

Mr. East was represented by a dreamy 'The Sacred Mountain of Japan,' and Mr. Alfred Parsons by a dainty drawing, 'Mégève, Savoy.' Mr. Colin Phillip as a rule prefers the sober colours and massive forms of northern waters and ranges to the snows and needles of the Alps. He justifies his choice by his success. He was represented by two fine drawings of the Breithorn and the Cuillins of Skye.

Some of the deceased artists were not so well represented as they deserved to be, notably Andrew McCullum, Simpson, Elijah Walton, Sir J. Collier, and Croft. Simpson's fine draughtsmanship was seen in 'Ganges Canal, Roorkee, 1863,' but one drawing gives no idea of his great and varied powers. Croft's large 'Matterhorn' was impressive, but a little sad. Barnard and Garrett Smith had numerous works on the walls. Both men, though very able, were tinged with a rather heavy convention. Mr. E. T. Compton's clever works always show great facility and ingenuity in constructing and painting his pictures, together with elaborate and fine draughtsmanship. Mr. Collingwood was represented by several able and interesting Icelandic pictures.

It has always struck the writer as curious that so little figure work relating to mountains should have been attempted. It is greatly to Mr. Willink's and Mr. McCormick's credit that they should have directed their talents in that direction. Besides some charming landscapes Mr. Willink was represented by several spirited figure pictures of incidents in climbing. It will be a great pity if this vein of Alpine art is not more cultivated.

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#### THE ACCIDENT ON THE SCHWARZHORN (SAAS FEE) TO MR. FRANK BERGNE.

THE accident which caused the death of Mr. Frank Bergne occurred about 5.30 p.m. on January 1 last, approximately half-way up the ridge of the Schwarzhorn, measured from the small saddle on the W. of a point locally known as the Trifhorn, but not marked on the Siegfried Map.

Mr. Bergne knew most of the summits and ridges round Saas Fee under summer conditions as well as anyone, the place having been for many years a favourite resort of his parents, and he had earned a high reputation as a mountaineer among the guides of the district. He had, as he told me only a day or two before, long looked forward to visiting it in winter. An opportunity for an expedition was afforded by the visit of Mr. A. O. Wheeler, the President of the Canadian Alpine Club, who, when dining with Sir Henry Bergne during our Jubilee festivities, referred to his intention of spending four or five days he had to spare in getting a sight of the Alps before his return to Canada. Mr. Bergne, who was present, was going with another friend and myself to Vermala-sar-Montana after Christmas, and an expedition from Saas to

St. Niklaus was then and there planned to enable Mr. Wheeler to get one of the most comprehensive views in the Alps within easy reach at this time of year.

Mr. J. A. Simon, K.C., M.P., who happened to be at Montreux, and in whose chambers in the Temple Mr. Bergne was reading as a pupil, was invited by Mr. Bergne to become a member of the party, and, being with Mr. Bergne at Vermala myself, I, too, was invited to join it.

Mr. Bergne and I met Mr. Wheeler and Mr. Simon at Sierre on Monday, December 30. Mr. Wheeler had to catch the Luxe train home from Visp the following Thursday evening, and Mr. Bergne was himself proposing to return to Vermala at the end of the week, as he had invited some friends there and at Montana to celebrate his twenty-ninth birthday with him on January 6.

After a night at Visp we walked up to Saas Fee, accompanied as far as Stalden by Herr Pierre Lagger, who opened his hotel there and very hospitably entertained us as far as his resources extended.

Arriving at Saas Fee about 5 o'clock we were all, and Mr. Bergne in particular, warmly welcomed by Auguste Supersaxo and Clara. In the evening Mr. Bergne discussed the proposed expedition to St. Niklaus with Daniel Zurbriggen, who agreed it was quite feasible, and he was accordingly commissioned to make up the necessary complement of guides and porters. The intention was to go as far as the Mischabel hut the first day, and after a night there, if conditions were favourable next day, to go up to the Windjoch, and, crossing the Ulrichshorn, descend from the Ried Pass to St. Niklaus. The New Year opened with a cloudless, windless day, a bright warm sun tempering the bracing crispness of the air. The barometer was rising slowly, and the party set out with high hopes about 12.30, to which hour our start had been postponed to enable the guides to attend High Mass.

