

PETER EGGER OF GRINDELWALD

By D. F. O. DANGAR

THE pages of the early numbers of the *Alpine Journal* give little information about the exploits of Peter Egger ; some of his most important expeditions receive but scant notice and others are not even mentioned. Studer is more helpful, and many of the particulars given in these notes are drawn from his *Uber Eis und Schnee*.

Egger's name will not be found in Cunningham and Abney's *The Pioneers of the Alps* and in *Pioniere der Alpen*, Herr Carl Egger allotted him less than half a page ; yet he was well qualified to take a high place in the ranks of the early Grindelwald guides.

In John Ball's *Introduction to the Alpine Guide* he is included in the 'List of the Best Known Guides' and is mentioned as 'a young man of great promise.' His *Führerbuch* gives striking evidence of how well that promise was fulfilled. He was better known to Swiss than to English climbers, and the names of some of the great Swiss pioneers recur at frequent intervals throughout the pages of his book, von Fellenberg, Bischoff, Aeby, Burckhardt, and others.

Peter Egger was born in 1832 and his *Führerbuch*, No. 153, was issued on May 30, 1863, but the only entry for that year refers to 'a visit to the glaciers.'

A. G. Girdlestone and R. G. Head sign an entry dated July 27, 1864, recording a passage of the Strahlegg and an attempt on the 'Ewige Schneehorn Pass.' An amusing account of this expedition may be found in Girdlestone's *The High Alps without Guides*, where the relevant chapter is headed '1865,' though the correct date is given in the 'Contents.' There was some hard bargaining with the guides before a start was made. A Swiss climber with his guide joined the party, taking as his second man the shepherd who lived in the Eismeer refreshment hut. A glissade down the steep slope leading to the Strahleggfirn nearly ended in disaster, three of the party failing to clear the bergschrund. Girdlestone's opinion of his guides as expressed in his book is not complimentary : 'We found, indeed, that our guides, independently of their slippery bargaining, went much more slowly than we could have done, and on the second day they quite lost their heads.' In Egger's *Führerbuch*, however, he describes him as being 'very serviceable, attentive & efficient.'

Egger's next engagement led to more serious work. On August 4, he made the second ascent of the Schreckhorn with Professor Aeby, Pastor Gerwer and Edmund von Fellenberg, A.C., Peter Michel, who had taken part in the first ascent three years previously, Peter Inäbnit, and two porters also accompanied the party. The entry, in Gerwer's handwriting and signed by him and both his companions records that '... much snow has this year increased the difficulties of the ascent

of this peak. Although P. Egger has not yet carried out many major expeditions, he showed himself by his hard work on rock, snow and ice, as fully up to the task. . . . We can strongly recommend him to all for the most difficult expeditions.'

Later in the month Egger took part, with the same three 'Herren,' in the first Swiss ascent of the Eiger, Peter Michel being once again the leading guide.

After one or two minor expeditions he finished the season by making the first ascent of the Berglistock with Professor Aeby and Peter Inäbnit on September 26. The 'remarkable difficulties of this expedition gave him the opportunity of showing himself a guide of the *first rank*.' On the previous day Aeby and his guides, accompanied by Herr Bohren with Peter Michel made a reconnaissance of the West side of the mountain but came to the conclusion that the summit could not be attained from that direction and returned to the Gleckstein. Next morning Aeby resolved to make another attempt and set off at 6.30 with Egger and Inäbnit, reaching the summit shortly before one o'clock. They spent more than three hours in climbing the last 300 metres. Nearly three years later, Egger made the second ascent of the Berglistock with Dr. Emil Burckhardt and Herr Nötzlin, but the expedition is not recorded in his Führerbuch.

