



**THE BRITISH COLUMBIA  
MOUNTAINEERING CLUB**

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**B. C. M. C. SUMMER CAMP**

The next issue of *The Mountaineer* will contain an account of the Summer Camp.

**CLUB MEMBERS AT SECOND  
MT. ROBSON CAMP**

The B. C. Mountaineering Club was well represented at the Second Mt. Robson Camp of the Alpine Club of Canada, the following members attending: B. C. Cayley, Ivan R. Miller, A. H. Bain, Miss E. M. Henley, Mr. and Mrs. Don Munday. Between them they climbed Mt. Robson, Lynx Mt., Mt. Resplendent, Mt. Ptarmigan, Calumet Peak, Mt. Mumm, Moritz Peak, and Gendarme. Part of the time the weather was unsettled and views disappointing on that account, particularly as no view in the region is complete if the giant of all, Mt. Robson, is hidden, which was the case a large part of the time.

Calumet Peak, a little short of 10,000 feet, was rated as a "badge" climb. It rises above Moose Pass where the alpine meadows are very fine. The approach up

the glacier is simple; the sharp arete, about a quarter of a mile in length, induced some people to crawl along it, one side being sheer and the other about 45 degrees, the smooth slabs making the one side like the roof of a house. The descent was made practically down these slabs, much less difficult an undertaking than it might appear to a novice in the use of edge-nails although there did seem a certain chance of slipping off the edge the other way where the cliff actually overhung. The views in this district, eight miles east of the main camp, were well worth the trip.

Around Robson Pass there was an absence of flowers, due in part to the time of year as the best of them are earlier; Robson pass, however, is merely coarse outwash from Robson Glacier, naturally somewhat barren. The same applies to the extensive gravel flats above Lake Kinney, though here too the dryas is beautiful early in July. The Valley of a Thousand Falls loses most of the cascades from which it takes its name, as the snow goes off the upper slopes. Four fine waterfalls break the upper stretch of the Grand Fork River, the famous Emperor Falls being the highest. The trail was in excellent condition, and most of the much-needed bridges had been built. The distance to Robson Pass from the station is called 19 miles but is probably less as many parties went in in six hours. The climb is about 2,500 feet from the railway. As the trail is fairly well in the open all the way many fine views relieve the monotony of the tramp. Three sides of Mt. Robson are skirted, the best being the northeast, above Berg Lake.

Next to Mt. Robson, Mt. Whitehorn, 11,100 feet, is the most difficult climb in the region and was not climbed during the camp period. It is a mountain of fine appearance, and guarded by a difficult glacier.

The Mural Glacier is of exceptional interest as it falls over a cliff nearly a mile in length.

Altogether the district is really a splendid one, though in some respects it may lack some of the charms of other regions; at the same time, one must never forget that it has Mt. Robson, the grandest peak

in the Rockies, which more than counterbalances any deficiencies in other respects the highly critical may find.

**MT. ROBSON AS A CLUB CAMP SITE**

Many B. C. M. C. members have looked forward to the time when the Club could hold a camp at the foot of Mt. Robson, and some day that ambition must be realized. Just how soon is, of course, quite another question. The Club is now in the fortunate position of having a considerable number of members with a good working knowledge of the district, and this would be a distinct advantage in the event of placing a camp there.

To climb Mt. Robson is an ambition worth while. Our Club possesses many members capable of the climb. Robson is not a mountain to regard lightly. The person who respects the mountain less after climbing it, ought never to climb it. Robson improves on acquaintance. Beneath its shining walls one must stand in awe and wonder.

Under ordinary conditions it is a dangerous climb; though the danger may not be given obvious expression, it is always there, imminent in ice and snow and sudden-gathering storm—and the men who have come through storm on Robson have looked death in the eyes; that may sound melodramatic, but to be caught in storm on those tremendous cliffs is certainly serious.

Our generally firm rock at the coast is not the best school from which to graduate to the shattered sedimentary rock of the Rockies, but for all that it is safe to say that the climbing we get within 50 or 60 miles of Vancouver is really good all-round training for the loftier inland ranges. It is on snow and ice that so many climbers are weak, and this is one thing coast climbers excel in. It is not too much to predict that Canada's best climbers are likely in the near future to come from around Vancouver.

