

quarts of wine each our pockets could not. We offered to buy the water which was brought up each day for cooking, so we were told, but this was also refused. An appeal to the all powerful and now not so genial Herr Sommer found him adamant. We were now more than impressed by the great care taken of the visitors' health. Necessity is the mother of invention. The difficulty was overcome by collecting water dripping from the melting snow at the eaves of our bedroom window. Risking lead or copper poisoning from the roof, we were each able to make up about a gallon of tissue fluid loss.

Having lost our sacks with crampons, cameras and spare clothing, we descended grudgingly to Grindelwald to refit. We felt it had been an unusual experience in August to skate one day, ski the next and climb on the third, to say nothing of a collapsed cornice.

The next day was a fine day wasted. Tom had to leave, as his holiday was over. Dick did not feel like more climbing. My other friends, not expecting me back, had gone up to a hut before my return. The fine weather had cleared Grindelwald alike of climbers and guides, so I was left with no companions at all. After three weeks' holiday I had done only two new *Viertausender* and felt thwarted and frustrated at wasting a fine day in the valley. After a day of fruitless searching for anybody at all to climb with, I met two Alpine Club members in the Bear hotel. One of them very decently offered to lend me his good guide who wanted to try the second ascent of the N. face of the Eiger with me. As this then had, and perhaps still has, a sinister reputation, and the weather might after all not be settled, I rather demurred at embarking on such a big climb with a total stranger who evidently had a flattering but exaggerated and erroneous opinion of my abilities. After some discussion he arranged for me to have as a companion a young man who hoped to become a guide. I was most grateful to those two members and their guide for this help, and went to bed full of optimism, with visions of an incipient Knubel to meet me in the morning.

(*To be continued*)

CHRISTIAN ALMER AND MELCHIOR ANDEREGG

By D. F. O. DANGAR

ON Wednesday, July 22, 1863, Messrs. H. B. George and R. J. S. Macdonald, accompanied by Christian Almer and Melchior Anderegg, made the first crossing of the Col du Tour Noir. This expedition has been regarded, wrongly, as the first occasion on which the two guides were associated.

In the obituary notice of George in *A. J.* 25. 530 *sqq.*, it is stated that the expedition was 'the first occasion on which Christian Almer and

Melchior Anderegg had combined forces.' The error is repeated in Anderegg's obituary in *A. J.* 29. 56 *sqq.*, where the writer states with reference to the expedition that it 'appears to have been, and probably was, the first occasion when Melchior Anderegg was associated with Christian Almer.'

Even Coolidge was unaware of the facts. In the 34th issue of the *S.A.C. Jahrbuch* he wrote an account of Almer's mountaineering career (pp. 199-224), subsequently issued in pamphlet form. In referring to the passage of the Col du Tour Noir he wrote, 'this was certainly the first occasion on which these two famous guides worked together.'

An examination of Moore's unpublished diary of his Alpine campaign in 1863, now in the possession of the Alpine Club, makes it quite clear that the Col du Tour Noir was by no means the first occasion on which the two guides cooperated, and that in the fortnight preceding July 22 they had taken part in an unsuccessful attempt to cross the Laquinjoch with Moore and George, an ascent of the Dom with Moore, and a crossing of the Col de Miage with Moore, George, Macdonald, R. M. Stephenson, and F. Morshead, Peter Perren also taking part in this expedition as Morshead's guide.

It may be of interest, therefore, to give a brief account of events between July 6 and July 10, in so far as they affect Almer and Anderegg.

On July 6, Moore accompanied by George and Almer met Anderegg at Iselle. His intention was to effect the passage of the Laquinjoch (at that time uncrossed by travellers) and, should time permit, to ascend the Weissmies from the pass. With these aims in view, the party passed that night at a chalet in the Laquintal. Starting at 3.15 next morning, they lost their bearings in a fog, keeping too much to the N., and much time was wasted. Eventually, at 12.30 P.M., George announced that he was seriously indisposed, and as Almer reported considerable difficulties ahead, the attempt was abandoned and the party returned to Simplon village (see *A. J.* 1. 135).