An ascent of the Wetterhorn with Lord Francis Douglas opened the season of 1865. An entry by Douglas is of sufficient rarity to be worth transcribing in full, and in Egger's Führerbuch he wrote: 'Peter Egger was my guide in the ascent of the *Wetterhorn* and also came with me over the *Mönch joch*. I have great pleasure in stating that he was excessively attentive & that he is as good as any guide I have been with. He is very good on rock and ice & he is also strong.' The entry is not dated. In connection with this passage of the Mönchjoch an extract from the Visitors Book at the Eggishorn is of interest: 'June 24, 1865. Lord F. Douglas. From Grindelwald by the Mönchjoch. From Eiger cave to summit, three hours and a quarter. From summit to this hotel, seven hours. Guides Peter Inäbnit and Peter Egger (Grindelwald) whom I thoroughly recommend.'¹

The next entry, of four lines only and dated August 15, 1865, is signed by Professor Aeby and E. von Fellenberg and refers to the first ascent of the South arête of the Silberhorn. The Jungfrau had not yet been climbed from the North and this ascent was the real aim of Aeby and von Fellenberg. In addition to Egger they were accompanied by Peter Michel, Peter Inäbnit, Hans Baumann and the porter Gertsch. Leaving the Kleine Scheidegg in the early hours of August 13, they had great difficulty in forcing a way through the seracs of the Guggi glacier, and it was not until 4 p.m. that they reached the Silberlücke where they intended to pass the night. Gertsch remained here to prepare the bivouac while the rest of the party ascended the Silberhorn. The weather had been uncertain all day, and in the course of the ascent a violent thunderstorm burst upon them. A sleepless

¹ Quoted in *A. J.* 32. 231.

night was passed on the Silberlücke in falling snow and severe cold. Daylight revealed four inches of fresh snow ; the storm was increasing in violence and there could be no question of going on ; by three o'clock they were back at the Wengern Alp.

Professor Aeby's fourth—and last—entry follows, though dated July 17, 1865. In less than five lines he dismisses the second ascent of the Klein Schreckhorn. Studer relates that Aeby and his companion, Mr. (later Sir Henry) Dering, of the British Legation at Berne, arrived at Grindelwald late in the evening of July 15, and with Egger and Peter Inäbnit were ready to start at one o'clock next morning. Reaching the foot of the South-west rock wall at 7 A.M., they had five hours' hard climbing before attaining the summit. They arrived back at Grindelwald after an absence of eighteen hours, but the two travellers went on to Interlaken and were at work again in Berne next morning.

Ernest Noel signs the last entry for 1865. He crossed several passes and ascended the Aletschhorn. He found Egger 'a thoroughly trustworthy and attentive guide, and much to be commended for beginners on the ice.'

Egger made a number of important expeditions with von Fellenberg and some of these, carried out in 1865 and 1866 are recorded in the latter's entry of August 3, 1866.

July 31, 1865. First ascent of the Lauterbrunnen Breithorn. In addition to Egger, von Fellenberg had Peter Michel, Peter Inäbnit, and Johann Bischoff. This ascent is famous in alpine history ; as is well known, there was a race for the summit between von Fellenberg's party and Messrs. Hornby and Philpott with Christian Almer and Christian Lauener. Von Fellenberg left his bivouac at 6 A.M. and in rather more than one hour reached the Wetterlücke. It was from here that he and his guides noticed four black dots advancing quickly towards them across the snow field south of the Tschingelhorn. Von Fellenberg's party resumed their march at once, but to reach the rocks had to cut a hundred steps in a steep ice slope, and the others gained on them. Then began a climb which lasted two and a half hours, each party choosing its own route up the rocks, von Fellenberg's reaching the summit five—or some authorities say ten—minutes before the other. Von Fellenberg descended to the Lötschental where he was detained for nearly a week by bad weather.

On August 6 there was an improvement, and with Egger, Michel and Inäbnit, he crossed the Lötschenlücke and passed the night on the 'Mittelfluh,' the southernmost spur of the Trugberg. Next morning, in very uncertain weather, he set out to make the first ascent of the Gross Grünhorn. By the time he and his guides had made their way down to the Ewig Schneefeld at a point opposite the foot of the Klein Grünhorn conditions were so bad that von Fellenberg contemplated abandoning the expedition ; eventually he decided to continue. Without cutting a single step the party mounted the snowy South-west face of the mountain to a point high on the South-west arête which was followed to the summit. The descent through the heavily falling snow was a

long and exhausting undertaking, which culminated in a six hour struggle from the Mönchjoch to the safety of the Bäregg hut.

