

came a moraine of a rather different nature ending in a plain of detritus and of soft deposit, stretching for 600 yards across the top of the lake, forming in fact the pleasant site on which we were encamped. It seemed to me that this soft deposit was not only slowly subsiding, but was also being washed away. For this reason the lake appeared to be losing its volume. Much of the level was swampy; seepage and underground drainage also drew away much of the water. The head of the lake showed that a good deal of water had been lost as there was a stretch of level, marshy land with grass and a little undergrowth. Below the end of the lake, the ground fell away rapidly and, as the stream was the natural outlet of the lake, the former drained away most of the water. It was the subsidence of the moraine and its failure to hold up the water supply that reduced the area of the Atar Sar.

We descended very rapidly down a valley becoming abundantly wooded as we reached lower levels; we then turned S. joining the main Ishkoman river and the customary route over the Ishkoman Pass and by the Holojut uplands.

There was nothing difficult about this journey, and we were able to see unknown valleys which, undoubtedly, would repay further exploration. It is true that the Atro Sar has been surveyed by an Indian surveyor for the new map of the country, but it will be realized how much more there is to do beyond what comes within a surveyor's province. In summer shepherds and their families live close to the mouth of the lake and numerous animals are left to graze near by. It is not an ideal pasture, however, as the moraines are dangerous for horses and cattle and there is much swampy terrain. None of these considerations struck the Ishkomans, although some mention of damage to their animals was made.

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#### AVALANCHE DAYS IN THE OBERSULTAL.

BY P. J. H. UNNA AND N. S. FINZI.

THE Gross Venediger is probably the finest of the more popular ski tours in the Eastern Alps, the traverse from Vent to Sölden by way of the Wildspitze, perhaps excepted. It is said that there is no reasonably safe approach to the former from the S. by the Frosnitzal, and it is more ordinarily reached from the Oberpinzgau, the Obersulztal and Kürsinger hut providing the most direct route. Willy Koller, however, suggests in his *Ski Guide* that the longer way round by the Krimmlertal and Warnsdorfer hut, and so over the Krimmlertörl, may be safer. In any case, the latter route includes a pass, and so increases the interest of the trip by enabling one to return down a different valley; and it must be well worth taking if the Krimml falls, and the almost tediously flat valley above, are as beautiful in winter as in summer. Incidentally, the Krimmler Tauernhaus is

open all the year round, on account of the cows; but the pastures at the very head of the valley belong to the Pustertal, and the cows using them have to cross the new frontier twice a year.

The experiences detailed in this note, however, are confined to the Obersulztal and the Kürsinger hut. Describing this valley in the ascending direction, it starts between Wald-in-Pinzgau and Neukirchen, and runs a little E. of S. until its head opens out into the large flat and uncrevassed basin of the Obersulzbachkees. Baedeker allows  $6\frac{1}{2}$  hours to the Kürsinger, but 8, or even more may be required in winter, according to the state of the snow. The lower part of the valley is thickly wooded up to Berndlalm, and then comes an open level stretch, taking an hour or so, to Postalm. There are inns at both these places; but that at Berndlalm is the only one open in winter, and even it remains closed until the Kürsinger becomes fully *bewirtschaftet*. The Obersulzbach hut, just beyond Postalm, is not used at all in summer, but acts as a convenient halfway house in winter—key required.

About midway between the Obersulzbach and Kürsinger huts one comes abreast of the snout of the Obersulzbachkees. The upper part of this glacier has already been mentioned. It stretches from the Venediger in the E. to the Krimmlertörl in the W.; and, so to speak, crosses the T, of which the lower part of the glacier in the valley proper forms a stunted and comparatively narrow tail, but half a mile wide. This tail is bounded on the left (E.), throughout its length, by scree surmounted by a steep rock cliff known as the Keeslahnerwand. The Kürsinger hut is at the top of the far (S.) end of this cliff. Abreast of the hut the ice leaves the basin and starts to flow down the valley, being broken up into an icefall for the first part of its descent. This icefall is descriptively called the Türkischer Zeltstadt, and was probably so named not long after the time when the Turks were encamped on the outskirts of Vienna in 1683.

When one reaches the snout on the way up, one has a choice of four routes to the hut, two by paths up the Keeslahnerwand, and two by the glacier. The new path, in places cut out of the rock, is never used in winter; but the hut porters when ascending follow the old one, as they find it saves them half an hour, although they have to carry up the cliff. The glacier routes are only used in winter, and both involve the problem of the icefall. One, not ordinarily used, passes up the middle of the glacier, to the right (W.) of the séracs. The only first-hand information about it is that it was followed some Easterns ago by B. L. Hallward's party in ignorance of any alternative way, and that serious difficulty was experienced in getting through the crevasses.

