

there are no buyers for anything but sheer necessities, and those are strictly rationed. It cannot guide, for the men are in military service and there are few climbers about for the same reason. The few hotels open stand empty. It does its best in the poor agricultural line of mountain valleys, women, children and patriarchs taking up the hoe and scythe, but the weather is the worst that I can ever remember, and as it is general, there will be acute shortage of absolute necessities this winter and next year.

Of course Grindelwald is no worse off than any other mountain village or other Swiss place, for we are really a beleaguered country, but it has had its own special blow.

Jossi saw the old Bear hotel burn down one summer evening. Now the big Bear, the landmark of the valley, the meeting place of many a club member, has gone the way of the old one. Filled with convalescent Swiss soldiers, nursing sisters, and a few sick Polish interneers, it must have been smouldering in the cellarage for some time before it burst into uncontrollable flames in the middle of a winter night that was registering, they tell me, — 18° C. All the several hundred inmates were saved, though some Poles and a charge sister on the top floor had very narrow shaves, being cut off from the stairways, and having to be lowered from balcony to balcony, a regular rope throwing and *Abseil* affair. It is a little thing compared to the horrors happening elsewhere, but to Grindelwald, in a mental and moral sense, a terrible blow on the top of all their other troubles. Poor Grindelwald! Would old Jossi recognise his village now?

In writing this, I have for the moment got back to those blessed years of innocence, and found it a fact that 'quo semel est imbuta recens, servabit odorem Testa diu.'

I only hope that for a moment this paper may remind old climbers of those much better days, and cause a reminiscent smile in these dreary ones.

EARLY MEMORIES

By LAWRENCE PILKINGTON

WHEN I was only seventeen I went alone to meet my mother and my brother Charles at Lucerne. I had never been abroad before. At Lucerne I found my brother was taking my mother home and I was to go on to Grindelwald and wait for him there. But when I reached Interlaken I was told that my portmanteau had not arrived, though I was sure I had seen it on the way and also at the Interlaken post office. I waited a couple of days at Interlaken and while there I heard that a party of climbers had been

overwhelmed by an avalanche on the Jungfrau.¹ I remember that the old ladies at the hotel were much impressed by my strong disapproval of risking one's life climbing.

When I went on to Grindelwald a bearded man came up to me and wanted to take me up the Eiger. I told Fritz Boss, one of the proprietors of the Bear hotel, that a strange man had actually suggested taking me up the Eiger. Boss only laughed and said, 'That man is a good guide, you will be quite safe with him.' As my portmanteau did not come I told Boss that I was sure I had seen it at the Interlaken post office. He said, 'I know the man there, he is a thief. I'll send for the portmanteau, it will come all right.' It did! A day or two later my brother came and we started climbing.

When we made the ascent of Monte Rosa the weather was bad and as I had poor gloves my fingers were frost-bitten. Later, when my brother was on his way to the Matterhorn, I persuaded him to bathe in the Schwarzsee. On coming out of the water he stepped on a broken glass bottle and cut his foot so deeply that he had to go home with his foot bandaged up. I feel inclined to add 'Here endeth the first lesson,' but I fear to moralise.

In 1878 Charles, Gardiner and I² started climbing without guides. The weather was good and we had many climbs in Dauphiné. Amongst other expeditions we ascended Les Ecrins, an account of which appears in this JOURNAL.³ We also had a good view of the southern face of La Meije from the top of Le Râteau.

In 1879 we visited Dauphiné again.⁴ The season began with snow and storm. On Pic d'Olan we were caught in a violent thunderstorm. When we reached the top more than an inch of snow covered the rocks. All down the ridge we had to clear out handholds. In crossing the couloir below Gardiner and I were both in it when an avalanche came crashing down and a great stone just missed my head. I looked down and saw Gardiner staggering, bareheaded, blood spurting from his head. He seemed badly hurt. My brother hurried down and put his arm round him; I did my best to follow, holding them with the doubled rope. Fortunately the climbing was much easier and we got to the hut without further mishap. When there, my brother washed the wound, which proved small but deep; then he cut the hair from the edges of the wound and drew the edges together by tying the hairs beyond across the wound. He did this very neatly, being accustomed to tie flies for fishing. Within a week or ten days the wound was healed, but unfortunately the Grenoble newspaper gave an account of the accident in which it stated that Mr. Gardiner had part of his head 'emporté.' Fortunately it escaped notice at home.

Some little time after that we climbed La Meije.⁵ I have described elsewhere⁶ how the first three parties bore to the left at the top of the cliff above Duhamel's cairn, but the rocks there were coated with ice,

¹ *A. J.* 6. 97.