August 13. First ascent of the South arête of the Silberhorn.

July 13, 1866. First ascent of the Mönch from the Wengern Alp. Apart from a few lines in *A. J.* 6, no account of this expedition has appeared in English. Von Fellenberg with Peter Egger, Christian Michel, and the porter Gertsch, who carried a ladder, left the Wengern Alp on the afternoon of July 11 and spent the night in a bivouac at a height of about 3,000 m. in the rocks above the Eiger glacier. The following morning they started at 4 A.M.; the ascent of the rocky portion of the North-west buttress was followed by an hour's step cutting on the succeeding ice-slope. It then became necessary to traverse to the right; the wearisome step cutting continued and the exhausted Gertsch suddenly fell asleep in the steps. It was now past ten o'clock, and with Gertsch in such a condition, it was obvious that the ascent could not be completed in the course of the day, neither could Gertsch be allowed to return to the Wengern Alp by himself. Von Fellenberg decided to devote the rest of the day to a reconnaissance and to complete the ascent on the following day.

Gertsch having been helped to a place of safety on the rocks, the rest of the party continued upwards until brought to a halt by a steep ice cliff, partly overhanging and some 38-40 ft. high. Christian Michel succeeded in cutting his way up. This accomplished, they began the descent, picking up Gertsch en route, and were back at the bivouac by three o'clock.

Next day, July 13, Gertsch was sent back to the Wengern Alp and the others started at 3.30 A.M. They reached the foot of the ice wall in three and a half hours. Thanks to the work on the previous day, this and other difficulties were overcome and twelve hours after leaving the bivouac the summit was at last attained. Yet another night out, the third, was spent above the Mönchjoch. Von Fellenberg's entry in the Führerbuch mentions that 'on this expedition Peter Egger gave unsurpassable proof of his endurance, energy, and skill.'

July 27. Ascent of the Hasle Jungfrau and Mittelhorn. Von Fellenberg had hoped to climb the Rosenhorn also, and thus to become the first to ascend the three peaks of the Wetterhorn in one day. Having ascended the Hasle Jungfrau and Mittelhorn, he and his guides, Egger, Christian Michel and Peter Bernet, attempted to follow the South-east arête of the Mittelhorn to the Rosenhorn, but the great gendarme, 3,616 m., forced them off the ridge and compelled them to traverse by the steep snow and ice slopes of its South-west face. So much time was lost that it was not possible to ascend the Rosenhorn and they descended by the Gauli glacier to the Urnen Alp, arriving there at 9.40 P.M.

July 31. First ascent of the Wellhorn. Another of Egger's new expeditions not recorded in the *Alpine Journal*. Leaving the inn on the Schwarzwald Alp at 5 A.M., the upper plateau of the Rosenloui glacier was reached in a little over three hours, but so bad were the

crevasses that it was impossible to find a way through them to the actual base of the peak. The party was forced to climb to the 'Wetterkessel,' and thence, at 9.15, reached the 'Guferhalden' at the foot of the Wellhorn. A somewhat difficult climb over wet slabs threatened by avalanches led them to the East ridge of the mountain, by which the summit was reached without further difficulty.

An entry signed by G. B. Marke and H. Marke records an ascent of the Wetterhorn on August 21, 1866. Egger gave 'entire satisfaction from his evident knowledge of the mountain, activity, & general good nature & carefulness, not to mention his cheeriness in the midst of a snow storm from which we suffered much.' Mrs. Marke was later to earn the somewhat gruesome distinction of being the first woman to lose her life on Mont Blanc. She and the porter Olivier Gay fell into a crevasse on the Corridor in August, 1870; both were killed.

In July 1867 Egger crossed the Mönchjoch with James Jackson, later a member of the Alpine Club, and then made with him an unsuccessful attempt on the Finsteraarhorn in which the Rev. A. G. Girdlestone and the Rev. J. H. D. Matthews also took part. Defeated by the weather they crossed the Oberaarjoch to the Grimsel. With Girdlestone in the party something unexpected was almost bound to occur. On this occasion 'three first-rate Grindelwald guides' were incapable of finding the way through mist and snow, and it was left to Girdlestone to offer them such advice as brought the party across the pass in safety. Jackson wrote that Egger was 'strong, active, and willing to carry almost any weight. On ice and snow he is particularly efficient, using his axe well and quickly, and like most Oberland guides is quite at home on rocks.'