Congratulations are due to one of our well-known members, Miss Ada L. Capell, on her marriage to Mr. Arthur F. Dagnall, Suite 3, 207 3rd Street, W., North Vancouver.

**ASCENT OF MT. ROBSON**

Unfortunate indeed is that some claims to have reached the top of Mt. Robson should be surrounded with any element of doubt. Donald Phillips, Kinney's companion, flatly denies that they made a complete ascent; however, they deserve unbounded credit for what they accomplished. Messrs. Foster and McCarthy, with Conrad Kain claim the first ascent, and it is not disputed. Putnam's claim to have ascended with an equally inexperienced companion as himself has been the subject of controversy, and there is a statement current that he admits now that they did not get within 800 feet of the top. The second undisputed ascent was made this year by Messrs. Pollard, Geddes, and Moffat, with Kain; the third by Messrs. Lambert, Drinnan, Porter, Mr. and Mrs. Don Munday and Miss A. Buck; Kain and Saladana as guides.

Camp at Robson Pass was left about 9:30 a.m., the trail being followed down the valley nine miles to Lake Kinney, a descent from 5,450 to 3,200 feet. Here packs were laden with food for the High Camp at 6,500 feet on a shoulder of Robson south of the Great Couloir of the west face. The climb was hot, steep and dry, camp being reached shortly before eight p.m. Three tents, food and other equipment had been placed on this high shelf, the highest point a comfortable camp could be placed, but not really high enough from the purely climbing point of view.

Messrs. Thorington and Ostheimer returned with a disturbing story of the huge avalanches of ice along the route taken by the rest of the party who had gone on to the peak. They did not return before dark, but shortly after four next morning Conrad's yodel woke the camp, and they arrived soon after. The night had been spent on the cliffs in sight of camp.

The day was spent by the waiting party in enforced idleness except for building a quarter of a mile or more of trail to render accessible as a water supply a stream in a branch of the Great Couloir. The day was perfect for climbing—to be forced to waste it was hard. Rain fell several times in the night, but at 2 a.m. the sky was cloudless.

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At 3:30 the party moved off. Steep rocks with narrow shelving ledges were crossed; a wall mounted with unlooked-for ease to the great shelf formed along most of the west face by the "yellow bands." The party were just in time to see a huge avalanche from the terminal wall of the unnamed glacier of this side of the mountain.

This glacier also discharges in two places through gaps in the ridge bounding it on the north, the first ice-wall being at about 9,000 feet, the greater one at 11,000. The larger avalanches from these go clear to the foot of the mountain and within a hundred yards of the trail, at 3,200 feet.

The first ice-cliff overhung tremendously and had littered the ledges with fragments. Not studying it too long, a traverse was made rapidly along the firm ledges, and the climb continued up the ridge, the chief impediment being Conrad's persistent telling of excruciatingly humorous personal anecdotes.

Shortly below the second and greatest ice-wall which extends for a quarter of a mile obliquely upwards across the head of the Great Couloir and to the Wishbone Arête, the ropes were called into play for the first time. The 150-foot ice-front was nearly silent. A 200-yard traverse had to be made absolutely exposed to anything which might come down from the leaning mass, so no time was lost. A narrow break in the wall afforded a way to the top. While Conrad cut steps and handholds up the wall, the second party sat on the rocks and hoped nothing would drop on their heads. Much care was needed rounding the final dizzy corner.

Once more the peak was in view as it had been most of the morning. The going

was easy across toward the crest of the long south shoulder. Saladana took the lead for a spell. Unfortunately an ice-bridged crevasse gave under him and he lost his axe, an hour being spent recovering it from the depths. Trouble was experienced in finding another crossing, the heat having honey-combed ice and snow. Conrad was again in the lead. While he was busy cutting steps the tail-ender on his rope ignored his implicit orders as to the mode and time of crossing the rotten bridge, and fell in as Conrad had predicted; No. 3 on the rope was not in position to stand a strain he had no reason to expect at that moment; fortunately No. 2 was well braced; otherwise all four almost surely would have gone into the crevasse. The danger was created by the human element.