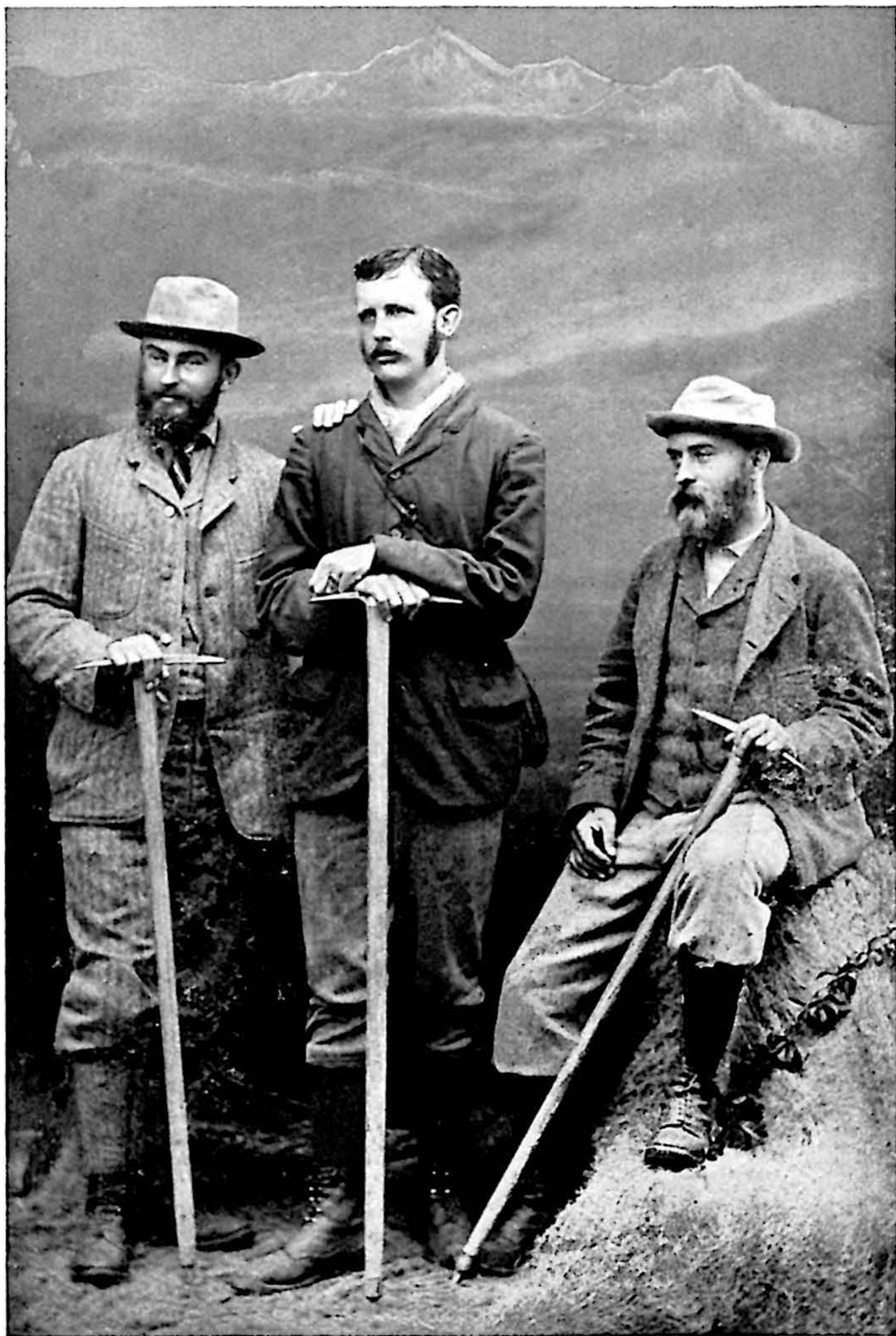
³ *A. J.* 9. 219 *sqq.*

⁵ *A. J.* 9. 411 *sqq.*

² See illustration, *A. J.* 32. facing 347.

⁴ *A. J.* 9. 357 *sqq.*

⁶ *A. J.* 32. 348.



Photo, M. Alophe, Paris.]

LAWRENCE PILKINGTON, FREDERICK GARDINER, CHARLES PILKINGTON.
'CALIDI JUVENTA.'

[To face p. 142.]

so we had to climb straight up to the Glacier Carré. It was only about 70 ft., but one part was so difficult that my brother only succeeded in getting past it at his third attempt. Neither Gardiner nor I could have done that. Years later, an Italian party, seeing the fixed rope by which we descended,⁷ were misled by it and actually hauled themselves up by it, though it must have been weathered. I shall never forget how our Dauphiné porters, the dear old soldier Joseph Lagier and the shoemaker Simon Barneod, used to go to church and pray for us when we were on a difficult climb, and how they carried a heavy box of provisions for us some twenty miles up the hot Vallouise, although told to pay for a mule and having £150 of our money on them.