After an ascent of the Wetterhorn with Wilhelm von Graffenried, Egger had another engagement with von Fellenberg. On August 14, they made the third ascent of the Jungfrau from the Wengern Alp, having passed the previous night in a bivouac on the rocks of the Schneehorn, and three days later crossed the Beich Pass from Bel Alp to Kippel. On August 19, second ascent and first traverse of the Bietschhorn, ascent by the West arête, descent by the North arête.

Some minor excursions with H. Akroyd Ridgway brought the season to a close.

The first entry for 1868 records expeditions with Herren Bischoff and Nötzlin (S. A. C. Basel). After crossing the Jungfrauoch they went to the Pennines—this seems to have been Egger's first visit—crossed the Adler Pass and ascended the Strahlhorn. Returning to the Oberland they traversed the Finsteraarhorn, making the first descent by the North-west arête to the Agassizjoch. Egger 'fully maintained his reputation as a guide of the first rank.'

Three other entries for July and August record only minor expeditions (pages 57-58 are missing from the book). The last entry for 1868 is signed by Wilhelm von Graffenried and refers to the first descent of the North face of the Jungfrau, on September 8. Von Graffenried and his three companions had, in addition to Egger, Christian Michel, Ulrich Wenger, and Peter Schlegel.

Egger had a good season in 1869. On July 20, with Herr Bohren, of the Adler Hotel at Grindelwald, he made the second ascent of the Gspaltenhorn, a mountain which in those days had quite a reputation and had been ascended for the first time only ten days previously by G. E. Foster, A.C., with two Grindelwald guides.

In August with Herr Fritz Bischoff he climbed the Wetterhorn, the Eiger, and the Jungfrau from the Wengern Alp and then on the 17th went to the Gleckstein with Herr Eduard Burckhardt of Basel. The plan to cross the Lauteraarjoch to the Pavillon Dollfuss had to be abandoned because of bad weather but they reached the Pavillon by way of the Strahlegg on the 21st and on the following day made the second ascent of the Gross Lauteraarhorn, no less than twenty-seven years after Escher von der Linth and his companions had made the first ascent.

The next entry over the signatures of Frederick Ramidge and Henry Chester records that 'Peter Egger made with us the ascent of the Wetterhorn yesterday [August 26, 1869] and we have every reason to be pleased with his care and attention.' Less than one month later, Henry Chester, A.C., was killed on the Lyskamm.

Next year, 1870, Egger began by an ascent of the Eiger with Herr Raillard and, after some minor expeditions, took two Americans over the Strahlegg. Then followed what must have been one of the early ascents of a very distinguished member of the Club:—'Peter Egger acted as one of our guides in the ascent of the Wetterhorn yesterday, and we were perfectly satisfied with him in every respect; he was very careful and attentive. We descended on the other side by the Rosenluis glacier, which is this year unusually difficult. Thomas Middlemore. Albert E. Scott. September 3, 1870.'

With his old patron Fritz Bischoff he ascended the Schreckhorn on September 17.

Dr. Emil Burckhardt's first entry is dated July 14, 1871, though Studer mentions that Egger had been one of his guides on the second ascent of the Berglistock in 1867. On July 10 he crossed the Finsteraarjoch with Egger and Peter Schlegel as second guide, with the object of attempting the North-east face of the Finsteraarhorn by way of the Hugikehle, but incessant stone-falls turned him back at the foot of the wall. Studer relates that he then climbed the mountain from the Agassizjoch, but Burckhardt does not mention this ascent in the Führerbuch. He next crossed the Grünhornlücke, and on July 13, with the same two guides, made the first ascent of the Trugberg. Setting out from the Faulberg, the party reached the South-east arête from the Ewig Schneefeld. The weather deteriorated steadily from seven o'clock onwards but at 9.30 they reached a first rock tower from which another and higher peak could be discerned through the mist, and this, the true summit, was reached soon afterwards. On the way down to Grindelwald Burckhardt met, near the Eigerhöhle, Dr. Häberlin, who was on his way to make his fourth attempt on the Trugberg. Egger was leading guide throughout this tour with Burckhardt.