Moore had hopes of ascending the Laquinhorn, but next day Almer also was unwell. Moore therefore resolved to make for Saas by the shortest route and engaged a native, Joseph Dorsaz, to show the way. It soon became apparent that even this was too much for the sick men, and the party divided. George and Almer returned to Simplon to make their way by diligence to Visp and thence to Zermatt. Moore and Anderegg crossed to Saas by the Gamserjoch, dismissing Dorsaz on the pass.

The next day they crossed the Alphubeljoch. Moore was much impressed by the tremendous E. face of the Dom, the appearance of which dispelled a notion he had always entertained that 'it might be *possible* to ascend the peak from Saas.' The condition of the snow on the Fee Glacier involved heavy work for the leader, and eventually Moore persuaded Anderegg to change places with him and for the first time in his Alpine experience commenced making the steps. They descended to Randa, since Moore wished to ascend the Dom on the

following day. On the Zermatt-Randa road they encountered George and Almer on the way up from Visp. The former endeavoured, unsuccessfully, to persuade Moore to abandon the Dom in view of the unsettled weather. Although Anderegg was quite prepared to make the expedition without a second guide, Almer joined them and they passed that night at Randa. Moore's narrative of their ascent of the Dom is reproduced below.

Friday, 10th July. Weather, fair.

I awoke a little after midnight, and jumping up, looked out of window and was delighted to find a fine starlight night; having satisfied myself on this point, I got into bed again, but was too anxious and excited to sleep, so lay quiet, listening for signs of the guides being on the move; these I soon heard, but as no one came to call me, after some time I could stand it no longer, so getting up, was half dressed, in the dark, when Melchior came in to wake me, at 1.45 A.M. While breakfasting, I asked the waitress to get me some prunes to take with us, but she seemed a greater 'Dumppf' than ever, not having the slightest conception what I meant, although I used the correct German word, until I produced as an illustration a stray one which happened to be in my coat, and then brought a lot *stewed*, juice and all, for me to put in my pocket. However, that want being at last satisfactorily supplied, at 2.30 A.M. we started, Melchior carrying a lantern. The sky was blazing with stars, and the weather to my eyes appeared perfect, not a cloud or speck of mist being visible, but neither Melchior nor Almer were at all sanguine, declaring that the stars were *too* bright, and that they feared the day would not be perfectly fine, a vaticination which, it must be confessed, I paid little heed to. Melchior went in front with the lantern, but the darkness was so intense that, for all the good it was, that article might have been a hundred miles away; I have not the slightest notion in which direction we went, but it appeared to me that after scrambling over the roughest of ground, we were perpetually crossing from one bank to the other of a most objectionable torrent, for apparently no other purpose than by recrossing again forthwith to show our agility in gymnastic exercises. But, taking flying leaps in the dark from one rock to another in the midst of a roaring torrent, with of course very considerable odds in favour of missing the necessary foothold and slipping into the water, is not an amusement which anyone, except persons of a peculiarly constituted mind, would care to indulge in for long, and none of us were sorry to find ourselves eventually in the pine woods which clothe the slopes on the right bank of the Randaier Bach, a stream which flows from the Graben Glacier. Not that we gained much by the exchange, except on the principle that variety is charming, for the darkness was, if possible, blacker than before, while the ground was more or less perpendicular, and but for the trees, by which we were enabled sometimes to help ourselves up, I do not know how we should have managed. At length