In Switzerland the climbs were better known and described in guide books. We had rather an interesting time on the Finsteraarhorn in 1883. It was so clear that we could see beyond the Gross Glockner, but next day we were running over the snow to the Mönchjoch, trailing our axes behind us on the rope, mist swirling, lightning blazing, thunder curiously muffled. Shortly after that we were sitting on the rocks in sunshine, all having cleared up.

Now as to the attitude of the guides. Always friendly and in two cases very helpful. Almer went out of his way to say: 'I hear you intend to climb the Eiger from the Wengernalp. Now it would take us three days to cut the ice, but the Jungfrau has not been climbed from the Wengernalp for some years because of the séracs on the Guggi Glacier, but this year I think it would go.' It did. We had to thank him for a glorious climb. Hans Grass of Pontresina also rendered us good service when he advised us to keep on the left of the glacier in going up the Bernina.

From what I have written I think I have made it clear that Charles was the leader of the party. He was always even-tempered and re-

⁷ My brother's account (*A.J.* 9. 422-3) does not fully explain what happened on the descent. First we fixed the 200 ft. of spare rope and let Gardiner down with the sacks. Then I followed, my brother helping me down with our ordinary rope. When about 40 ft. down I found a good foothold and said I would wait there to prevent his being pulled off the rock by a side pull, entirely forgetting that the good foothold did not safeguard from a side pull. It was here that my brother swung clear into open space, then back again on to the rock just above my head. It was all over before we had time to realise what an escape we had. After descending that first 70 or 80 ft. the climbing became easier, but as the day went on the sun melted the icicles on the Glacier Carré above us and we were subjected to a dangerous bombardment of falling ice; however, we reached Duhamel's cairn at last in safety. When we reached the glacier below we found our porter, old Lagier, waiting for us; he had seen our wine tins flashing in the sun and had waited till midday on the glacier below, bringing with him much-needed food.

Perhaps I may say, as some excuse for our adventure, that we were young, also we could not wait until the mountains were in better condition as my brother had to go home.

With regard to our axes, my brother had them made to his pattern at the colliery. Gardiner got him to make his extra long; it was no use for step-cutting—really a nuisance as we often wished all to cut *going up* extra hard ice. The porters got theirs made like his at the village smithy—supposing that Gardiner, whom they thought of as *Byron*, would know best.

sourceful. I think his allround excellence in games had something to do with that. He was a good footballer, half-back, a good bowler, batsman and fielder at cricket, also a good fisherman and shot. But he was above all an excellent mountaineer.

In 1884 my brother Charles was married, and I had been crushed by a rock in Piers Ghyll and lay for six weeks at Wastwater recovering. So ended our guideless climbing. But one's love for mountain scenery not only remained but increased.

The best mountain scenery lies below the top of the mountains, and those who undertake strenuous climbs are apt to miss the full beauty of the mountains. Two scenes I shall never forget. These I saw shortly after my marriage in 1890. The first was when my wife and I stood looking down on to the valley near the top of the Col de la Lauze. A thunderstorm was going on beneath us, at the same time another had broken out on the Aiguille du Plat and yet another on Les Ecrins. I never saw the peaks of Dauphiné in such a weird savage light as that.

The other scene was a very different one. We were crossing the Col du Géant from the S.; we went up slowly by moonlight, taking a mule with us as far as we could. When we reached the top of the col we watched the daylight dawn. The peaks of the Graians to the S. rose out of the purple gloom; along the wall of the great Swiss mountains, past the Matterhorn, came the rosy flood lighting the snows of Mont Blanc above us. Altogether a scene of perfect beauty and peace.

THE EARLY ATTEMPTS ON MONT BLANC DE COURMAYEUR FROM THE INNOMINATA BASIN

(Concluded.)

9. MARSHALL, 1874 (INNOMINATA ROUTE)

J. A. GARTH MARSHALL had been a member of that happy party which discussed possible new ways to Mont Blanc on the meadows of Courmayeur in 1873. W. E. Davidson said of him, perhaps too sweepingly: 'Unless a thing was difficult . . . he did not care to try it,' and Marshall was certainly strongly attracted to the problem of an ascent of Mont Blanc by its southern flanks, which he put to the test in 1874. We have seen that in the previous year he had been Kennedy's companion on the ascent of the 'Lower point of the Péteret' and probably also in a visit to the Brenva Glacier. It is in any case significant that, as Kennedy also, he now turned rather to the Innominata basin, taking the services of Johann Fischer over from Kennedy in addition to those of his own guide, Ulrich Almer. They