In August there was another journey with Fritz Bischoff, and Peter Bohren as second guide. They began with the second ascent of the Mönch from the Wengern Alp. Conditions were better than on the occasion of the first ascent five years earlier, and the ice-wall which so delayed the first party seems to have been overcome without undue difficulty. Descending to the Bergli, the Gross Fiescherhorn was climbed next day in beautiful weather from the Fiescher Sattel, the first time this route had been followed. On August 20 the same party crossed the Lauitor; this was probably the second passage. Studer affirms that the pass had been crossed on several occasions after the first passage, but in 1893 Bischoff's was the only crossing, in addition to the first, which was known at Lauterbrunnen.² Leaving the Stufensteinalp shortly after five o'clock, the ascent of the couloir was a tiring affair; the snow was not good and stone-falls forced the party to keep as much as possible to the rocks on either side. The pass was reached at 12.30 P.M. and the Eggishorn hotel nearly seven hours later. Bischoff then climbed the Aletschhorn, and Lauterbrunnen was reached by way of the Beichgrat and the Petersgrat.

That August was a busy month for Egger. Two days later he took Dr. Merck of Hamburg over the Strahlegg and on the 30th led A. Millot and his wife up the Wetterhorn, Ulrich Wenger, of Weisshorn fame, being second guide. 'We were completely satisfied with Egger in every respect.'

Herman Bicknell's entry of September 5, 1871, mentions that 'Peter Egger I consider to be a first rate guide, as *resolute* as strong. I have to thank him for the interesting reminiscence of our ascent of the Schreckhorn.'

The following season—1872—opened with a 'tiring journey, 22 hours owing to the heavy snow' across the Mönchjoch from Grindelwald to Eggishorn. Egger then accompanied Pfarrer Edmund von Steiger and Wilhelm von Graffenried on a round of easy peaks and passes: Tschingelhorn, Gemmi, Torrenthorn, and back again over the Gemmi to Interlaken.

He spent the last fortnight of July with Thomas Cox, A.C., 'during which time we have ascended the Sustenhorn, the Wetterhorn, descending by Rosenlauri glacier, the Schreckhorn (first ascent this year), the Mönch from the Wengern Alp [fourth ascent, A. W. Moore having made the third on July 23] and the Jungfrau. He leaves me, much against my will, to fulfil another engagement. His reputation, I feel, already stands high enough to need no further eulogium from me than to say that, as a guide, he has fully sustained it, & that as a first rate one. As a companion he is always cheerful, good tempered, & anxious to do all he can for the comfort of his employer.'

Egger's next engagement was with von Fellenberg for a geological

² According to a note by the late H. V. Reade in the margin of the writer's copy of *Über Eis und Schnee*. (Since writing the above, another crossing of the Lauitor has come to my notice; by Herr C. Ostertag with Ulrich Lauener—*A. J.* 30. 308.)

tour in the Lötschental district, in the course of which several new expeditions were accomplished. On August 14 they made the first ascent of the Birghorn; two days later they climbed the Hockenhorn and on August 20 made the second ascent of the Lötschentaler Breithorn, descending to Bel Alp. Next day, first crossing of the Birgisch Pass into the 'long and dreary Gredetsch Thal,' as Ball describes it. Later in the tour von Fellenberg, having crossed the Baltschiederjoch, reached the Gredetschlücke but did not descend on the other side. Finally, he explored the Ijollital, at that time almost unknown to tourists, made the first crossing of the Ijollilücke, and walked down to Raron by way of the Bietschtal. The entry describing this journey, dated 'Grindelwald, September 4, 1872,' is the last made by von Fellenberg in Egger's book.

A few days after his return home Egger took Herman Bicknell up the Finsteraarhorn—'In no Swiss guide have I greater confidence.'