we fell into what perhaps a person of great facetiousness, hard up for a joke, would have called a path, but which to us appeared the merest apology for one, although by daylight we might have better appreciated its merits ; however, such as it was, we followed it, and toiled upwards, with the consolatory reflection that if our way was steep, we rose with proportionate rapidity. At 4.30 A.M. we at last emerged from the woods, and deposited our lantern, it being now quite light. Straight in front of us was the inexpressibly beautiful pyramid of the Weiss-horn, apparently within pistol shot, seen from its base to the snow point forming the summit, bathed in a gorgeous crimson from the rays of the fast rising sun ; while away to the left was the still more wonderful obelisk of the Matterhorn, covered with more snow than I have ever before seen on its rugged flanks. The sky above was of an exquisitely pale blue, against which these two giants of the Alps stood out in marvellous beauty, forming a scene which can never be forgotten. The ground above the wood was rather less steep for some distance, but strewn with boulders which rendered the walking very laborious ; picking our way over them we skirted the hill side, always rising very rapidly, and having to encounter some ' *mauvais pas*,' until we were near the base of a line of precipices, which there was no obvious way of surmounting or avoiding. Melchior here seemed rather at a loss, which was not to be wondered, as he had only been on the mountain once before, five years ago with the Revd. Leslie Stephen ; accordingly telling Almer and myself to wait, he disappeared up the rocks on a voyage of discovery, leaving us seated on a rather uncomfortable ledge, where we had to look out to avoid slipping, and thereby reaching the valley below faster than would have been either desirable or agreeable. The rocks around, wherever there was a patch of soil, abounded in that curious plant *Edelweiss*, which is never found except in rather ungetatable places, and is consequently much sought after. Melchior's voice was at last heard, telling us that he had found the way and that we might therefore come on, so winding about over the precipitous ground, we made for a couloir, wide below, but gradually narrowing as it neared the top of the ridge. Great quantities of loose stones were lying about, and the ascent required some caution, but when about thirty feet from the top, the rocks shot up absolutely perpendicular, and at the very summit were actually overhanging, the only route being up a gully or ' *cheminée* ' of most uninviting aspect. Melchior however being gifted with certain catlike faculties, not usually found in the human race, had already reached the top of this diabolical looking place, and having fastened one end of the rope round his own waist, let down the other for me to be attached to, and having made himself fast, told me to come up somehow and ' *have no fear*.' The operation which ensued was certainly one more fitted for a professional chimney sweep than my humble self, but with my back against one side of the gully and my feet on the other, taking advantage of every crack or inequality of the rock, I managed pretty well until close to the top ; there however the rocks were beyond my powers, so leaving myself to the rope,



Moshead. Perren. Moore. George. Stephenson.
Melcher. Macdonald. Almer.

Chamounia, 21st July/63.

I was hauled up by Melchior, and landed like a bale of goods, my feet arriving at the surface almost before my head, panting, breathless, and feeling as though I should have the impression of a rope round my waist for the remainder of my life. Almer having joined us, we continued our march, over very steep ground, vegetation becoming more and more scanty, until all signs of it disappeared, and our course lay over a savage tract covered with stones, which brought us to the moraine on the right or northern bank of the Graben, or according to the Federal map, Festi Glacier. Following the remains of avalanches along the side of this for some distance, we at length scrambled to the top, and at 7.0 A.M. halted for breakfast; we fairly looked down upon the Théodule Pass, so that we had attained a height of considerably over 11,000 ft. before touching a glacier. The weather was still perfect, and the Weisshorn, on the opposite side of the valley, even more glorious than from below, so that we devoured our bread and butter in a state of bliss, having too the delicious consciousness, that we have fairly broken the neck of the ascent, although the work during the pull up from Randa had been the most severe and punishing I ever underwent. The Graben Glacier flows in a westerly direction from the very base of the final peak of the Dom, and after a not very long course, comes to a termination at a great height above the valley of St. Nicholas: its existence would scarcely be suspected from below, but a traveller passing from Randa to Zermatt, looking up at the cliffs, may see its snowy snout protruding over the rocks. Having put on the rope, at 7.30 A.M. we resumed our way, keeping towards the north bank of the glacier, and steering towards its north-east corner; the glacier was in beautiful condition, about an inch of fresh snow lying on the ice, which crunched pleasantly under the foot, as we pushed rapidly on, picking a way through the few crevasses that crossed our path. The ranges forming the right and left banks were not particularly fine, but the precipices of the Dom in front were magnificent, although the actual top of the mountain was concealed. As we advanced, the slope became steeper and finally led us to the foot of a steep ridge of rocks forming the north-eastern boundary of the glacier; there was considerable choice of route up these, none of them very fascinating, as the rocks were formidably steep, and covered with snow just sufficient to render the footing precarious. However, we set to work, and scrambling up, after many slips, none very serious, reached the crest of the ridge at 9.0 A.M., and found ourselves looking down upon the nevé of the Hohberg Glacier, on the opposite side of which rose the minor peaks of the Mischabel chain, known collectively as the Nadelgrat. We were now at an elevation of 12,327 ft., and had two routes to choose from, by which we might gain the summit; we might either follow the arête on which we were standing, which is one of the main ridges of the mountain, and forms the barrier between the Graben and Hohberg Glaciers, which latter flows down in a north-westerly direction from the very summit of the mountain, having for its right bank the range of the Nadelgrat, before mentioned, and after

