

ALPINE ACCIDENTS IN 1909.

On June 28, **Herr Edmund Gütl**, of Vienna, was killed while leading a party of six friends up the N.E. face of the **Multereck** (Grimming). He had 30 metres of rope out when he for some unaccounted-for reason fell, shattering his skull at his companions' feet.

He was a very prominent member of the Austrian Club, thirty years of age, and is described as a very competent mountaineer as well as a most charming companion.

On July 21, **Herr Gustav Barthel**, of Chemnitz, Saxony, while leading on an ascent of the very exposed **Guglia di Brenta**, and when close to the summit, fell about 1,000 feet, and was instantly killed. His companion was only saved by the breaking of the belayed rope.

Barthel was a well-known and very competent climber, forty-six years of age, a professor at the local gymnasium. Among many other expeditions he was the leader of the first successful attack on the very difficult S. arête of the **Thurnerkamp**.

On July 21, a young schoolmaster, **Herr Wilhelm Lass**, of Vienna, was killed while attempting the N. face of the **Terglon** with Herr K. Plaichinger of the same place. The rope, by which he is reported to have been trying to pull himself up, broke and he fell about 75 metres till the rope-end caught on a rock and held him. He, however, speedily succumbed to his injuries. Plaichinger managed to descend alone the next day. Both are described as very capable rock climbers.

On July 21, **Mr. Percy Shannon**, with his brother Mr. William Shannon and Mr. P. Greenfield, ascended the **Elsighorn** from Adelboden. During the descent falling snow rendered the grass slopes slippery, causing Mr. Percy Shannon to fall, and he died in his brother's arms before the rescue party fetched by Mr. Greenfield could reach him.

On August 2, two young engineers, **Herren Seese** and **Besser**, left the Rottal Hut to ascend the **Jungfrau**. They lagged behind the other parties, and on the 6th the frozen body of Seese with a piece of rope tied round his waist was found close to the summit. The body of Besser could not be found. It is presumed that while resting near the Hochfirn the party was overwhelmed by an avalanche, as a map belonging to Seese was, on the 9th, found lying on a recent avalanche.

Besser was apparently carried down, while Seese continued the ascent with the sack and axe belonging to Besser, hoping to find people on the summit. His strength, however, gave out and he succumbed to exposure, as the following day snow and bad weather set in.

On September 10 two parties, viz. **Dr. Winkelmann** and Herr O. Guggenbühl, both of Zürich, and a young student, **Erich Hermann**, of Marburg, with the guide **Knecht**, of Gsteigwiler, left the Bergli hut to ascend the **Jungfrau**.

Below the Rottalsattel they were forced by a very violent storm to retrace their steps. They lost their way in the mist, and the first two were found early next morning about 400 to 500 yards to the right of the regular track, Winkelmann having died from cold at about 11 the previous night while Guggenbühl was considerably exhausted.

The other two were found a little later (from Guggenbühl's indications, who had heard their shouts up to about midnight) on the western rocks of the Walcherhorn ridge, dead from cold and exhaustion.

On August 2, **Dott Emilio Castelli** and **Carlo Piatti**, both well-known and active mountaineers belonging to the Como Section of the C. A. I., were killed while descending the **Piz Badile** (m. 3,307) by the route usually followed. Castelli was leading and Piatti bringing up the rear. It is supposed that the snow balling under the boot of the leader caused him to slip, dragging Piatti after him. The shaft of Piatti's ice-axe broke at a critical moment, and the two unfortunate climbers fell some 200 metres. Castelli was fatally injured, and Piatti cannot have survived more than a few hours.

The bodies were taken down to Bagni del Mäsino.

On August 7, after a successful ascent of the Ecrins, **M. Jean Capdepont**, his sister, and **Herr Gley** slipped on the ice of the steep slope leading from the **Col des Ecrins** to the **Gl. de la Bonne Pierre**. **Herr Gley** was instantly killed and **Mlle. Capdepont** speedily succumbed to her injuries, the other climber reaching **La Béarde** next day half dead.

On August 4, **Mr. Herbert Francis William Tatham**, aged forty-seven, an Eton housemaster, ascended the **Aig. de L'M.** direct from Chamonix with his nephew. Shortly before 7 p.m. they were descending by the usual zigzag track and were within a couple of minutes of the **Ponts Path** by the Angle when **Mr. Tatham, jun.**, heard a cry, and, looking round, saw his uncle rolling down a slope covered with Alpine rose bushes and then fall over a sheer pitch about 30 feet high. **Mr. Tatham, jun.**, immediately summoned assistance from the Montanvert. **Mr. S. F. Staffurth, A.C.**, with his guides and **Miss Mudd** of the Ladies' A.C., hurried to the spot, but it was soon apparent that life was extinct, the skull being fractured.

Mr. Tatham was an experienced climber and was formerly a prominent athlete and one of the best exponents of the 'Wall' game.

On August 8, **Herr Graf**, engineer of Meran, had just untied himself on the summit of the **Königspitze** when he broke through the cornice and fell many hundreds of feet on to the Sulden Glacier.

On August 15, **Signori G. Bompadre, A. Castelnovo**, and **P. Sommaruga**, of the C.A.I., went up from Macugnaga to a bivouac on the rocks of the Nord End, about 3,700 m. (considerably higher than the Marinelli hut), to make the ascent of the **Macugnaga face of the Nord End**. They started next morning and have not since been heard of. The weather on the morning

of the 16th became threatening, and the same night a great storm broke, lasting for two days.

