

and Doughty'. They were hands on. From Manchester Kelly drove for the meeting at Thornythwaite and on the Sunday they drove to Honister summit, walked to Pillar for *Hadrian's Wall* and *Nor' Nor' West Climb* before descending to Ennerdale for tea: 'Left 9.10pm. Honister 10.15pm'.

So William knew these crags intimately, upwards and downwards with his hands and his feet. In a 1938 note William wrote, 'Many a man grows old with a picture in his mind of summer evenings on the Pinnacle. Everyone has gone home for dinner, the crag that has been in shadow all day wakes up and comes to fresh life as the sun sets ablaze all the significant detail of the sound grey rock face that stretches in a clean sweep.' A 1936 pencil sketch of Pillar Rock's west face indicates volumes of mass for a later painting, rather than for guidebook purposes. It seems that his famous Esk Buttress watercolour with the golden shaft of light beside it – William did regard this as a religious painting – derived from a moment when he took his sketchbook and pencil out of his climbing sack 'to remind me of the design'.

Of course, William's son, AC member Julian Cooper, was inevitably tempted into the guidebook sketching business. His drawing of Beinn Eighe for the SMC Northern Highlands Area 1972 guidebook is on display, as is, by way of contrast, his 'Eiger Face' of 2005. This huge painting on two panels allows the sky only small triangles at the top corners as the full majesty of the crag, if one can call it that, literally falls in paint as the light catches odd bits of snow. The famous ice fields are ominously dark and integrated into the shadowed face. The presence of climbing history is part of the spirit of the crag that Julian has evoked here in an extension of his father's work.

Many people would want to pay tribute to the warm memory of using William's guidebook drawings to read Lakeland crags, but few could command so much authority as Gwen Moffat, now over 90 years old, who has contributed a personal statement to this exhibition: 'I still have those guides: over 60 years old, water-worn, mud-stained, dog-eared and annotated, and still consulted.' She says that William was 'a man who understood the soul of rock [...] something between a realist and an impressionist.' But almost hidden in the richness of documentation in this exhibition is a statement from John Hunt. Lining Crag, the evening sun-catcher above Eagle Crag, Borrowdale, was one of William's favourites, on which he made a new route, *Evening Wall*, with his loyal climbing partner, Jim Cameron. In August 1939 John Hunt climbed here with William before going off to war, taking with him in his kitbag William's book, *The Hills of Lakeland*. This is, perhaps, the most moving tribute of all.

Terry Gifford

Lines of Ascent, The Heaton Cooper Studio, Grasmere, November 2014 – Spring 2015



Monte Viso, also known as Monviso. (*Adele Long*)

The First Female Ascent of the Stone King

Dominating the Italian Cottian Alps, Monte Viso or Monviso (Occitan: *Visol*; Piedmontese: *Brich Monviso* or *Viso*) stands higher than all its neighbouring peaks by about 500m. From its summit, on a fine day, a spectacular 360-degree panorama of the Alps unfolds, a view that inspired the title of Will McLewin's book *In Monte Viso's Horizon*; the mountain itself can be seen from many miles away. At 3841m Monviso is not the highest mountain in the Alps, neither is it the hardest, nor the most dramatic, but arguably it is one of the most majestic, fully deserving of its name *Il Re di Pietra* – the Stone King. Not many mountains can boast the same level of love and loyalty from the population over which it stands so regally. As Paulo Allemano, Mayor of Saluzzo, said of Monviso, it is 'a mountain that speaks to the soul and characterizes our lives.'

The first recorded ascent of Monviso was on 30 August 1861 by William Mathews, British mountaineer and a founding member of the Alpine Club accompanied by his friend Frederick Jacomb, a French lawyer, the Irish naturalist and politician John Ball, first president of the Club, and guides Jean-Baptiste and Michel Croz. The second ascent, done the following year between 3 and 4 July 1862, was by Francis Fox Tuckett, also a British mountaineer and former Alpine Club vice-president. The party on this occasion included the first Italian climber, Bartholomew Peyrotte, a mountain guide, and guides Peter and Michel Croz. This group were the first to camp for a night on the summit of Monviso.