circling round, until its course runs parallel with the Graben Glacier, terminates in a similar manner to that glacier, rather below Randa ; or we might descend upon this, and follow it up to its source. The arête would probably have afforded the shortest route, but all along it, we should have been most terribly exposed, and we were disgusted to see heavy clouds creeping up the valley of the Rhone, and threatening dirty weather ; Melchior shook his head, under these circumstances, and thought it would be better to follow the way where we should be most sheltered, which we of course made up our minds to do. There was evidently no time to lose, if we wished to attain our object, so we immediately set about looking for the best way down on to the Hohberg Glacier ; we had hit the ridge rather too far to the north, where it was impossible to get down, so turning to the right we scrambled round a most awkward ledge of rock, until we had gained a lower point, from which a steep snow slope led down to the glacier ; this was intersected by a considerable bergschrund, which we cleared by a leap, and found ourselves comfortably on the snowfield below. We crossed towards the Nadelhorn, passing under a very steep hanging glacier, coming down from the higher part of the ridge we had just left ; débris from this was lying about in profusion, and we should have been glad to hurry over this part of the route, but it was impossible to do so, as the glacier was much crevassed, rendering the constant use of the axe necessary to force a passage. Many anxious glances did Melchior cast at the threatening masses of ice overhead, urging us meanwhile to push on as speedily as possible, until the danger was left behind, and we had reached a comparatively smooth plain of snow, stretching away to the ridge connecting the Dom with the next peak to the left, marked 4167 metres, on the Federal map. I was under the impression that we should make for the col thus formed, and then keep up the arête to the summit, but after plodding over the snow for a short distance, we turned sharp to the right, and struck straight up the glacier slopes coming down from the northern ridge of the mountain. The climb which ensued was the most continuously steep and laborious I have ever done ; the slope was covered with fresh powdery snow, with not the slightest coherence, to the depth of about a foot, and being inclined at an average angle of, I should think, 40° , it was almost impossible to get any satisfactory foothold, and at nearly every step I slipped forwards, and the upper coating of snow being once removed from the ice below, it required, on each occasion, the greatest exertion on my part before I could recover myself, as the more I struggled, the worse matters became. I found that the only chance of getting on was by entirely avoiding Melchior's footsteps, and striking out an independent course to the right or left of his track, Almer pursuing a similar course, as regards mine, for the snow was exactly like dust, and regelation did not serve us in the least. Toiling up, occasionally wishing, I am grieved to confess, that the top of the Dom were at the bottom of the ocean, or some equally out of the way place where we should not have the trouble of climbing it, we approached

