition of Paintings by M. Albert Gos, father of our Honorary Member M. Charles Gos, and *doyen* of Alpine painters, formerly a close friend of Emile Javelle and of Eugène Rambert. An article concerning Javelle by M. Albert Gos is to be found in *Die Alpen*, 1934, pp. 356 *sqq.*

THE MATTERHORN ACCIDENT, 1865.—In the issue of the *Journal de Genève* of February 11, 1940, M. Charles Gos revives an old article from the *Echo des Alpes* of 1867 by Charles Long of Geneva, which describes the scene in Zermatt at the moment when Whymper's party reached the summit. The article mentions that the 'sharp-eyed lad' who reported an avalanche from the summit was one of old Peter Taugwalder's sons; it also states that it had been intended to include the Rev. R. Wood in Whymper's party.

UNUSUAL EXPEDITIONS IN 1939.—Several noteworthy expeditions, including some of a freakish nature, have been carried out in the Western Alps.

Cottians: Visolotto by the N. face on February 6–7 by Signori G. Gagliardone and D. Piazza.

Dauphiné: The startling Aiguille Dibona of the Aiguilles de Soreiller (for its present appellation and former name, Pain de Sucre, see *A. J.* 28. 80–1, 203–7) was climbed by its precipitous W. face (6 hrs.) on August 9, 1939, while its equally sheer, if rather lower, E. face (4 hrs.) fell on August 11 to the same party, the guide A. Madier accompanied by M. Maurice Laloue. During July the same guide with another amateur crossed the redoubtable Col du Diable, between the

N. summit of Grande Ruine and the W. summit of Roche Méane, from N. to S. The ascent of 'the frightfully steep ice couloir' (Coolidge) took 12 hrs. On June 19, MM. R. Tézenas du Montcel and H. Hauptmann scaled Pic sans Nom from the Glacier Noir in 5 hrs. from the base, conditions being admirable.

Mont Blanc Group : The Grands Charmoz-Aiguille du Plan ridge was traversed from end to end on August 14-16 by the Marquise d'Albertas with the Courmayeur guide Arthur Ottoz. Leaving Montenvers at 02.00, they bivouacked on the Col des Nantillons on the night of the 14th. On the following day (06.30) they turned the central point of Aiguille de Blaitière and climbed the S. peak of Les Ciseaux and Aiguille du Fou ; turning over on to the Chamonix slope, the party by a descending and then ascending traverse attained the Pointe de Lépiney, bivouacking at its foot, 20.30. On August 16 the party resumed progress at 06.30, making a long traverse of the ridge across the Envers de Blaitière Glacier slope. By three *rappels* of 100 ft. they attained the snow slope on the final wall of the so-called Col du Caïman, whence they scaled the E. face of the Caïman itself. The Crocodile was in bad condition and the Aiguille du Plan itself was not attained till 19.00, the Requin hut being reached at 21.15.

Madame d'Albertas with the same guide accomplished also the ascents of Mont Blanc by the Péteret arête, of the *four* peaks of Dames Anglaises, of Mt. Rouge de Péteret by the W. face-'direct' route, and of the Aiguille Joseph Croux by what may be a curiously novel itinerary.

A more direct route, differing slightly from that forced in 1935⁴ on the Aiguille Noire de Péteret, S.E. arête attained from the W., was accomplished on August 17-19 by Signori V. Ratti and L. Vitali. The difficulties proved almost insuperable—50 pitons. On August 14-15 Signori R. Cassin and U. Tizzoni scaled the N.E. (*sic*) face⁵ of the Aiguille de Leschaux : the actual climb took 18 hrs. Cassin compares the difficulties with those provided by the N. face of Pointe Walker of Grandes Jorasses (*A. J.* 50. 302-3). The last 300 ft. required as much as 7 hrs. to accomplish.

Fräulein Helena Lochmatter—daughter of 'the incomparable Franz'—with an amateur and Armand Charlet climbed the Aiguille Verte via the A. du Jardin. She is stated by Charlet to possess the most extraordinary skill that he has ever seen—a fact which will cause no surprise.

The central spur of the N. face of Les Courtes was climbed on July 12 by MM. R. Jonquière, A. Maillol and Villarem, with A. Tournier and E. Frenedo. The route is of course a variant of the Oakley-Maund expedition of 1876 (*A. J.* 8. 105, 297-8).

