

EXPEDITIONS

Bernese Oberland

BIETSCHHORN, 3934 m. = 12,907 ft. Traverse by N. arête and E. spur. August 20, 1937. Messrs. T. A. H. Peacocke, M. G. Meade-King and D. A. Hodgkinson.

The party left the Bietschhorn hut at 02.50 and climbing by the usual route *via* the Shafberg and Nest Glacier reached the crest of the N. arête at 07.00. The ridge was in fairly good condition, despite some fresh snow, and the N. peak was reached at 08.10 and the highest point at 08.30. Since the weather was very uncertain the descent by E. spur was begun almost immediately. The crest of the ridge was fairly free from snow, but both flanks were heavily snow-covered. The first few hundred feet proved easy, but then the angle steepened considerably and to avoid an abrupt gendarme a traverse on the left, N., side was made. This proved a great mistake as the rock in the couloir was extremely loose. Thereafter the crest was adhered to as far as possible, though short traverses very near the crest on the N. side often proved practicable. The most difficult section was about half-way down when the party climbed over a very steep gendarme, the lower side being 100 ft. in height, and the rock smooth. This gendarme can be avoided by an easy traverse on the N., which fact is evident from below. It was now 13.00, and as the weather was rapidly getting worse with snow falling, the party struck into the couloir and followed an easy rib straight towards the Baltschieder Glacier. The couloir was perfectly safe owing to the sun being obscured and to the cold—during the whole expedition one stone only fell through natural causes. This route undoubtedly saved much time. The bergschrund was crossed fairly easily immediately below the rib, and after wasting much time, owing to the blizzard which was now raging, in trying to descend direct to the glacier, the party traversed S. and reached the Baltschieder Glacier beneath the E. spur. The Baltschiederjoch was reached at 17.00 and the weather cleared. The descent was continued, and after a halt at 19.00 for food, Fafleralp was reached at 20.20.

Times :

Bietschhorn hut	.	.	.	dep.	02.50
N. arête	.	.	.	.	07.00–07.25
Summit	.	.	.	.	08.00–08.45
'Very steep gendarme'	.	.	.	.	13.00
Bergschrund	.	.	.	.	14.00
Baltschiederjoch	.	.	.	.	17.00
Fafleralp	.	.	.	arr.	20.20

This route might be better if taken in the reverse direction. In

any case it seems preferable to and more interesting than the W. arête. In clear weather the Baltschiederjoch would be less than 1 hour from the bergschrund.

ALETSCHHORN, 4182 m. = 13,721 ft., Loetschenlücke to Concordia. August 25, 1937. Same party.

The party left the Hollandia (formerly Egon von Steiger) hut at 03.50, and helped by a full moon, started up the long slope immediately to the S. of the Loetschenlücke. Despite a heavy fall of snow two days previously, this slope was in fairly good condition. The snow had been either wind-packed or blown clear by a strong N. wind. In most places one or two blows of the axe were sufficient, though a steep icy bulge, about one third of the way up the slope, cost half an hour. The ridge immediately to the E. of the Sattelhorn was reached at 06.40. At 07.15 the party started along the ridge towards the Aletschhorn. This was narrow and heavily corniced in places but the snow was in fair condition. The top of the so-called Klein Aletschhorn was reached at 08.20, and the Sattel beyond this at 08.40. From here to the summit the work was more difficult as the rocks of the ridge were covered with fresh snow, and several long bouts of step-cutting, in steep ice on the N. flank, were necessary. The summit was not reached until 12.20. A halt was made on the plateau N. of the summit from 12.40 to 13.00 for food. Clouds then rolled up and the descent by the ordinary route to the Concordia was carried out with map, compass and barometer. A narrow and unstable arête of snow, heavily corniced in places, was crossed just before reaching the *Hasler* rib. The latter was descended in leisurely fashion as the weather had now improved, and the glacier reached at 17.30 and, after a further halt, the Concordia hut at 19.30.

Times :

Hollandia hut	.	.	.	.	.	03.50
Sattelhorn	.	.	.	.	.	06.50
Klein-Aletschhorn	.	.	.	.	.	08.20
Summit	.	.	.	.	.	12.40
Hasler rib	.	.	.	.	.	15.15
Concordia hut	.	.	.	.	.	19.30

T. A. H. P.

EIGER, 3974 m. = 13,042 ft. By the S.E. (Kalli) face. August 10-12, 1937. Herren O. Eidenschink and E. Moeller.

Eidenschink, just back from a campaign spent mostly on Welzenbach's itineraries (Grosshorn, Breithorn, Gletscherhorn, Gspaltenhorn, Fiescherwand), and Moeller, both from Munich, camped under canvas during the night of 10-11 August on the Zäsenberg. The small hours looked bad, but they left at 09.00 on the 11th and found the day improved when reaching the *Kalliband*. They had some serious difficulties in crossing the bergschrund. They left the axes there, started at 13.00 and began to ascend the Eiger slabs in the direction



Photo, R. Schudel.]

S.E. FACE OF EIGER, 1937, SHOWING ROUTE.

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(1) IN THE KALLIWAND.



(2) IN THE KALLIWAND.

of a very narrow crack running down the lower third of the total height. About halfway up that step Moeller took photo No. 1. No. 2 was taken a trifle higher, obviously near the crossing of the main (very shallow) couloir under a huge overhanging wall to point marked 16.00 h. on the large photograph. They climbed the shallow couloir, which gradually became more defined. Eidenschink told me that he used a piton to manage a very difficult step (marked '1'), whence the ascent became easier until they reached the bottom of the wide couloir in the top part of the wall, where they spent the night to the 12th under considerable annoyance through stonefall. Next morning they placed the second piton to secure the traverse (marked '2'). The climb up to a first terrace covered by scree proved not too difficult. But the next step was the worst and the third piton went in (marked '3'). The rest they found fairly easy owing to the broken condition of the rocks. They crossed towards the summit until they reached the next crest (*Vorgipfel*) and then 'peacefully paddled down' to the Mittellegi hut (as Eidenschink puts it), where they arrived two hours later (about 15.00).

I think this is a very fine performance and only feel sorry for the two climbers that they did not tackle the direct system of cracks running down from the main summit. This minor mistake will probably call out a bunch of German parties next year!

OTHMAR GURTNER.