The ordinary winter route, boomed throughout from one hut to the other, keeps to the left (E.) of the icefall, which forces one into a groove between its séracs on the right and the Keeslahnerwand on the left. This groove soon comes to a dead end formed by the

almost vertical face of a sérac (1935); and one then has to negotiate the lower part of a 70 or 80 ft. snow slope, guessed at 40° near its top, and presumably lying on scree. After this one immediately arrives at the level snows of the upper part of the glacier and then, after bearing to the left, leaves the ice as soon as the hillside eases off sufficiently. One thus ascends to the level of the hut, which is then reached by doubling back to the left.

The groove is about 1000 ft. below the hut; and it was in getting out of it on Saturday, March 9, 1935, that Pius Ensmann, guide and *Wirt* of the hut and two hut porters, Alois Nindl and Vital Zwiknagl, lost their lives in circumstances which will be explained later. The accident was due to a slab avalanche on the slope already mentioned, and which appears in photographs 1 and 2: photograph 1 was taken from the place where the séracs start to force the ordinary winter route to the left, from glacier to groove. It looks south, towards the icefall. The upper end of the Keeslahnerwand—the end just below the hut—appears on the left, and the upper part of a track emerging from the groove is visible on the snow below. The lower part of this track will be seen in photograph 2, which is a close-up of the groove, and also looks south. The latter shows the dead end to the groove, and the load of one of the porters some distance away with Finzi beyond, and on the right some skis and sticks of the party which came to grief. The scar and débris resulting from the avalanche are not visible, having been covered by fresh snow much trampled upon in the process of recovering the bodies. The boom at the upper end of the footsteps is just at the start of the level track beyond. Both photographs were taken on the Monday afternoon, after the bodies had been sledged away.

The story is this:—On Tuesday, March 5, 1935, S. Bacon, C. B. D. Campbell, R. de Martin, B. R. Goodfellow, N. S. Finzi and P. J. H. Unna skied from the Obersulzbach hut to the Kürsinger. As the latter hut would not be fully opened for the season until the 10th, and was officially described as being provisioned in only a simple manner, we had taken the precaution, before leaving Wald on the 4th, of telephoning to Ensmann at Neukirchen to ask if there would be enough to eat, and were assured that there was plenty. The weather conditions were bad, for there had been a heavy snowfall a week before, with low cloud and intermittent snow ever since; but fairly good time had been maintained through the deep untracked snow, largely owing to the adoption of a five minutes' routine.

As this routine seems to have been ignored in mountaineering literature, it may be worth while digressing to discuss it, for it prevents the speed of a fairly uniform party under bad snow conditions from dropping much below that of the slowest member under good ones. One man acts as timekeeper, a substitute taking on that job when he is leading; and each man in turn leads for exactly five minutes and then steps aside and falls in at the tail end. While he is leading he goes all out, hard enough to get thoroughly blown by



*Photo, P. J. H. Unna.]*

(1) LOOKING S.E. TOWARDS TÜRKISCHER ZELTSTADT. MARCH 11, 1935.

*[To face p. 324.*



*Photo, P. J. H. Unna.]*

(2) IN THE GROOVE, LOOKING S.E. March 11, 1935.



*Photo, P. J. H. Unna.]*

(3) GROSS VENEDIGER FROM KIRSINGER HUT, LOOKING S.E. BY E. AFTER SNOWFALL AND BEFORE GALE. MARCH 7, 1935.



*Photo, P. J. H. Unna.]*

(4) GROSS VENEDIGER. MARCH 9, AFTER GALE.

*[To face p. 325.]*

the end of his spell. The track he cuts may be by no means perfect for the second man, but becomes quite good going for the rest. If the party be large enough there is ample time for recovering one's wind before one works back into second place. The speed of the party will be the average of that of its members going all out for five minutes each, and that speed will be appreciably greater than anything possible with odd members casually leading until they feel inclined for a rest ; but if one man is so much faster than the others that he would naturally do all the tracking, the routine may not pay. The procedure of changing rounds involves a loss in distance made good equal to the length of the party—distance from first to last man—per cycle. This is inappreciable with an unroped party in close order, but may not be so when ropes have to be used ; and then a simple calculation will show whether the routine is worth adopting or not. In any case, it will often make it possible to eliminate much of the slowing down effect of deep soft snow ; and at times this may be of considerable importance. For instance, if a party were marooned at the Concordia in winter, it might make all the difference on a dash being made for the Jungfrauoch.