Bernina, W. Wing : A French party, MM. R. Aubert, R. Dittert, J. Guelpa and F. Marullaz,⁶ climbed the N. buttress of Piz Badile

⁴ *A. J.* 48. 167, illustrated.

⁵ The *B.I.K.* map is badly drawn in this region.

⁶ We believe that this is the first occasion on which our Allies have visited the Bregaglia.

(5½ hrs. from the base) on August 2, the descent being made by the same route. It is interesting to hear that the granite resembles that of the Chamonix Aiguilles with fewer chimneys or cracks but with more slabs, where adhesive powers play the principal part. Piz Badile is *less* difficult and fatiguing than, for instance, the Ryan-Lochmatter route of the A. du Plan, or the ridge between the Aiguille de la République and Grands Charmoz. The climb, however, is stated to be *more* difficult and 'delicate' than that of the Grépon or A. de Roc from the Mer de Glace.

An Italian party, in accomplishing the ascent of the 1300-ft. S.E. face of the Sasso Cavallo (Grigna), expended four night bivouacs on the face and as many as 220 pitons.

From *Alpinisme*.

NEW FOOTGEAR.—'Vibram,' the new Italian *Kletterschuh*, is now on the market, having apparently been invented in 1935.

The sole is composed of non-skid rubber; it is rigid and is shaped like nails. On granite it is scarcely inferior to crêpe-rubber, but being stiffer enables the use of the smallest footholds. It does not slip on wet, and can be used on snow and ice steps or with crampons. Vibram boots were employed *altogether* on the following ascents among others: N. buttresses of Pizzi Gemelli and Badile, N. face of Western Ailefroide, N. face of Grandes Jorasses (Pointe Walker), N. face of Petit Dru. There is no mention of its value on limestone, nor of its durability or price.

From *Alpinisme*.

CONGRATULATORY.—The marriage of Mlle. Micheline Morin and M. Gérard Blachère took place last summer. Both are members of the G.H.M., and Madame Blachère (the sister of M. Jean Morin), besides being a distinguished mountaineer, is the author of *Encordées*.⁷

M. and Mme. Blachère inaugurated a climbing camp for budding mountaineers at the Pré de Madame Carle above Ailefroide in July–August of 1939. It proved a great success.

C.A.I. HUTS.—New huts or reconstructions of already standing huts are being completed in the Mont Blanc group as follows: Aiguille des Glaciers, Estellette (both practically finished), Dôme de Miage with a new path from the vicinity of the Combal tarn, Gonella on the Dôme route of Mt. Blanc,⁸ Quintino Sella on Rochers du Mt. Blanc (enlarged and improved), Boccalatte-Piolti⁹ on Grandes Jorasses, Rifugio Elena in Val Ferret,¹⁰ and lastly another of the questionable *bivacchi fissi*—this time on Pic Eccles.

From *Lo Scarpone*.

⁷ *A. J.* 49. 133 *sqq.*

⁸ It is not clear whether this is a new construction or not.

⁹ Named after the victims of the A. de Triolet accident, *A. J.* 50. 334–5.

¹⁰ No indications as to site.

THE ACCIDENT IN THE AIGUILLES DE SOREILLER.—After the double ascent of the Aiguille Dibona by its W. and E. faces, the guide A. Madier on August 11, 1939, endeavoured to rope down the W. face of the Aiguille, scaled by him and M. Laloue two days previously. This face, some 500 ft. high, is composed of vertical slabs of the smoothest nature. Madier stumbled while fixing the very first *rappel*, let go the rope, and was killed instantaneously. His companion standing on the summit was powerless to help. Madier's shattered remains were buried at St. Christophe.

Andéol Madier de Champvermeil was a climber of extraordinary powers both on ice and snow. After a long military career, he became an instructor in Military Mountaineering at Chamonix, as well as a ski professional at St. Véran, being given his guide's certificate in July last. During a brief mountaineering career—he was still under 30 years of age—Madier accomplished some most remarkable feats. Among these are a solitary ascent of the S. face of La Meije apparently by a variant between the Zsigmondy (attempted) and Dibona routes, the first ascent of Le Râteau by the N. face (*A. J.* 50. 301), the W. arête of the Tête des Fétoules, the descent of the Glacier Noir slope of the Col des Avalanches, Roche Méane (Tour Carrée), descent of N. slope of Col des Sellettes entirely on ski, N. face of Aiguille Verte, the *complete* ascent of the N. face of Aiguille de Bionnassay, as well as the two climbs on the Aiguille Dibona already related. The very sympathetic memoir of a completely fearless and skilful climber will be found in *Alpinisme*, No. 55, pp. 104–6. Madier's superlative powers combined with an error of judgment are probably responsible for the very sad ending to what might have proved a great career. He will be sorely missed by his comrades of the Alpine troops.