The air now was bitterly cold in spite of the brilliant sunshine. The actual tip of the mountain was still in view, a little snow cornice on a big ice cornice. The slope was a crazy terrace effect, a maze of far-projecting masses of ice hung with thousands upon thousands of long and slender icicles through which the sunlight struck with a cold unearthly beauty never to be forgotten.

Above the peak the sky was not blue but nearly black. To the southwest Mt. Geikie and all the mountains in that direction were now cloaked from view by the smoke of a rapidly spreading forest fire.

But from this point onward the character of the climbing precluded studying the scenery; the steep slope was nothing but a jumble of ice blocks, and with frequency a climber broke through the rotten snow, so that the parties could not all be in motion at one time. In places they even crawled

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on all fours to distribute weight as much as possible. The angle of the slope became even steeper under the peak, and the danger of the snow avalanching very real. The apparently broad shelf under the icicle-bearded ice cornice of the peak was really a thinly bridged crevasse, its lip providing a narrow "freezing-place" for the second party for 40 minutes while the first went to the summit and back.

From the ledge a crumbling ice wall had to be surmounted on the very edge of things, followed by a short distance upward on a narrow ridge full of holes, the two faces of the mountain dipping away on either hand. Terrifically steep, the ice-slope northeast plunged to the Tumbling Glacier. Berg Lake lay far below. Beyond, the tents of the main camp were mere white dots in the pass. The virgin crest of the Helmet, more than 2,000 feet below, lay so close under Robson as almost to escape notice. Resplendent, for once belying its name, looked a mere snow ridge. Thus it was with all the enormous expanse of mountains—the peak of Robson too greatly surpasses them in height, and dwarfs them all. This, of course, is always the case with the highest mountain in a district, and the experienced climber does not expect more than the majesty of wide view.

A bit of black paper from Pollard's camera remained in the summit snow, the only actual evidence that has been seen on the summit of the presence of a previous party.

Descent was improved by rapid freezing of the footsteps, but much caution was necessary at the weak points, most of these being slid over at full length. The upper ice wall was reached at 7 p. m. Again the traverse was made in safety. Before the rocks had been descended far, darkness closed rapidly. Conrad led out into the middle of the lower glacier, and to the upper edge of the lower ice wall under which the the party had climbed. Getting off the ice in the dark took some time, one person being sent across at a time, straddling a bridge, then crossing an awkward crevasse.

The elevation was now about 9,500 feet. By the light of Conrad's lantern the remaining food was eaten, dry socks and all

extra clothing put on, and the rocks leveled down. The glacial breeze kept most of the party from sleeping much.

At 3 a. m. the odd sleepers were roused. Heavy clouds clung close overhead. Things were collected, and stiff limbs set in motion. The ice wall had scattered fragments across the ledges, but had ceased its midnight activity. The remaining rocks to camp were soon descended, camp being reached at 5 a. m.

The next climbing party provided a tasty breakfast. At 7 a. m. the successful ones started down for Lake Kinney, breakfasted in earnest there—not having cared to devour the High Camp's precious supply—then set out for Robson Pass, arriving there at 2 p. m., and receiving a splendid welcome.

### THE MAKING OF A MOUNTAINEER

"*The Making of a Mountaineer*," by George I. Finch, who will be remembered as a member of the 1922 and 1924 Everest expeditions, is a splendidly illustrated book which in the narration of the author's notable mountaineering achievements also endeavors to convey to others some useful hints on how to master the craft.

Finch has specialized on guideless climbing, but does not scorn a good guide. His ideal climber is one who seeks new routes or new mountains, who finds his own way, develop his self-reliance. Of rock climbing pure and simple he thinks but little, rating snow and ice climbing as calling for much more skill and judgment. It is a book for the mountaineer in every sense of the word.

Published by Arrowsmith, London, England; price 30 shillings net. Received through Associated Bureau of Mountaineering Clubs.

Members will regret exceedingly to learn of the death, on Aug. 26th at his home, of Mr. Norman Procter, a member of the Club for several years, and the deepest sympathy of the Club is extended to Mrs. Procter.

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