

*E. F. Neve, photo.*

ARMUNG VALLEY,

*Swan Electric Engraving Co., Ltd.*

WELL HEAD SAC PASS IN THE DISTANCE

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PEAKS AND GLACIERS OF MT. KOLAHOI.

BY DR. ERNEST F. NEVE.

VISITORS to Pahlgam, the well-known hill station in the Lidar Valley, often ask whether Mt. Kolahoi can be seen from the camping ground. If we go to the upper part of the pine-clad slope and look to the N., a double-pointed summit, with a steep snow slope on the east side, comes into view. This is the S. peak. And it stands directly in front of the N. peak, thus obscuring the latter from view. Three miles below Pahlgam however, from a point 200 ft. above the river on the right bank, the whole of the chief peaks of Mt. Kolahoi are visible, the N. peak appearing as a pyramid just to the left of the Buttress Peak.

From Pahlgam, travelling due N., the top of the Armiung Pass can be reached in about four hours. Standing on the crest we look across a steep and narrow valley, the slopes of which are covered with rocky debris, above which tower mighty cliffs. Those on the S. side form the buttresses of the Har Nag Peak. Those facing us to the N. are the southern cliffs of the Kolahoi massif. Above them are tiers and tiers of precipices with glacier-polished tops and terraces of snowfield, until high up against the blue sky stand the white slopes of the S. peak, culminating in two rocky points, of which that to the E. is somewhat the higher. At the upper end of the

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Armiung valley, which lies at our feet, we see that the cliffs on either side converge to form a pass, on the N. side of which lies the upland valley of Har Nag. This is the key to all attempted ascents of Mt. Kolahoi. For on this side of that mountain it is possible to pitch a base camp as high as 14,000 ft., on a ridge which faces S. and which is therefore free of snow by the middle of June. Juniper bushes too, from which we obtain firewood, grow on the slopes up to 12,500 ft. From the base camp, a short climb, first on the snow slope above the eastern glacier and then up the eastern icefall, places us on the great Kolahoi snowfield.

The conditions this year were peculiar. In the winter and early spring, there had been unusually heavy falls of snow. But in the late spring and early summer it was very dry and remarkably hot. As a result, on the northern slopes and in valleys and hollows with a northern aspect, the snow was deep and abundant. But on southern inclines, owing to the intense sun heat, there was much less snow than usual. This was favourable for climbing, as crevasses and the spaces between séracs were obliterated and the deep snow on steep slopes, when slightly softened by the sun, made traversing easy. In the afternoon, however, the snow becomes very soft and small avalanches tend to start. The snowfield this year presented a remarkably rippled appearance, like that of the sand on the sea shore, but with depressions from nine inches to a foot and a half in depth. This also was evidently due to the prolonged spell of hot sunshine, which had exaggerated the usual markings.

On June 21 we made a successful ascent of the S. peak, previously unclimbed. The party consisted of Lt. Mason, R.E., of the Trigonometrical Survey, myself and two Goorkhas trained by Major Bruce—Kul Bahadur and Log Bahadur. Both of these have a serviceable knowledge of snowcraft and are steady climbers.

We left the base camp at 5.40. This was intentionally late to allow of the action of the sun on the frozen snow and obviate the necessity for step-cutting on moderate slopes. On reaching the snowfield, we turned to the left and climbed at a gentle incline, with our faces southward until 6.40, when we reached the eastern corner of the extensive bergschrund which stretches along the whole of the north face of the peak. We now traversed on very steep snow above the south corner of the eastern icefall. The snow was in excellent condition. We reached the eastern snowslope at 7.25. This is prolonged



*E. F. Neve, photo.*

SOUTH PEAK,  
FROM HAR NAG PASS.

*Swan Electric Engraving Co., Ltd.*

steeply upwards, with a deep cornice on the N. side until it joins the rocky arête, a few hundred feet from the top. Striking across the foot of this to the S.W. we came to a mass of rocks from which a steep ridge extends up the S. face of the mountain. Climbing up this and occasionally working out to our right on to the steep snow slope, and back again on to the rocks where they were practicable, we reached the eastern arête at 8.30. Almost at once we crossed a hanging patch of snow, heavily corniced on the right, and then kept along the arête till 9 A.M. when we had breakfast. From this point there is a steep rock climb with a precipice on the right surmounting snow and a deep drop on the left among rocks. The hand-hold was excellent. Keeping close to the edge on the S. side of the arête, we reached the summit at 10.30. The point on which we found ourselves lies to the N. of the other and is separated from it by a formidable gap 400 ft. deep. The formation is trap, streaked with courses of quartz. We built a cairn on the top.

From this point the N. peak looks immense. It is fully 1000 feet higher and its corniced snow cap is very conspicuous. Facing us were two snow-filled gullies from two to three thousand feet in height.

The following day Captain Corry, R.E., and Lieutenant Squires, starting from our camp on the snowfield, made an attempt on this peak. The weather was beautiful. They climbed first on the N. side and then traversing the snow, to the S. side of the couloir which rests against the eastern arête, they ascended the rib on that side of the gully, following my route until they arrived on the E. arête. They then kept just below this, zigzagging back when they got too low. Traversing the snow patch below the big vertical gendarme they reached the ridge again. About 100 ft. from the top they came to an awkward gendarme which gave trouble. The rest was fairly easy until they came to the final snow patch, which was heavily corniced and in bad condition with a tendency to avalanche. The peak became enveloped in cloud and very reluctantly they had to abandon the ascent, although only, they believe, about 30 ft. from the summit.

On June 22 Lieutenant Mason and I descended from the Kolahoi snowfield in a northerly direction to the line of cliffs which bound the N. glacier on the E. Leaving this ridge on our left we walked and glissaded down the steep snow slopes and emerged in a valley to the S. of Mt. Harbagwan just above and to the E. of the terminal icefield of the united N. and W. glaciers.