a broad crevasse, running right across the slope we were ascending, the upper edge being as usual much above the lower ; across this there was no snow bridge, but a tongue of ice stretched instead from one bank to the other. This looked firm, and Melchior advancing, was half way over, when the bridge sank, at least a foot, with a loud angry rumble. Almer and I fell back involuntarily, and a sharp cry of 'Zurück' simultaneously escaped us, expecting that the mass of ice would disappear into the chasm, carrying Melchior as far as the rope would allow, but fortunately the continuity at either end was not actually broken, and he with a peculiar leer, expressive of satisfaction, pursued his way across, and we in succession followed. The slopes were steeper than before, and I found it necessary to halt frequently, only however for a few seconds, just sufficient to get a little fresh wind ; but meanwhile the clouds had been blowing up, and now enveloped us in their clammy folds, so that we were unable to see a foot in front. Melchior kept steadily on for some time, endeavouring to move in a straight line upwards, but everyone knows how difficult it is to do that, for any length of time, in a fog, and we soon found ourselves compelled to halt and sit down, in a happy state of ignorance as to whether the summit was to the right or left, or behind, or where. A short time before, so tired was I, that at the moment, I had felt as if I should have been glad of an excuse to turn, but now when it seemed probable that the state of the weather might compel us to retreat unsuccessful, unspeakable disgust and grief filled my soul, and I could have bitten my tongue out with vexation. We resolved to sit where we were till the latest possible moment, and if only a transient lift would show us where the summit was, we would persevere, even with the certainty of seeing absolutely nothing when we got there. The top of the mountain was what we wanted ; the view, however beautiful in itself, was a minor consideration. After we had sat for about a quarter of an hour, the wished for gleam of sunshine came, and showed us the summit on our left, apparently not far above us ; the mist immediately settled down, as thick as ever, but we had seen enough, and joyfully jumping up, pushed on. Snow was now falling fast, but we regarded it not, and worked steadily upwards, until Melchior, in the act of making a step forwards, drew back and stopped, luckily, for that step would have taken him over the precipices above the Graben Glacier ; it was just 11.45 A.M., and we had gained the main arête of the mountain. It was evident that we should not be able to stop long on the summit, so all the provisions were left here, and turning sharp to the left Melchior began cutting steps along the arête ; the inclination was steep, and the ice very hard, with scarcely any snow on it, so that our progress was slow, each step having to be made large and secure. The ridge, at first tolerably broad, gradually narrowed, until it was not more than a foot in width, and in clear weather the situation would doubtless have been impressive, and to a nervous person alarming, but under present circumstances, we were in perfect ignorance whether there was a fall of five feet or five

