

## NEW ZEALAND NOTES 1958-9

BY DAVID HALL

THE 1958-9 season was a good one here, but the good weather was offset by a high tally of accidents, bringing about five mountaineering deaths. The New Zealand Alpine Club did its best to counter one source of disaster, the inexperience on snow and ice of visiting Australians, by holding a training meet for visitors from across the Tasman. Three women and six men (one American, eight Australian) attended this gathering at the Crow Hut.

Two climbers, P. R. Beedham and G. D. Broadbent, were lost in February in the Linda Glacier after an exceptionally vigorous season that had already included a high proportion of the 10,000 ft. peaks (their objective was to climb them all in one season) and had been dazzlingly successful, with several remarkable traverses. They made the fifth ascent of the East ridge of Cook, traversed to the High Peak, retraversed to the Low before descending on the Hooker side. A few days later they traversed Hicks, Dampier, and Vancouver, from Hooker to Linda. Another prodigious day saw them climbing over the Silberhorn to Graham, Teichelmann, and Magellan, retracing their steps to the Silberhorn for an ascent of Tasman. Later they made the second traverse from Hamilton to Malte Brun, from Pioneer Hut climbed Glacier and Douglas Peaks, both peaks of Haidinger, and Torres, and then took in the high peaks of the upper Tasman Glacier.

Six parties reached the High Peak of Mount Cook, including two grand traverses and a climb, up and down, of Zurbriggen's route by an Austro-German party. Zurbriggen's route was also ascended by a rope which did not go on to the summit. Another party climbed the Low and Middle Peaks.

This season all who climbed Tasman climbed the Silberhorn, but four parties reached only the latter, at least at their first attempt. A number of traverses were made, including two west to east; nine parties stood on the summit of Tasman. The Austro-German party (J. Lietner and E. von Terzi) were on the peak at 5 a.m., just after sunrise.

A number of active parties did interesting climbs in the Mount Cook area. A new route was made on the East face of Nazomi by R. Tornquist, A. R. Page, D. G. Herron, P. Houghton, and D. C. Ball. Some of the same party broke new ground on Mount Haast, including a new route on the West Peak. Herron, with J. J. B. Jack, made the first complete traverse on Häckel Peak and Mount Annan. Malte Brun

yielded a new route on its North-west face to A. C. Rattray and J. C. Stammers-Smith. The latter was tragically killed descending from Mount Arrowsmith in early March, his injured companion, Anne Latham (daughter of our fellow member, T. F. Latham), being extricated with great difficulty.

Rattray and Stammers-Smith also made a new route from the Crow to the Low Peak of Rolleston. Other new routes in Canterbury included the Ashburton face of Arrowsmith, the North ridge of Mount Evans, the South ridge of Mount Thorndike, the South-west ridge of Mount Lambert, Mount Kensington from the Garden of Eden, and Mount Kenneth, in the Liebig range, from the Godley. The middle peak of *Trireme*, in the Havelock, was climbed for the first time.

South of the Cook area the rather infrequently visited Hunter valley received a good deal of attention. First ascents included an unnamed peak on the Huxley-Hunter divide, Mount Marshman, and two other unnamed peaks.

In the Wilkin a first ascent was made of the South Peak of Dreadful. In the well-defended East Matukituki, *Moncrieff* was climbed for the first time and a new route made on *Fastness*. From the Rees the East peak of *Centaur Peaks* was climbed for the first time.

In the Darrans and the Fiordland area generally a good deal was accomplished, including a new route on *Tutoko*, and some elegant high-level crossings. First ascents included an unnamed neighbour of *Paranui*, a neighbour of *Te Wera*, *Taiaroa*, '*Hunka*' (a name I cannot help hoping will prove unacceptable to the Geographic Board in spite of the excellent reason for bestowing it), '*Suter*', and in the Milford area a neighbour of *Mount Elliott* (climbed alone by a recent immigrant, *Z. Kepka*, who also gathered in *Pillans*), and two unnamed neighbours of *The Lion*.

Although it is possible still for the earnest researcher to smell out here and there a totally unclimbed peak, these are now comparatively rare. Climbers in quest of an unfading garland are turning their attention almost exclusively to new routes, of which there is still an abundance. Many new routes done today (not all recorded here) are of a high standard and gained only with a good deal of skill and effort.

Most of the climbing in New Zealand's sector of the Antarctic has already been noted (see *A.J.* 64. 132). One new climb not recorded there is the first ascent on January 2, 1959, of *Beacon Heights West* (8,750 ft.) by H. J. Harrington, E. B. Fitzgerald and I. G. Speden. This peak lies in the *Ferrar Glacier* area and apparently has special merits as a viewpoint.

The New Zealand Alpine Club, after prolonged and at times troublesome negotiations with the government, has obtained assent to a club party climbing in Antarctica next summer. As in the earliest days of

mountaineering, the enterprise has had to find a scientific objective to achieve respectability.

Heights of peaks in New Zealand have sometimes fluctuated in the past. For many years the West Peak of Earnslaw was the higher. Now the easier East Peak proves to be the loftier. The most recent survey shows it has a height of 9,308 ft. to the West Peak's 9,261 ft.

The death of Kenneth Ross, in his ninety-first year, breaks the last remaining link with the first self-taught generation of New Zealand climbers. A younger brother of Malcolm, Kenneth Ross made his first climb in 1892 and became a member of the New Zealand Alpine Club soon after its foundation.

It was a great pleasure to meet Malcolm Slater last year in the course of his extended visit to this country and to hear his graphic first-hand account of Centenary junketings.

As I shall not be supplying these notes in future, I should like to put on record my special indebtedness to my friends M. J. P. Glasgow and J. D. Pascoe for their information and help.