

slope at the side of the Pisan glacier was uncertain and soft, and the other side above the Gulmet glacier was hard crust forcing us to undertake step-cutting. We used screw ice-pitons in the hard ice in many places, but they came out because of high temperature in the afternoons. We took 5 days to get out of danger and then made Camp 4 on a relatively flat space at 6400m. This was the second Advance Base Camp. We prepared to climb up towards the steep rock face above Camp 4.

We considered this big face of green schist, 200m high, the crux of our climb. The E side of this face is overhanging, while the W side has 4 gullies, angled at about 80°. We found a route to the top of the face by the westernmost gully. It was about 5 pitches long, though not too severe. Nevertheless we had to stay at Camp 4 because the weather began to change. The snow fell in a whirl every day for a week, furthermore 2 of the party fell sick. Because of this we took 12 days to reach Camp 5. The temperature fell sharply and there was deep snow.

Now we reached the N ridge at 7000m. On 30 July Kodama, Hattori and the summit party set off for the appointed site of Camp 6 at 7400m. We climbed over a vertical ice cliff and saw a broad slope above. The summit was some distance away from Camp 6 and in between were many little peaks. We judged that 2 more days would be needed to reach the top.

Next morning Otani and Yamashita started from Camp 6 at 5.00am. They preferred a traverse to a long ridge route. They traversed a series of ice slopes needing much step-cutting and finally reached the col at the foot of the summit rock face. They made a snow hole on the col and bivouacked for the night. The following day at 5.00am they climbed the 200m steep and unsound rock face; it was difficult. After that they reached the gentle summit ridge and soon attained the summit. It was 2.00pm on 2 August. They found traces of the Pakistani-Polish party which had been there a month earlier. It was a fine day; they could see K2, Nanga Parbat and other peaks of the Karakoram and Hindukush. They bivouacked once more before returning to Camp 6.

The weather conditions changed again and we suffered many hardships between Camp 6 and Camp 2. We took a 2-day rest at Camp 2 and then returned to Base Camp without any further trouble.

Memories of Arolla and Fafler Alp

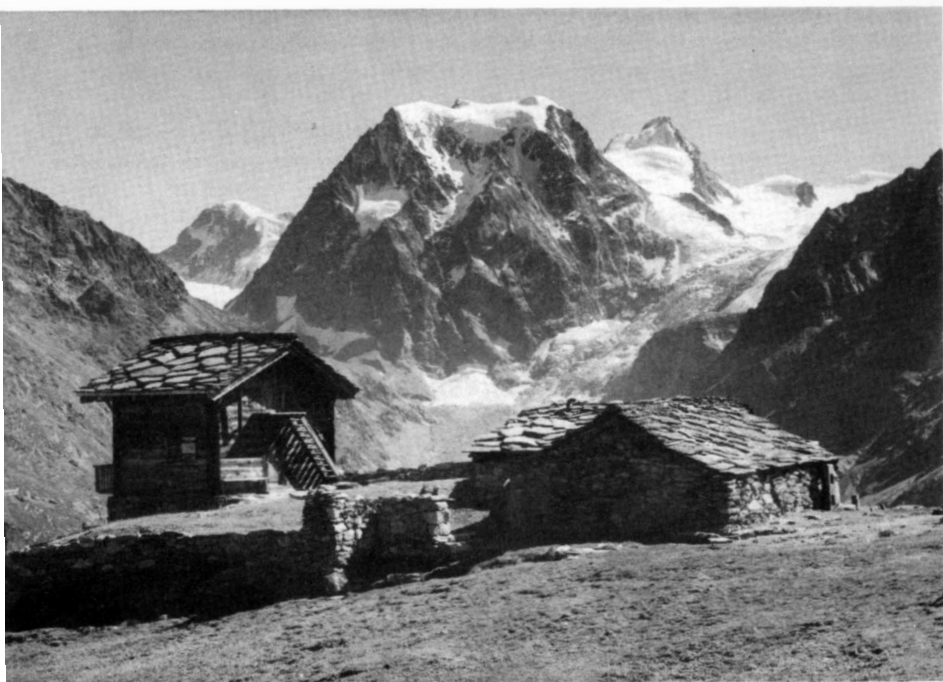
Francis G. Irving

It was 50 years ago last August that I last saw Arolla, 51 since I saw Fafler Alp. This tentative article is submitted largely in deference to my father R. L. G. Irving who was president of the club in 1940, and to whom I shall always be indebted for very happy days in these resorts. It was also the 50th anniversary last August of a tragic accident on L'Evêque, in which my sister and her fiancée were killed descending just below the summit. My father, brother, and myself were all on the same rope, in addition to four others. I don't think my father ever went to Arolla again, though he went regularly to the Alps up to 1939. Yet I doubt if there was a place in the whole range that he loved more.