To return to the subject, we found the hut in charge of a solitary caretaker, Josef Reichegger, and his small tan dog. He said that he had been there since the beginning of February, that there had been but one fine day, and that the hut had only been visited by four pairs of tourists ; and yet in spite of this, provisions were definitely scarce. The following morning we started for the Gross Venediger in still air and under a clear sky ; but pronounced mare's tails soon formed, resulting in snow. We held on for a bit, however, so as to cut a track for future use, but were forced to turn after two hours' going in all. As the snow conditions seemed safe, we were able to use the summer path on leaving the hut, instead of descending a bit to get on to the glacier at once, as is often preferable in winter.

The next day, Thursday, was not much better at the hut, but half the party, being near the end of their holidays, went down, getting into sunshine below the groove, while Campbell, Finzi and Unna stayed behind, hoping for another try at the Venediger. In the first instance Goodfellow was the only one who intended to go down, and said he would like to be accompanied to the groove, so as to be seen safely through. We all agreed, and as this shows that we already had doubts about this place, it may be of interest to record what we did there on the way up. We came across the groove quite unexpectedly, when in close order ; and the front men found that the powder snow, resting on hard, gave no grip for their skis. All that could be done in the way of spreading out was for the last two men to stay where they were until the others were clear of the slope ; but we all had to take our skis off, in order to get up the slope, quite apart from any question of safety. The groove was thus negotiated by the whole of our party on the Tuesday, and by half of our party on their way down on the Thursday ; and also by

two porters we had hired, who followed us up independently on the first day and went down the same afternoon. There was, however, deep powder snow both in the groove and everywhere else—a very different state of affairs from those existing later, when the accident happened.

A temporary clearing up was followed by some more snow and a really strong N.E. wind, which starting on the Friday evening, did not blow itself completely out till Sunday morning. Photographs 3 and 4 show the Venediger as seen from the hut, the former on the Thursday evening before the wind, and the latter on the Saturday after the rocks of the Venediger had been stripped bare, and those on the glacier plastered with drift. Slopes exposed to the full strength of the wind were blown safe, but the reverse was the case with those sufficiently but not entirely sheltered.

In fact we could not have been far from coming to grief on the Saturday afternoon. After lunch we started to walk towards the lower point, 3033 m., of the Keeskögl. We kept to the right (E.) of the ridge which runs straight down to the hut, and got into a corrie with a 300 or 400 ft. slope leading up to some rocks, intending to round the rocks and so regain the ridge. Unna had been photographing, and so got a bit behind Finzi and Campbell, who were tracking straight up the slope, breaking the crust upwards with their knees. The two latter began to have doubts about the slope, but Unna shouted out that it looked all right, so they went on towards the rocks. Just as they reached their foot the whole crust parted an inch or two away from the rocks with a cracking noise; but luckily for Unna, who was still behind, and so not clear, it steadied after its initial movement. Nevertheless it must have been a pretty near thing, and was, at all events, near enough to make us turn back. We should probably have been wiser to have kept to the fully crusted snow on the ridge, in spite of the wind. It was, in fact, extremely cold, not only because of the wind, which had partially died down, but also owing to actual low temperature; the thermometer outside the hut reading 4° F. when we got back at 3.20 P.M. This temperature is worthy of note in view of what was happening below at the moment.

It has already been mentioned that provisions were short. Actually the six of us had almost eaten out the hut during the two nights we were all there, but we had hopes. Porters were expected to arrive on the Friday, and be followed by Ensmann on the Saturday; and the caretaker had orders to make tracks down the old summer path, to help the laden men up the Keeslahnerwand. As it turned out he made tracks on the Friday, Saturday and Sunday, those made on the first two days soon filling up. No one arrived on the Friday, and it was assumed that all would come up together on the Saturday. When, on the Saturday, there was still no sign of the party, it was assumed that the journey had been broken at the Obersulzbach hut for the benefit of Frau Ensmann, who might also be coming. These

surmises on the part of the caretaker were correct to the extent that husband and wife, with two porters, did start together, and did break the journey, sleeping at the *Jagdhütte* at Postalm; but they actually started on the Friday, and so should have arrived on the Saturday. Further, they came by the groove and not by the old summer path, to save Frau Ensmann from having to carry up the rocks; and it is probable that only bad luck prevented the caretaker, possibly because he was too early, or on account of mist or driving snow, from seeing their track up the glacier when he was on the Keeslahnerwand on Saturday morning. In the meantime, cheese, butter, meat, eggs and other justifiable necessaries were all finished; and the caretaker's dog, not so much on account of his unpronounceable name or his particular colour, but because of his probable fate, was rechristened 'Schnitzel.'