thousand on each side, and went placidly forwards, until at 12.15 P.M. the last step was cut, and we stepped on to the actual summit of the Dom, at a height of 14,942 ft. above the sea. And did we not shout ! As each man in turn stood upon the very highest point, he emitted a shrill yell, which might have been heard down at Randa, now a little more than 10,000 feet below us ; indeed only one thing troubled us, the fact that we had no bottle or anything else to leave as a trace of our presence on the summit, in order to confute any doubts as to our success, which might be raised in the minds of sceptics below in consequence of the state of the elements. Our position was peculiar, as the fog had lifted a little, and we were standing in the centre of a circle, with a diameter of about a hundred yards, within which it was tolerably clear, but beyond that radius and above our heads were walls of mist, of course shutting out every atom of view. At our feet however was the great Fee Glacier at the base of one of the most fearful precipices I have ever seen ; it appeared as though a plummet dropped from where we were standing, would have fallen straight to the ice, a depth of over 5000 ft., without touching a stone. Other prospect we had not, but we cared not over much, for we had conquered the peak, and that was the main point. But under the circumstances there was no object in making a long halt, so having drunk to the health of the Dom, in a sip of brandy, in five minutes we turned to descend, and carefully making our way down the arête, soon reached the spot where we had left the provisions. It was unanimously agreed that it was impossible to eat there, so we hurried rapidly down the slopes which had cost us so much labour to ascend, but were soon obliged to slacken our speed, as the falling snow had, even in so short a time, almost obliterated our traces, and having once managed to leave them, we found it impossible to hit them again in the fog, and were getting into difficulties, when again did an opportune gleam of sunshine relieve us from our troubles, and down we went helter skelter, sometimes running, sometimes sitting down, not at all particular whether heels or head were foremost, until in an almost incredibly short space of time, we had reached the nevê of the Hohberg Glacier, and halted for dinner. The weather now showed signs of clearing up, and we made our way rapidly through the crevasses, our pace being quickened by the sight of some blocks from the hanging glacier, which had evidently fallen during our absence, and were unpleasantly suggestive of more to follow. However, we got through all safe, and at 1.45 P.M. reached the col overlooking the Graben Glacier, on to which we descended forthwith ; instead of following our morning's track, Melchior, for some unexplained reason, kept much higher up along the snow slopes on the right bank, a manœuvre by which nothing was gained, as the snow was in bad order, the crevasses numerous and troublesome, and we had to make a considerable descent before reaching at 2.30 the moraine on which we had breakfasted in the morning. The rope was thrown off, and we stopped a quarter of an hour to indulge in a good drink of the rather dirty water, caused by the fast melting snow ; then started off again, over the rough ground

below the glacier, and made an effort to circumvent the gully by which we had ascended, which failed utterly, so that we were compelled to face it after all. I was let down by the rope, and we were soon far below this our last difficulty, but on looking up at it, Melchior observed with perfect truth, that no one, ignorant of the way, would suppose it possible to get up. Not forgetting to gather a good bundle of Edelweiss we soon reached the wood, and hit off a path very superior to that of the morning, but on getting near the valley, short cuts were the order of the day, so forsaking it, we struck straight down through the trees to the bank of the Randaier Bach, crossed that disgusting torrent to the meadows beyond, and exactly at 5.0 P.M. entered the hotel at Randa, after an absence of $14\frac{1}{2}$ hours. The apathy of the 'Dumpf' on hearing of our success was extreme, indeed she did not seem, in spite of the nomenclature of the inn, to have the slightest notion that there was such a hill as the Dom in existence; with some trouble she managed to produce a very moderate bill, and that settled we took our departure at 5.25 in the midst of a thunderstorm, accompanied by torrents of rain, which soon soaked us through. Naturally, under such circumstances, I was not desirous to loiter on the way, so finding that both Melchior and Almer, though quite unladen, were inclined to lag, I pushed on at my own not very rapid pace, and the rain soon ceasing, reached the Monte Rosa hotel at Zermatt, tolerably dry, at 7.15 P.M. There I found Morshead and Mr. Proctor, both of whom were agreeably disappointed on hearing that I had actually reached the summit, which, from the state of the weather, they had thought most unlikely. George had gone up to the Riffel, intending to ascend Monte Rosa with a party on the morrow, and had left word for Almer to join him there, in case we should reach Zermatt early, but of course it was now too late for him to do so. Mons. Seiler brought all the resources of his cuisine into play to serve me a capital dinner, to the demolition of which I, in my turn, applied all the resources of my naturally vigorous appetite, with a result so gratifying as to excite the admiration of all in the salon. With an idle day before me, I was in no hurry to get to bed, and it was late before Morshead and I finally betook ourselves to our respective chambers.

RUWENZORI

By R. M. BERE

MOUNTS STANLEY AND SPEKE

DURING the course of three weeks spent on Ruwenzori in May and June of 1945, P. H. Hicks, Dr. R. G. Ladkin and I made an attempt on the N.E. ridge of Margherita (Mount Stanley). When worked out, this route will probably give the best and most attractive way to the highest point, less affected by mist, the deadly weapon of the Stanley Plateau, and more direct than the usual route.