Mr. Simon had been very unwell the previous evening, and doubtful about coming, but felt sufficiently better to decide on making an effort, at any rate, to reach the hut.

Our professional assistance consisted of four guides—Daniel Zurbriggen, Emil Imseng, Theodore Bumann, and Clemens Bumann—and a porter, viz. Daniel Zurbriggen's son Ignaz. Mr. Wheeler and Mr. Bergne manfully insisted on carrying their own rucksacks, in accordance, as they said, with their usual practice.

The route taken lay in a northerly direction up the Trifhorn ridge, some going in the latter part along its crest, on which there was not much snow, others up the snow slope, which here was in good condition, on its W. side, keeping close to the foot of the rocks until the small saddle on the W. side of the Trifhorn was reached. From this the party proceeded in a westerly direction along the ridge of the Schwarzhorn, on the summit of which the Mischabel hut stands. The usual route in summer—by the path across the scree slopes, now covered by deep snow, on the S. side

of the Schwarzhorn—was considered impracticable, owing to the risk of avalanches.

The saddle mentioned above was struck soon after 3.30. Shortly afterwards, on coming to the first rocks met with on the Schwarzhorn ridge, Mr. Bergne asked Mr. Simon, whom he observed to be somewhat tired, whether he would care to be roped, and the latter assenting, the guide who undertook this duty invited Mr. Bergne, immediately behind Mr. Simon, to rope himself too. Seeing, however, no occasion for this, as these rocks, which were free from snow, presented no difficulty, Mr. Bergne declined to do so. Clemens Bumann was at that time behind him, and the last of the party.

About 4.30 there was a halt of some 20 minutes for a meal on a level part of the ridge, and during this halt, as I afterwards learnt, a change in the guide roped to Mr. Simon was made, Clemens Bumann, who had been last, taking his place.

Though the snow was soft and powdery, it was not noticeably balling under our feet, nor was there any ice on the rocks. Our way was free from difficulty, and no thought of then roping the party generally appears to have occurred to anyone.

On starting again some of the guides fell behind me, but presently suggested that their going in front, as they had been previously doing, would hasten the pace of the party by their trampling down the snow for us, and we then proceeded in the following order: Theodore Bumann, Emil Imseng, Ignaz Zurbruggen, Daniel Zurbruggen, Mr. Wheeler, myself, Clemens Bumann, Mr. Simon, and lastly Mr. Bergne.

It was about 5.30, when there was still at that elevation a fairly good light, the afternoon being very clear and bright, that our even progress along the ridge was a little delayed by a pile of rocks rising abruptly some 10 ft. in height, and extending about 12 ft. wholly on the southern side of the ridge: continued as this is from their summit they form, as it were, a great step in it. These, which were free of any ice, and, except in their interstices, practically clear of snow, the guides went up without hesitation as they came to them by a shallow, irregular crack, some 2 ft. wide, within 2 or 3 ft. of the southern edge of the rock-face, and inclined at an angle to it, which gave the crack to some extent a southern aspect. Though I had no thought of any danger, my instincts were against the place they chose, and, selecting a steeper one a few feet more to the right and nearer to the crest of the ridge, I climbed up where a big rock available for both hands juts out over a ledge below. Finding it suited me I recommended it to Mr. Bergne, who did not respond to my suggestion, but remarked to Mr. Simon that he had not anticipated any rock-climbing on the way to the hut. Clemens Bumann and Mr. Simon followed the line taken by the others, and Mr. Simon when half-way up relieved Mr. Bergne of his ice-axe, passing it on to Clemens Bumann above him, and then offered Mr. Bergne his hand. The latter, no doubt full of confidence in following where seven had preceded him without comment on any difficulty, did not, however, think it necessary to avail him-

self of this assistance. Mr. Simon having gained the top half-turned as he held out Mr. Bergne's ice-axe for the latter to take on rejoining him. At that moment he heard a low exclamation of "Ah!" and the hiss of a swiftly moving object on the snow. At once turning completely round he was already too late to see anything but the evenly marked track left by his companion's descent down a rather steep snow slope on the southern side of the ridge, which extended about 50 ft. to the brink of rocks even more precipitous stretching several hundred feet below. The want of any answer to repeated calls confirmed the fears of Mr. Wheeler, Mr. Simon, and myself, based on observation of these rocks earlier in the day, that there could be only one result of such a fall. Their intimate knowledge of the ground convinced the guides too of the terrible certainty that it must involve instantaneous death. We held a consultation as to what should be done, but at that hour there was no alternative for the survivors but to continue their way to the hut.