By 10 o'clock on Sunday morning it looked as if it had really succeeded in clearing up, and towards 11 we started out for a peep over the Obersulzbachtörl. On leaving the hut we were rather puzzled by a one-man track on the glacier; but this was almost immediately explained. An Austrian arrived with the news of the accident to Ensmann's party, he and his friend having found Frau Ensmann partly buried in the snow on the floor of the groove, and guarded over by a St. Bernard, who had kept her warm during the terrifically cold 24 hours she had been lying there. They had removed her from the shade of the séracs, and then one of them had come up for help. A few minutes later the caretaker arrived back from his daily tracking, and, with a couple of shovels, pricker, skis and sticks in his arms, ran down a steep gully leading almost directly to the groove. Meanwhile we collected other gear including ten blankets, all of which were required to keep Frau Ensmann warm.

As it is doubtful whether the average layman knows much about handling the medical side of rescue work, it may be of use to detail what Dr. Finzi considered the correct treatment; it being remembered that Frau Ensmann had not only been lying out in the cold for 24 hours, but had had nothing to eat for 30, and so was naturally very exhausted. The first food, given at once, consisted of lump sugar with plain water. At the Obersulzbach hut it was followed by rum and hot tea in which a raw egg had been beaten up. On testing her by asking which finger or toe he was touching, Finzi found no real frostbite in the fingers; and there was no other trouble requiring immediate treatment. On the other hand, Frau Ensmann did not get off entirely unharmed; for she is now lame in one leg, possibly owing to the accident. In all probability she would not have survived had the dog not kept her warm.

All three men were completely buried; their bodies were dug out while the Austrians went to fetch a sledge from the Kürsinger. They were all within a few yards of the spot where Frau Ensmann was found. The party, in the order of porter, wife, husband, porter, all close together, and the first three carrying, but the last

on skis, had been traversing upwards across the slope and had almost reached the boom when the slide occurred. Consequently they could only have been buried by the snow from the upper part of a slope no more than 70 or 80 ft. high from top to base. The thickness of the slab was not ascertained, for both scar and track entering it had been drifted up flush, and were only rendered discernible by a contrast in colour so slight that it was not noticed till the Monday. The leading porter was buried 5 ft. deep, but Ensmann's head was only one foot under, while the other porter was at an intermediate depth. Frau Ensmann escaped complete burial by having landed on a lump of ice. She was able to work one arm free, and clear the snow from her face but, as usual, the débris were comparatively hard, and so she could not release herself any further. Otherwise she would have been able to save her husband, who was groaning for a long time and could have been easily found, especially with the help of the dog. In any case, Finzi is of opinion that he had not been dead so very long when he first saw him, a point worth noting by all who may have to dig for their companions in the future.

Campbell did not stop long at the groove, but went almost straight away to Neukirchen for help, arriving there about 5.30 p.m. The caretaker told him to apply at the police station; and the policeman whom he found off duty, did the right thing, going home to change into uniform so as to be able to give his orders with the requisite authority.

Before going down with Frau Ensmann to the Obersulzbach hut, we broached the pack of one of the porters, so as to obtain some lunch and enough to eat for the night; the St. Bernard did likewise, having a good meal off the end of a projecting joint, the rest of which became *Schweinskottelette* the next day. We soon met two other Austrians who lent a hand with the sledge; and at the hut we found a dozen or so people staying there on their way to the Kürsinger. So effectively did those at Neukirchen get to work that the first detachment of the rescue party arrived at the Obersulzbach hut before eleven in the evening. Others continued to dribble in, and the whole party, numbering about 20, with three sledges, was assembled there by three in the morning. They were all young Austrians of a noticeably fine type. Most of them went on at daybreak to fetch the bodies while some started down with Frau Ensmann, the dog acting as escort. The behaviour of the latter had been most striking. As each of us in turn approached Frau Ensmann at the groove, Bari met us with angry barking; but as soon as he was assured that we meant no harm, he introduced us with wags of his tail. Not only that, but he came and shook hands of his own accord before turning in for the night, and again before leaving in the morning. He belongs to Herr Forstrat Müllauer of Bischofshofen, and was presumably being taken up to the Kürsinger for a run in the snow. Now he is in possession of a medal inscribed 'Dem tapferen Lebensretter: Der Wiener Tierschutzverein.'