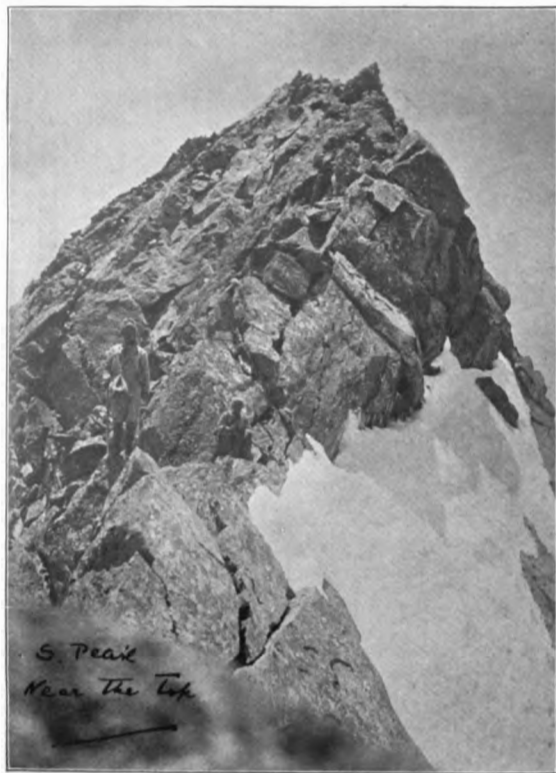
I camped for the night below the snout of the glacier and next day I crossed the Lidar river on a snow bridge immediately below the ice cave from which the stream issues and climbed the left lateral moraine for 500 ft. The scenery here was charming. There were bushes of pink rhododendron in full blossom, the *Primula rosea* formed sparkling patches, and the cliffs were clothed with birches.

To surmount the second icefield I was compelled by impassable séracs to climb the snow-covered slopes of the left bank for 1500 ft. The phenomenon of red snow was unusually abundant—large areas of snowfield presenting a pale claret colour. There were no red rocks in the vicinity, indeed the colouration was quite marked on the crest of ridges far away from the possibility of contamination.

Above the second icefall is an icefield, to the S. of which stands the pyramidal peak of Mt. Kolahoi, rising 5000 ft. from the ice. From this point two arêtes can be seen—the E. and N. And on the W. a rib runs down steeply. To the E. of the peak is the N. glacier, an account of which I gave in the February number of the JOURNAL, 1910.

The north arête of Mt. Kolahoi splits at about 2000 ft. above the mouth of the western glacier into two branches, which include a small steep tributary glacier. The colour of the peak is dark grey. The strike is N.W. The rock formation is extraordinarily stable. On the great snowfield above there is no rocky debris, but at the foot of the E. arête there is a collection of small rocks and shaly detritus. To the N. and W. the glaciers are wonderfully free of rocks. Those which have come down are small. The fragments are polymorphous, many of them with sharp edges and extremely hard, giving a metallic ring if struck. Some are basalt but most are trap. Purple, pale jade green and dark grey are the common colours, with here and there a reddish brown mass stained with iron. Few of the moraine blocks exceed 20 cubic feet in size. There is evidently very little disintegration going on. Doubtless the extreme steepness of the sides keeps the rocks dry and saves them from the influence of melting and freezing snow. Mt. Kolahoi in its stability presents a marked contrast to the cliffs on the right bank of the Lidar, a few miles lower down, where massive rocks have fallen in abundance.

To the W. is another glacier, which, so far as I am aware, has never been described. This glacier, at its mouth, is about one third of a mile across. It is considerably longer than the N. glacier, but much less steep. Above its junction with the



*E. F. Neve, photo. Swan Electric Engraving Co., Ltd.*  
SOUTH PEAK, NEAR THE TOP.



*E. F. Neve, photo. Swan Electric Engraving Co., Ltd.*  
WEST SIDE OF MT. KOLAHOI.

latter it has two icefalls. It is bounded on the W. by a ridge with an outstanding peak. The width here is about half a mile.

This year, owing to the exceptional amount of snow, the crevasses of the lower icefall were almost obliterated and the séracs of the upper icefall were easily passable, there being numerous snow bridges.

Above these is a snowfield about one mile in length, completely isolating the Kolahoi massif from all mountain ridges to the W. The snow runs right over to the S. and joins the névé of the southern aspect, to the W. of Mt. Kolahoi. The W. side of the peak is very impressive. It stands up 4000 ft. with extremely steep couloirs fissured by bergschrunds.

The S. arête is very jagged and peaked, the angles being filled with corniced snow. The axis of the whole peak is from S. to N. with an inclination of 10° to the E.

This is the first time that I have obtained a near view of this mountain from the W. And as seen from this side, it fully maintains its grim and forbidding aspect. As a result of this year's exploration I feel absolutely convinced that the only possible route for the ascent is from the E. and that it is, in fact, the one which I have already described in this JOURNAL (Nos. 157 and 187).

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#### SOME CLIMBS IN TYROL.

BY W. INGLIS CLARK.

(Read before the Alpine Club, February 7, 1911.)

NO true lover of the mountains finds his sole pleasure in the mere difficulties of mountain ascents. The threading of complicated seracs, the crossing of bergschrunds, the traverse of knife-edge arêtes, the surmounting of rocky pinnacles or faces, all unite in bringing out the man in us and leave lasting memories of the most glorious description. But in addition to these physical and moral joys, do not the contrast of blue sky and snowy dome, the faint blues of distant ranges, the rosy hues of sunrise and sunset stir within us poetic depths and afford delights as keen as any? And is not the very boldness and defiance of the mighty ridges tenfold enhanced by the rich colouring of foreground and flower? All of us grant