There are only four entries for 1873. Montague Cannon, qualifying for membership of the Alpine Club, crossed the Strahlegg on July 9. In August, Egger was with Dr. Burckhardt once again; Jungfrau from the Wengern Alp, Mönch, Eigerjoch. Herr Bischoff then joined the party and on August 3, with Burckhardt and Egger ascended the Matterhorn.³ Then the Weisshorn and Monte Rosa, and Bischoff also ascended the Zinal Rothorn and the Dom.

September found him with his old patrons Monsieur and Madame Millot; Balmhorn and Mönch were their principal ascents. Millot's entry concludes—'Je le recommande comme digne de toute confiance.'

One of Egger's most memorable expeditions took place in the following year. On January 23–24 he made the first winter ascent of the Mönch with Herren Bischoff and Bohren, the other guides being Peter Bohren and Peter Michel *vater und sohn*.⁴ There is but scant reference to this expedition in the *Alpine Journal*. The party left Grindelwald early in the morning of January 23 and near the Zäsenberg met Coolidge and Miss Brevoort with Fritz Deutschmann and the 'Five Christians' (Almer *vater und sohn*, Bohren, Inäbnit, and Roth)⁵ returning from the first winter ascent of the Jungfrau. Leaving the Bergli hut at 4.15 A.M. next day, the summit of the Mönch was reached at 11.50. The descent was delayed by a snow storm, and also by the indisposition of Herr Bohren, who elected to remain at the Bäregg for the night; Bischoff went on to Grindelwald where he arrived only at 10.50 P.M.

From the middle of July, Egger was with Dr. Burckhardt for four weeks in Eastern Switzerland. Commencing with a variation on the South-east face of the Verstanklahorn on July 20, they then went to the Bernina district and on July 27 ascended La Sella by the East arête, a new expedition, following the frontier ridge from the Sella Pass and

³ In Whymper's List this ascent, No. 49, has 'Guides no information' in the Remarks column.

⁴ The names are as given by Studer.

⁵ See M. Schwartz; '... et la Montagne conquit l'Homme,' p. 185.

descending direct from the summit to the Roseg glacier. Burckhardt spent the following day in crossing the Fuorcla Chapütschin and returning to Pontresina by the Fuorcla Glüschaint—first crossing—with Egger and P. Jenny.

At this date the Porta Roseg, or Gussfeldt Sattel, had only once been crossed and Burckhardt's next expedition was to attempt the second passage. Hans Grass was engaged as a reinforcement for Egger and after an unsuccessful attempt on July 29, the pass was crossed on August 1. Then followed the second ascent of Crast'äguzza, and Piz Roseg (both summits, as Burckhardt is careful to state). On August 11, Monte della Disgrazia in one day from Chiareggio, following the North-west arête from the Passo di Mello. Burckhardt finished his tour by an ascent of the Tödi.

At the end of the month Egger traversed the Jungfrau from the Rothtal to the Wengern Alp with Fritz Bischoff.

Mr. and Mrs. E. P. Jackson, after ascents of the Jungfrau and Wetterhorn in September 'were very much pleased with him, being both a good guide & a pleasant companion.'

The same month Monsieur and Madame Millot engaged him for the Schreckhorn—'Nous lui renouvelons les temoignages de notre entière satisfaction.' Christian Almer was leading guide, and this was the only ascent mentioned in their Führerbücher on which he and Egger worked together.⁶

The first entry for 1875 is signed by Frederica Plunket. Miss Plunket and her sister were well known lady climbers of the period. They had Egger for three weeks; their expeditions included the Eiger and Mont Blanc—'Besides being a first rate guide both on snow & rocks he is, from his strength and carefulness, particularly suited to help ladies & we found him at all times most cheerful & attentive.'

Two ascents of the Eiger and one of the Jungfrau brought his season to a close.

Next season, 1876, opened with an engagement of three weeks with Thomas Cox, A.C. Most of the ascents were in the Western Oberland, Diablerets, Wildhorn, Wildstrubel, Balmhorn. The Eiger was also climbed. 'I can only repeat my opinion,' wrote Cox, 'he is a *first class guide* while, as always, I have found him a very cheerful, willing, & agreeable man.' Frederick Gardiner with Peter Knubel also took part in this tour.⁷

After leaving Cox, Egger spent the next four weeks with the Misses Plunket, going from Zermatt to Bourg St. Pierre by the High Level Route and ascending Mont Velan.