After breakfast we started back for the Kürsinger to fetch our own and Campbell's things. We found catering in full swing at lunch time, the caretaker having apparently got from Frau Ensmann the keys of the store cupboards, of whose existence we had been suspicious, to supplement those items from the porters' loads which had by now been taken on to the hut. The place moreover was filling up, not only with those we had already met, but also with others coming from the Warnsdorfer. When we left in the afternoon



*Photo, P. J. H. Unna.]*

#### BARI.

to join Campbell at Wald, Schnitzel was answering to his new name which recent arrivals had assumed to be his correct one.

It was late in the afternoon when we passed Postalm; and while we were on the level stretch between there and Berndlm we counted no fewer than eleven fresh snow avalanches started by the setting sun from the rocks above the path, which keeps to the E. side of the valley. They were, however, of little consequence, for they merely trickled down the long slope between the rocks and the path. Although one or two shoots of old débris had nearly reached the path, and one large avalanche which fell about five minutes behind us possibly did reach it, it is probable that this place, which at first sight seems dangerous, is reasonably safe, except perhaps under really bad conditions; for the time the snow takes to run down the slope will generally be sufficient for anyone to dash up to a high point on the path.

Next morning we left for Innsbruck and the Dresdener hut; and

although the JOURNAL is not the place for giving free advertisements we scarcely like to ignore the hospitality we received at Herr Strasser's old-style hotel at Wald, where up-to-date bedrooms, heated and with running water, h. & c., appeared at only 1s. 6d. on the bill.

There are a good many points arising out of the Ensmann accident.

1. Poisoned meat, for instance, as a bait for foxes, illegal in Austria. In February 1934 the caretaker had a large dog, Schnitzel's predecessor, who ate some of this bait on the way up, and died before reaching the Kürsinger. His daily habit had been to run down to watch for parties coming up through the groove, and signal their approach to the hut by barking. Had he been still alive, we should, within a couple of hours of the accident, have realised that there was trouble below, and been in time to dig at least Ensmann out alive.

2. Whenever we attempted to discuss the safety of possible expeditions with the caretaker, we were met with the answer that the entire district was perfectly safe, no accident ever having happened there. This no doubt was typical of local opinion, presumably tainted with over-confidence.

3. It may account for the fact that wind crust met with before arrival at the groove did not dictate to Ensmann's party precaution at the one possibly dangerous place on the way up. The avalanche was only some 20 yards wide, and therefore open order of quite moderate extent would have ensured three people being available for digging out the fourth in the event of an accident. Further, while there is little reason to suppose that a slab will be much more likely to hold if only one man is on it at a time, there is nevertheless the possibility that the avalanche would not have come down if the second porter had taken off his skis. He could only have stepped on to the part which carried away just before it did so; but, on the other hand, the disturbance might have been started by the leading man, even at the very first moment he touched the dangerous part, for delayed action is not unknown—see 'B.S.Y.B.' 1934, pp. 338-9.

4. As already stated, the upper wind appeared to be N.E., but there could not have been sufficient north in it to place the upper part of the glacier in a lee, for it was blowing from the east over the ice. It is therefore not unreasonable to assume that there was a strong eddy round the corner near the groove, or turbulence caused by the said E. wind meeting a northerly current blowing up the valley. The resulting effect would most likely be heavy drift on the lower part of the slope, owing to shelter from the séracs, and wind slab of only moderate hardness above. This would account for the avalanche and for the subsequent drifting up of its scar.

5. Although there was such a short slope above, the party fared so badly because the avalanche had no clear run out, but merely piled up in the bed of the groove. Even quite a short slope may be dangerous if obstructed, as has been pointed out in 'B.S.Y.B.' 1934,

p. 339, where the effect of a char road—that to the Franz Senn hut—is noted in this respect. Other things being equal, a slope presents less danger if it eases off gradually.

6. Those who had removed their skis do not seem to have managed to keep to the surface of the sliding snow any better than the one who had maintained them. If this indicates anything, it means that while an individual with skis still on must be at a special disadvantage once he has come to a standstill, he may not necessarily be more helpless at the earlier stage.

