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The Editor
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MOUNT BONNEY, 1888–1988

(*Plates* 99–101)

Sir,

One hundred years ago, on 9 August 1888, two eminent members of the British Alpine Club made the first ascent of a peak on the North American continent for the sole purpose of sport. The Rev William Spotswood Green and the Rev Henry Swanzy climbed Mount Bonney (3107m) in the Selkirk Mountains of British Columbia in Canada (see *AJ93*, 210, 1988/89. This reference gives the height of Mt Bonney as 3050m. 3107m is the height according to the map sheet Mt Revelstoke and Glacier National Parks, Canada Map Office 1987.)

On 4 August 1988 this historic climb was re-enacted by the Rev Jack Greenhalgh and myself, the Rev Lloyd Northcott. The record of the first climb in Green's *Among the Selkirk Glaciers* (1890) served as our guide. Very few people have visited the peak since, let alone followed the original route. Heavy undergrowth for 4km leading to the alpine meadows acts as an effective filter to keep the less determined at a distance. It took us 10 hours to penetrate this growth which at times was as thick as a cedar hedge. As we followed Green and Swanzy's footsteps we found the landscape nearly as they had described it, and without any trace of human activity.

Several times we might have turned back, but for the encouragement Green gave us in his account. We knew that he had felt the same trepidation and that he had succeeded. There was a very steep headwall overhung by a cornice barring the obvious route to the ridgeline. Later there was a nasty forepeak composed of loose, wet, even in places muddy, rock. There was a long way to go to get to the peak and back off the ridge by nightfall. It was uncanny how the words of the first climbers rang in our ears as we made our way, and as we stood

on the peak to honour William Green and Henry Swanzy, the fathers of mountaineering in Canada.

Fr Greenhalgh and I are Anglican priests, like the first two ascensionists. Jack was rector of Revelstoke in the 1970s, and I am the current rector. Both of us have enjoyed mountaineering for many years. We were sponsored in our anniversary climb by Parks Canada which arranged publicity and colour slide presentations in Revelstoke and Roger's Pass. I hope that it is not immodest to say that the photographs we took turned out to be of excellent quality. I thought that you might be interested and might care to print this letter for the benefit of your readers.

Yours faithfully,
Lloyd Northcott



99. *View from the forepeak, or horn, towards the summit of Mount Bonney.* (p 227)



100. *The Reverend William Spotswood Green seated, flanked by two Swiss guides; taken on the Mount Cook expedition in 1882.* (p 227)



101. *Mount Bonney from the N in the morning light.* (p 227)