A month's engagement with Herr Georg Gruber was the outstanding event of the following summer, 1877. The weather was bad, but amongst the expeditions carried out were Piz Roseg 'ascent from the Tschierva glacier by a new route,' Piz Bernina, and the Jungfrauoch returning to the Wengern Alp the same day. I can find no record of

⁶ Almer's Führerbuch, p. 191.

⁷ See Gardiner's article in *A. J.* 8. 'Mountaineering in June 1876.'

the new route on Piz Roseg ; possibly Gruber was not aware of Middlemore's and Cordier's ascent in the previous year.

The month of August was passed with the Misses Plunket in the Oberland but no details of their expeditions are given, and in September Egger had a few days with Herr Felix Burckhardt. Studer refers to an ascent of the Schreckhorn on September 29 with Dr. Dübi and Dr. Stoons, but there is no mention of it in the Führerbuch.

July, 1878, saw his second engagement with Herr Georg Gruber, but once again bad weather interfered with Gruber's plans ; he crossed the Schmadrioch, Moming Pass, Mischabeljoch, and several other passes, and also climbed Lyskamm, Obergabelhorn, and Brunegghorn.

Egger's last important new expedition was made on August 10, 1878, when with Messrs. J. Baumann and G. F. Vernon he ascended the Wetterhorn by the West face and North-west arête ; some days later he made a variation with them on the North face of the Jungfrau, the last few yards of their route taking them over the North-east arête. ' We have been perfectly satisfied with his capabilities as a first-class guide & much pleased with his general conduct and good humour.'

The next two entries are signed by Dr. Emil Burckhardt and refer to expeditions made in 1876 and 1878. In the winter of 1876 he made some minor excursions from Grindelwald with Egger (Waldspitz, Männlichen, Faulhorn) and engaged him again in the summer for a tour of several weeks' duration carried out ' bei schlechtem Wetter.' Nesthorn, Aletschhorn, and Finsteraarhorn were their principal ascents. Returning from his ascent of the Nesthorn on August 29, Burckhardt crossed the Gredetschjoch and walked down the whole length of the Gredetschtal to the Rhone Valley ; he was wrong, however, in claiming to have made the first passage of the Gredetschjoch ; it had been crossed by A. W. Moore and Horace Walker in 1872.⁸ His entry concludes—' Egger hat sich auf dieser Reise sehr gut u. brav gehalten.'

In September 1878 they began with the Triftlimmi Pass, then Rhonestock and ' Gross Gelmerhorn über Gelmerjoch ' ; this last is puzzling ; according to the *Climbers Guide* the first ascent of the Gross Gelmerhorn was not made until 1902. Many other ascents were made including the Bietschhorn (' bei sehr schlechter Beschaffenheit,' with the ill-fated Dr. W. O. Moseley) and the Blumlisalphorn. ' Auch diessmal bin ich recht mit ihm zufrieden.'

The first record for 1879 is of an ascent of the Wetterhorn, as second guide, in July. G. F. Vernon signs the next entry : ' Peter Egger has been with Mr. Hoare and myself from July 24 to August 26, and has made the following ascents with us : Piz Roseg from the Tschierva glacier, a route which is rarely taken though it is much more interesting than the ordinary one from the Sella Pass. Piz Bernina, Diavolezza, Rheinwaldhorn, Nufenen Joch, Gabelhorn from the Arben Glacier, Lyskamm, Trift Pass, and Moming Pass. We have been much pleased with him & have found him both a first rate guide & a pleasant

⁸ A. J. 6. 93.

& willing companion. The unsettled state of the weather has prevented our making more ascents.' Vernon's party seems to have been the first to have ascended the Obergabelhorn from Zermatt by way of the Arbenjoch.