7. The circumstances of this accident help to explode the local knowledge fallacy. At Swiss, if not Austrian, ski-ing centres one is apt to be gratuitously told that such and such a slope has a bad reputation, in the sense that one should suspect it without much regard to the conditions at the time. This may be plausible round about Christmas, when avalanches may strip the ground bare, but later on it becomes nonsense. Aspect, gradient and perhaps underlying ice are the only influential factors which do not vary, and local knowledge does not help in judging their effect.

8. The accident also tends to confirm what one previously imagined as to the value of guides to moderately experienced ski-ing parties. The strong probability is that no living person understands much about winter snow ; and that guides are of little use to experienced summer climbers engaged in ski-ing, even to those with but little winter experience. Where the native element does come in is after an accident, because it cannot be beaten in regard to stamina, handling of sledges and use of the long-handled continental shovels. Nevertheless, natives sometimes require supervision, even in rescue work. Thus, objection was once taken to a rope being hitched to the tail of a sledge loaded with a man who had broken his ankle. Whether the native thought an aspersion was being cast on his ability to control the sledge, or whether he did not understand the object of the rope, is difficult to say ; but the fact remains that it was a precaution which had to be insisted upon in order that reasonable speed might be maintained without the sledge taking charge at every small dip ; and as a matter of fact it would have done so. When rigging the sledge at the groove, the caretaker took a tail rope as a matter of course—in fact, he was most efficient throughout.

9. At first sight the proximity of the glacier might seem to indicate that the assumption that snow on ice is usually safe does not hold good ; but the probability is that if the slope at the groove were inspected in summer it would be found to be of scree, or possibly rock.

10. The accident revives a question which must have occurred repeatedly to all who use *bewirtschaftet* huts in winter. If one part of a much frequented approach becomes dangerous it is almost inevitable that it will trap one of the first parties making for the hut ; for it is asking rather too much of human nature to expect

that it will be systematically avoided until it becomes safe again, which may be a matter of days, or even of more than a week. Thus, if Ensmann had taken the old summer route, his porters would quite possibly have been involved on their way down by the groove; or else some of the Austrians would have been caught on their way up. The only safe remedy is for skiers to keep widely separated whenever there is the least possibility of dangerous places being encountered; and they should not rely on detecting each such place individually as it is approached, even on an orthodox route to a hut.

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TWO LEGENDS OF MONT BLANC.

By T. GRAHAM BROWN.

I. *The alleged ascent of the old Brenva Route by Courmayeur guides in 1854.*

A RECENT number of *Alpinisme*<sup>1</sup> refers to the claim that Courmayeur guides ascended the old Brenva route in 1854; a fable which apparently is accepted *without further criticism*!

The story had its origin in Alexis Clusaz, an old Courmayeur guide, who told it to the Abbé Henry. Alexis Clusaz was still a porter in 1857 (which may explain his absence from Ramsay's party in 1855: the information is from J. M. Chabod's *Führerbuch*); his enterprise is shown by the fact that he (together with Julien Grange and J. M. Perrod, both to be mentioned below) was a member of the party of five Courmayeur guides who repeated Whymper's ascent of the Grandes Jorasses (1865), two days after the first ascent, in order to learn the way; <sup>2</sup> he became the first *guide-chef* at Courmayeur when the Bureau des Guides was established officially in 1868. Clusaz was apparently an honest and sincere man, and the Abbé, an historian of sincerity, accepted the story and embodied it in his short pamphlet.<sup>3</sup> But Clusaz must have been an old man when he gave his account, and his memory must have been uncertain.

The Abbé Henry's pamphlet seems to be the sole authority for the story, and I have never been able to find any other reference to this alleged ascent in any of the places where one would naturally expect it to be mentioned—a general silence in itself sufficient to discredit the claim, even were there no other evidence against it. The party of guides on the alleged ascent consisted of Joseph Marie Chabod *dit* Turin, Alexandre Fenoillet *dit* Tutse, Joseph Marie Perrod *dit* Cacagnon, Gratién Bareux *dit* Saint Francei, Alexis Proment *dit* Gaccia, Joseph Marie Chabod *dit* Turisa (cousin to the

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<sup>1</sup> *Alpinisme*, No. 37, p. 33.

<sup>2</sup> Whymper: *Scrambles*, footnote, p. 344, 1871.

<sup>3</sup> L'Abbé Henry: *Les Premiers Guides de Courmayeur*, Aosta, 1908.