L-r: Rya Tibawi, Caroline Phelan, Amanda Graham and Adele Long on the summit of Monviso. (Adele Long)

The first wholly Italian expedition to the summit was that of government minister Quintino Sella in 1863. The expedition was supposed to be guided by Bartholomew Peyrotte, already familiar with the route, but apparently he gave up. The climbers, who included the Piedmont noblemen Paolo e Giacinto Ballada of Saint-Robert and congressman Giovanni Barracco from Calabria, were accompanied by three local mountain guides: Raimondo Gertoux, Giuseppe Boudin and Giovan Battista Abbà. The event was a clever political propaganda drafted by Sella aimed at celebrating, through the 'heterogeneity' of the expedition, the recently achieved unification of Italy in 1861. In the wake of the enthusiasm that had accompanied the success of the climb, Sella went on to found the Italian Alpine Club in Turin.

Official records report the first female ascent of Monviso as that by Isabella Straton, born in 1838 in Sussex, southern England and Emmeline Lewis Lloyd of Wales. Emmeline is purported to have introduced Isabella to climbing, and in 1871 the pair climbed Monviso in the company of the guide Jean Charlet. Isabella had inherited all the family wealth at an early age and was thus able to pursue an independent life, which she chose to spend in the mountains. She married Jean Charlet, but was always known in the climbing circles as 'the Lady'. Both Emmeline and Isabella climbed for many years and made significant contributions to women's mountaineering. However, around 10 years ago, the diaries of a local woman, Alessandra Boarelli (née Re, 1838-1899) of Verzuolo, came to light. It emerged

that Alessandra had had her eye on Monviso some six years prior to Emmeline and Isabella. Her quest for the summit commenced in 1863, when she made her first attempt, putting a camp in at passo Forcioline. Her guide was none other than Peyrotte, who decided, on that occasion, that the weather was too bad to continue. Fortunately her persistence paid off the following year, 1864, on 16 August; the 26-year-old Alessandra successfully summited Monviso in the company of the 14-year-old daughter of the notary of Casteldelfino, Cecilia Fillia. The achievement was recorded in local newspapers. A plaque to commemorate these achievements has been erected in the open-air theatre in Casteldelfino. Alessandra was born in Turin and married the nobleman Emilio Boarelli in 1856; they had three children, daughters Isabella and Luisa and a son, Clemente. She is buried in the family chapel in the cemetery in Verzuolo. Little is known about Cecilia Fillia (1850-1937), who was unmarried.

In the words of Paula Bonavia, president of the CAI Saluzzo: 'Alessandra Boarelli was a 26-year-old... athletic and sporty, [and her achievements] should be remembered because she challenged the conventions of the time, going against the grain.' In the same spirit, on 1 September 2014, a group of four women from the Alpine Club and Climbers' Club set off, at the invitation of the CAI Saluzzo and the Piedmont tourist board, to celebrate the occasion of the 150th anniversary of Alessandra and Cecilia's ascent. After some acclimatisation, based at Rifugio Vallanta, taking in Punte Gastaldi (3210m) and Monte Losetta (3054m), the team crossed the passo Giacoletti (Grade II) to the Rifugio Quintino Sella. The following day they made the ascent of Monviso via the *voie normale*, in the company of Paolo Allemano, Dave Wynne-Jones and guide Sandro Paschetto; ice and snow conditions made it somewhat harder than the 'F' given in the guidebook.

At the summit they signed the special book to record the female ascents. Unfortunately the awful weather in the Alps that year had rendered Monviso unclimbable for many weeks and their summit successes were recorded as numbers 81 to 84, a long way short of the 1000 women the Italians hoped to get to the summit on that anniversary year. Nonetheless, the Italians appreciated the team's presence, exhibiting their famous hospitality and generosity.

Adele Long and Livio Perotti

Team: Adele Long, Amanda Graham, Caroline Phelan and Rya Tibawi. A film by Dave Wynne-Jones is available on vimeo.