Apart from the shock sustained, the use of the rope was soon afterwards required by the increased steepness of the rocks and deficiency of light. The hut was not reached till 7.30.

The intended expedition to St. Niklaus was of course abandoned, and it was decided to organise a rescue expedition as speedily as possible on the morrow.

After an anxious and trying night we left the hut soon after sunrise, and on descending to the place of the accident found Mr. Bergne's right-hand glove behind the first convenient hand-hold in the rocks. The first left-hand hold taken by the others who went up the same way was the top of an upright slab of thin rock, raised at right angles to the face, slightly above the level of the head of the climber, and sloping like a gable-end of low elevation in a downward direction both inwards and outwards.

Mr. Bergne's right hand evidently slipped out of his glove before he had secured a good grasp of this not very convenient left-hand hold, and handicapped by his rucksack as he fell backwards he was unable to do anything to save himself. It is probable that the fading light and Mr. Bergne's short sight, for which he usually wore a single glass in his right eye, were substantial contributory causes of this awful disaster, more particularly as the afternoon light was in his eyes.

It was already midday before we had descended to a point from which it was possible to traverse the snow slopes to the foot of the rocks where we anticipated finding his body, and under the influence of the midday sun the snow on these slopes was in too uncertain a condition to risk crossing them. Moreover as we had no sufficiency of rope or other appliances to remove him, there seemed little object in attempting to reach his resting place, and we therefore decided to return direct to Saas and postpone the rescue of the body till next day.

Mr. Wheeler had to return to England that evening, and Mr. Simon being anxious lest his company should delay the rescue party I set out without him early the following morning, viz.

January 8, taking with me the guides and porter of our expedition and nine more, several of whom were members of the Supersaxo family.

We found Mr. Bergne's body, as we had anticipated, at the foot of the rocks rising above the snow-covered scree slopes, and from the injuries he had received there can be no doubt that his death must have taken place immediately he had passed off the short snow slope on which he fell. His body was conveyed down on ski, and brought home for burial in Brookwood Cemetery. He was laid to rest on January 8 in the presence of his immediate relatives and a few of his most intimate friends, including some members of the Alpine Club, two of his companions on the ill-fated expedition, viz. Mr. Simon and myself, and his old and much attached friend, Sir Edward Davidson, who also, by request, represented the President and Committee of the Club. The Rev. Barton V. Mills, another old and valued friend, performed the funeral service. Mr. Wheeler was unavoidably prevented attending these last sad rites, and greatly regretted his inability to do so. Among the many beautiful wreaths sent was one from Herr Pierre Lagger, which accompanied Mr. Bergne's body from Visp to the grave.

The keenness and intelligence which characterised him as a mountaineer were equally prominent in his attitude towards his professional work; indeed whatsoever his right hand found to do that did he with all his might. To his companions in the Temple he had already shown promise of a successful career at the Bar, to which he had been called in November last, while his bright and sunny disposition won him friends in every quarter, and he will be greatly missed. He was much beloved, and by none more than by his numerous friends in the Club. At Saas Fee, too, there are many who had watched him grow up, and had followed his mountain exploits with interest and affection, and now deplore, as we do, his untimely fate.

GEORGE L. STEWART.

## NEW EXPEDITIONS IN 1907 (*continued*).

### *Bernese Oberland.*

GROSS GRÜNHORN (4,047 m. = 13,278 ft.) BY THE N. ARÊTE.—On August 4 Mr. H. V. Reade and I left the Concordia Inn at 5 A.M., and reached the arête joining the Gross and Klein Grünhörner immediately to the S. of the latter at 8.25 A.M. Proceeding at 9.5 A.M. we followed the rather broken N. arête of the Gross Grünhorn to a pitch about 20 ft. high. This my leader was very keen to climb by a ledge on its eastern side, but, as this led on to an inclined slab covered with 6 in. of powdery snow, he, after some demur to my strenuous, in fact, very forcibly expressed insistence, consented to traverse to the right over an unstable corner into a gully by which we regained the arête. The rocks carried much loose stuff and showed no signs of having