A search party left Macugnaga on the afternoon of the 17th, and on the 18th the guides, notwithstanding the bad weather, reached the bivouac, where they found the blankets and a sack containing clothing.

On the 22nd a caravan of guides, led by Clemente Imseng, reached the summit of the Nord End from the Swiss side, whence the two Zurbriggen descended, by means of a 200-metre rope, on the Macugnaga side and carefully examined the face with glasses. The guides C. and B. Jacchini and Francesco Delponte ascended meanwhile from the Marinelli hut to a height of about 4,250 m., and when descending found in the Nord End couloir, a confluent of the Marinelli couloir, a sack belonging to Castelnuovo, open and containing only some woollen gloves. Owing to bad weather the search could only be continued on the 23rd and 24th, when the rocks on both sides of the couloir were examined, but without result.

Several colleagues of the climbers joined in the search, and they speak in the highest manner of the devotion and willing assistance of the Macugnaga guides and porters.

The unfortunate climbers had reconnoitred the ground on the 8th and 9th of the month, and are said to have announced their intention to descend by the same way, which has never yet been done. No doubt the accident may in part be put down to the bad weather, but it is extremely probable that this gigantic face, the ascent of which under favourable conditions and by a well-trained party is one of the most serious expeditions in the Alps, was, in a summer like the last, never in fit condition to warrant its ascent without a very considerable risk.

As no trace of the bodies was found, it is possible that the climbers were forced to bivouac a second time and succumbed to the violence of the storm.

It cannot be too strongly urged that an expedition of this magnitude imperatively demands that the rocks shall be dry (for it is for the greater part of the way a rock climb), the weather perfect, and the climbers thoroughly experienced and in first-rate condition.

The routes on this face are shown in a diagram in Bollettino xxvii. page 51. The right-hand route is the line followed by Ferdinand Imseng, the leader on the first ascent in 1876, and more or less by Daniel Maquignaz, the leader of an English expedition in 1898, and is, under good conditions, safe from falling stones and ice. The left-hand route is, however, preferred by Mattias Zurbrücken, who led on the second ascent in 1893, and who has since repeated it once or twice, although this line appears more exposed in its lower portion and is described by Dr. Kugy, who made the ascent with Zurbrücken and Joseph Croux in 1906, as very dangerous from falling stones.

In any case the ascent even under good conditions is very long and makes great demands on the endurance of the party, although the technical difficulties when the mountain is in good condition are not so serious as might be expected.

On September 8, **Herr Hans Dürr**, of Innsbruck, described as an experienced and very careful climber, aged thirty-two, set out from the **Alphaus**, intending to follow the somewhat difficult arête from the **Hochwand** to the **Karkopf**, in the **Mieminger Gebirge**. His body was discovered next day about 200 metres down on the N. face of the **Karkopf** by **Herren Ernst Clément** and **Blaschke**, members of a numerous body of friends forming the search-party.

On September 8, a young Viennese, **Leopold Rudolf**, was leading in an ascent of the difficult N. face of the **Hochthor** in the **Ennsthal**. When close to the top he suddenly fell and was dashed to pieces, his companion being only saved from sharing his fate by the breaking of the belayed rope.

ACCIDENT IN THE LAKE DISTRICT

On September 26, **Mr. Thomas James Rennison**, aged twenty-nine, of **Kirkby Stephen**, **Westmorland**, was killed while attempting the ascent of the **Eagle's Nest** ridge on the **Great Gable**.

The party consisted of **Mr. Fred Botterill**, **Mr. Oliver Thorneycroft**, **Mr. Fred Aldous**, and **Mr. Rennison**.

Mr. Botterill had made the ascent five times previously and had led on four of these occasions, but in this instance **Mr. Rennison** was leading by his own wish, **Mr. Botterill** being second on the rope. When about 200 feet up and some 12 feet above the belay where **Mr. Botterill** stood, and just at the worst part of the climb, **Mr. Rennison** slipped and fell some 200 feet, being picked up in **Needle Gully** with his neck broken.

The rope, which is described in evidence as an ordinary climbing rope, 80 feet long, and as having been eighteen months in use and a little worn, broke between **Mr. Rennison** and **Mr. Botterill**, but **Mr. Botterill** expressed the opinion that even a new rope would have broken under the circumstances.

It will be noted that in three of the accidents described in this number has a belayed rope failed to ensure the safety of the leader.

NEW EXPEDITIONS IN 1909.

Eastern Graians.

PUNTA VACHÈRES OF THE NEW ITALIAN ALPINE CLUB MAP (no height given, but probably about 10,000 ft.). *August 10.*—**Mr. George Yeld**, with **Benjamin Pession**, of **Val Tournanche**, went up from **Cogne** by way of **Gimillian** and the **Testa Chaplane** (2,673 m.) of the **New Map** to the ridge between the **Grauson** and the **Arpisson** valleys. They ascended a point on that ridge (possibly that marked 3,033 m. on the **New Map**, though they think that their point was probably higher and nearer to the **P. Vachères**), and subsequently went up the **P. Vachères** itself. Approximate time, 5 hours. They could see nothing higher than their second point