It was easy to see why in those days he chose these 2 places. There was no road or railway within 5 or 6 miles of either of them. The only visitors were true mountaineers or genuine lovers of the Alps, and the single hotel in each place catered for them. This in no way implies that he was narrow-minded in his outlook. He introduced many young men, among them George Leigh Mallory, to the joys of climbing, and was genuinely glad that quicker travel and better facilities made it possible for so many more people to visit the Alps. But he did not relish the extent to which some of the high resorts were being commercialized, and as he paid his first visit to them in 1901, one can understand why he said occasionally in his later years that it was good to have known them as they were.

When I first visited Arolla in 1926 we left the train at Sion, and were driven in a large, ancient taxi up to Haudères, where the road ended. We then shouldered our rucksacks and walked up the track through Satarme to the Mont Collon Hotel. If I remember, it took us the best part of 1½ hours. The rest of our luggage, as did the hotel provisions and the mail each day, came up on the backs of mules. One fact that strikes a chord in my memory is the stillness of the evenings and nights. The hotel naturally had a telephone, but I do not recall even a radio, and as one retired to bed early before a climb or went for a stroll before supper, the sound of the mountain torrent was the only thing that broke the silence. Somehow it made one feel an intimate relationship with the peaks and pastures of this lovely valley.

In those days there were a few little chalets above the hotel, one of which was the Post Office and another a tiny shop, where one could buy postcards and Toblerone chocolate. There was no other sign of commerce. There was also a church about 300 feet up in the pines, where a resident priest took an English service every Sunday.



89 *Mont Collon, Arolla (This and next photo: Swiss National Tourist Office)*



90 *The Lötschenthal*

In 1926 and 1930 we climbed most of the main peaks round Arolla. Those like the Mont Collon, Za, Perroc and the Dents de Veisivi were ascended by the normal routes as described in the guidebooks of the day, and though I recall the Pigne D'Arolla being ascended straight up the N face in 1930, it was rare for any other routes to be taken. We had marvellously enjoyable climbs, but sensationalism and the cult of danger were not often seen or encouraged.

Fafler Alp had a charm that was all its own, and was a perfect place not only for climbing the peaks on either side of the Lötschenthal, but also for spending an off day in idyllic surroundings. Indeed, it is hard to believe that it is not the same today. It is a short distance to both the Grundsee and the Schwarzee, and on a fine day the views from either gave an impression of sheer beauty and wild grandeur that was enhanced by the sound of the Lonza roaring down the valley. I remember a wonderful day on the Lauterbrunnen Breithorn, and the serenity and peace of an evening at the Bietschhorn hut before ascending that mountain. The sunset was of the best and we had the hut to ourselves. The wild raspberries I had picked on the walk up from Ried were like nectar as we had our supper outside. After climbing the Bietschhorn the following day, it was then quite an effort to descend to Ried and walk up the steep, rough track to Fafler, for the road went no further than Kippel.

This one visit to Fafler Alp in 1929 was sheer bliss with nothing to mar it. But despite our accident in 1930, I think that Arolla would take first place if I had the choice of one more visit to the Alps. In 1932 we drove up to Haudères, and then crossed over to Zermatt. Haudères is the parting of the ways, and we had to go left up to Ferpècle. I confess I looked longingly to the right to the path going up to Arolla which I could remember so well. I have not seen it again, and I believe it is now a well-worn motor road.

I would like to add that my uncle, the late H. E. G. Tyndale, and G. H. Bullock were also members of the party who visited Arolla and Fafler Alp in those days.

Tyndale was a real lover of the Alps as a whole. He knew the flowers, the birds and apart from his early climbing skill—he was badly wounded in the leg in the first world war—he managed a number of ascents up to 1932. He also wrote the story of that brilliant alpinist Julius Kugy.

Guy Bullock was a member of the 1921 Everest expedition. It was these two, along with George Mallory, that my father introduced to the Alps in the first years of this century. I hope and believe that they were grateful to him.

British Conway's Ogre expedition 1980

Tony Saunders

Conway's Ogre (otherwise Uzum Brakk) (6422m) is in the Ogre-Latok chain beside the Biafo Glacier in the Karakoram.

In the late summer of 1980 2 expeditions were in the area—a Japanese attempting Latok IV and a British directed towards Uzum Brakk. On the descent from their peak, disaster threatened the Japanese summit party and members of the other expedition (Cairns Dickson, Tony Saunders and Will Tapsfield) became involved in the rescue operations.



Map 10