Egger's next engagement was with Dr. Güssfeldt: Matterhorn, Riffelhorn from the Gorner glacier, Finsteraarhorn (alone with Güssfeldt), Jungfrau traversed from the Faulberg to Grindelwald. Güssfeldt, an exacting and experienced judge, states in his entry that 'Peter Egger, particularly in the last expedition which proved exceptionally difficult and dangerous, confirmed his long-standing and well deserved reputation as one of the first and most distinguished guides of his country.' This was Güssfeldt's second ascent of the Matterhorn and was made with another well known German mountaineer, Dr. L. Haller; Hans von Bergen had been put at the latter's disposal by a 'prominent member of the Alpine Club.' This ascent is not recorded by Whymper.⁹

Hard work on the Eigerjoch is recorded in the next entry, dated Sunday, September 14, 1879: 'Peter Egger has accompanied me & my son over the Eigerjoch from the Little Scheideck (yesterday). The seracs of the Eiger Glacier were much involved & gave us considerable trouble in threading them. The final ice wall required continuous step cutting & the whole ascent to the Col required 14 hrs. with scarcely a halt. Peter Egger took his share of the work entirely to my satisfaction & I have every confidence in recommending him as a thoroughly "solid" & efficient guide for work of an arduous character, such as we found on the Eiger Joch. F. T. Wethered.'

No expeditions of importance are recorded in 1880. A French entry mentions that Egger was recommended to the writer as one of the best guides in Grindelwald. The last entry for that year is signed by Anna Voigt, the first German woman to ascend the Matterhorn. With Egger she went up the Jungfrau, Agassizhorn, and Wetterhorn and pays high tribute to her guide: 'Bei diesen Touren, von den besonders die Letzte durch schlechtes Wetter erschwert wurde, hat er sich als ein vorsichtiger, zuverlässiger und sehr empfehlenswerther Führer bewiesen.'

So we come to Egger's final season, 1881. In July, with M. Goehrs of Strasbourg, he ascended Eiger, Schreckhorn, and Finsteraarhorn, and traversed the Jungfrau: '. . . Je ne puis qu'ajouter qu'il mérite entièrement l'*excellente* réputation dont il jouit sous tous les rapports.'

On July 25, Theodore Roosevelt, New York records that—'Peter Egger as head guide has just accompanied me up the Jungfrau; it would be hard to imagine a better guide. Always ready and willing, cautious, excellent over any ground or in any weather, and a very amusing companion. Lack of time alone prevents me from taking him for the summer.'

The last recorded ascent was that of the Wetterhorn, traversed from Grindelwald to Rosenlauri on July 29-30, and on September 18 John

⁹ Güssfeldt, *In den Hochalpen*, p. 165.

Cutler signs the final entry mentioning visits to the 'upper portions of both the glaciers.'

Less than eight weeks later, on November 14, 1881, Egger met with an untimely end under most distressing circumstances. With Herr Hans Anderfuhren, Rudolf Kaufmann, and Peter Schlegel, he set out from Grindelwald for the Bergli hut. Within half an hour of the hut, Schlegel was taken ill. As darkness was coming on and the hut was so close the rest of the party decided to push on, intending that one of them should return later for Schlegel. A little before 7 P.M. a shout was heard from Schlegel, and Egger and Kaufmann set off to meet him. Their lantern was in Schlegel's knapsack, so Egger manufactured one by putting a candle in the neck of a bottle, the lower part of which had been broken off. Kaufmann, having accompanied Egger to a large crevasse, left there his axe planted in the snow with a rope attached, and returned to the hut.

Egger soon reached Schlegel and began to help him set up the lantern, holding the bottle-candlestick with his free hand. In some way, he cut his right hand on the jagged edge of the bottle and severed the radial artery. The blood spurted out in terrifying fashion; Schlegel bound up the wound but could not check the flow of blood. Their friends above, with neither rope nor light, did not dare to descend to their assistance until the moon rose. When they finally reached the injured man, Egger was very weak. His comrades took off their flannel shirts and wrapping him in them, laid him in a hole dug in the snow. Schlegel was left to look after him, while Herr Anderfuhren and Kaufmann hastened to Grindelwald for aid, but the unfortunate Egger succumbed about six o'clock next morning, long before the arrival of a rescue party.