AN ANNIVERSARY.—On March 15, the Geneva Section of the C.A.S. celebrated the 200th anniversary of the birth of Saussure (February 17, 1740), the gathering being addressed by Professor Léon W. Collet. This was also the 75th anniversary of the founding of the Geneva Section. It will be recalled that Saussure was born just a year before the English, in the persons of Pococke and Windham, 'discovered' Chamonix.

CANADIAN NOTES.—The official opening of the Big Bend Highway between Revelstoke and Golden, British Columbia, has been set for June 29, 1940, two days in advance of the opening of the Banff-Jasper Highway. The Big Bend road follows the Columbia River around the northern tip of the Selkirk Range, and will facilitate climbing in the Sir Sandford and northern groups of the area, the road completing an important link in the Trans-Canada motor route. Scenically, however, it is inferior to the Banff-Jasper road, the low level of the Columbia valley preventing a view of most of the loftier peaks. The Banff-Jasper road, on the other hand, is spectacular, and one is never out of sight of snow and ice. It leads through the region made known by the expeditions of J. Norman Collie and others, and follows the trench occupied

by sources of the Saskatchewan and Athabaska Rivers. Although the topography is at right angles to that of the Alps, this road is comparable, in relation to the main chain, with the line of travel in the Rhone-Rhine trench from Martigny to Chur, if the latter be imagined as elevated to a level where the Pennine and Lepontine groups would be continuously in sight.

J. M. THORINGTON.

BOLIVIAN ANDES.—Mr. E. S. G. de la Motte writes from La Paz, Bolivia, under date of February 27, 1940 :

‘An Andine Club has just been formed here (Club Andino Boliviano), and we have built a small hut at 5014 m. above sea-level. We are all wondering if this is the highest Club hut in the world. Can you tell me if this is so? Also whether the motor road we have constructed to reach it is the highest motor road?’

‘The hut is at the foot of a fair-sized glacier giving ski-ing all the year round, which is unusual for a place only 17° S. of the Equator. The altitude is naturally rather noticeable, but its effects have been mitigated to a certain extent by making a ski lift with 1000 m. of cable worked by an old car chassis—a Heath Robinson affair, but it works.’

WITHOUT COMMENT.—We learn from a leading newspaper that an outstanding mountaineering feat was accomplished last July by a 48-year-old London business man—a solo climb of the Untergabelhorn, 11,150 ft., a difficult peak in the Matterhorn region. It is believed that no Englishman before him has climbed the peak alone, while few professional Swiss climbers have done so.

A travel film exhibited in London informs its audience that Mt. Rainier, 16,800 ft., one of the grandest mountains in the whole world, gives birth to no fewer than twenty-seven glaciers, or nearly double those found in the whole of Switzerland.

EMILE JAVELLE'S BIVOUAC PLACE.—We are indebted to M. Emile Gos for leave to reproduce the photograph facing p. 129 of Javelle's bivouac place near the Glacier de la Neuvaz. Readers of Javelle's *Souvenirs d'un Alpiniste* will recall the charming description of his bivouac before the first ascent of the Tour Noir. This site was also used by our Honorary Member Dr. Kugy, with Dr. Bolaffio and the two guides Joseph Croux and Cyprien Savoye, before their ascent of Mont Dolent via the E. slope of the Brèche de l'Amône (*Alpine Pilgrimage*, p. 310). With the coming of the Refuge Dufour, it is feared that few climbers may now share either Dr. Kugy's delight in the ‘tiny Alpine garden at the front door’ or Dr. Bolaffio's disgust at the prospect of sleeping in ‘this hole.’

HERR VON FRERIKS.—We regret to report the death of a well-known mountaineer and valued correspondent, Herr W. F. T. von Freriks, which occurred at Fribourg, Switzerland, on March 26, 1940, after a long illness.



JAVELLE'S BIVOUAC BY THE GLACIER DE LA NEUVAZ.