

ON THE ASCENTS OF MOUNT RAINIER

HARRY McL. MYERS

A COUPLE of years ago the writer was one of a party which proposed to climb Mount Rainier by the Success Cleaver Route and before making the attempt they tried to find out who had climbed by this way in the past. Their investigations were not very successful as it seemed that nowhere was there a complete list and description of the early and unusual ascents of the Mountain, and the present account and schedule accompanying is intended to fill this want.

The first recorded visit to the mountain seems to have been that by Dr. Tolmie in 1833, and later in 1841 and 1852, the early newspapers mention visits by other parties, but in neither case does it seem that they climbed any higher than the elevation of the parks.

The ascent of the mountain is made at the present time by the way of Gibraltar so frequently and by such large parties that the fact is often overlooked that the ascent has been made by seven other routes. The two most generally used are the Gibraltar and the Northeast Side. The Success Cleaver has been climbed by five parties and the North Tahoma Glacier by only three. There are also the two ascents of the early summer of the past year by the Nisqually Glacier from Paradise Valley and from Van Trump Park by the Van Trump and Kautz Glaciers. In addition to these Lee Pickett of Index, in 1911, described to George E. Wright and Asahel Curtis an ascent he and another man had made from Spray Park by the way of Ptarmigan Ridge. The last of the list is the heretofore unrecorded Ingraham Glacier climb by Allison L. Brown, an account of which appears elsewhere in this issue.

The pioneer ascent by Lieutenant Kautz in 1857 was made, in all probability, by the Van Trump-Kautz Glacier route, for surely his account does not fit any of the other courses since used. His description of the climb is very sketchy but it seems that he climbed off the Nisqually on the west side, and ascended by the route mentioned to the main summit of the mountain. To make clear this distinction between the "main summit of the mountain" and the "absolute top," Mount Rainier may be described as a truncated cone with a top diameter of something less than two miles. Rising from this top are the three peaks of which Columbia Crest at the southeast is the highest, 14,408 ft. Liberty Cap or North Peak is 14,112 ft. and Peak Success to the south is 14,150 ft. The surface of the top slopes rather gradually to these peaks. Of all the people

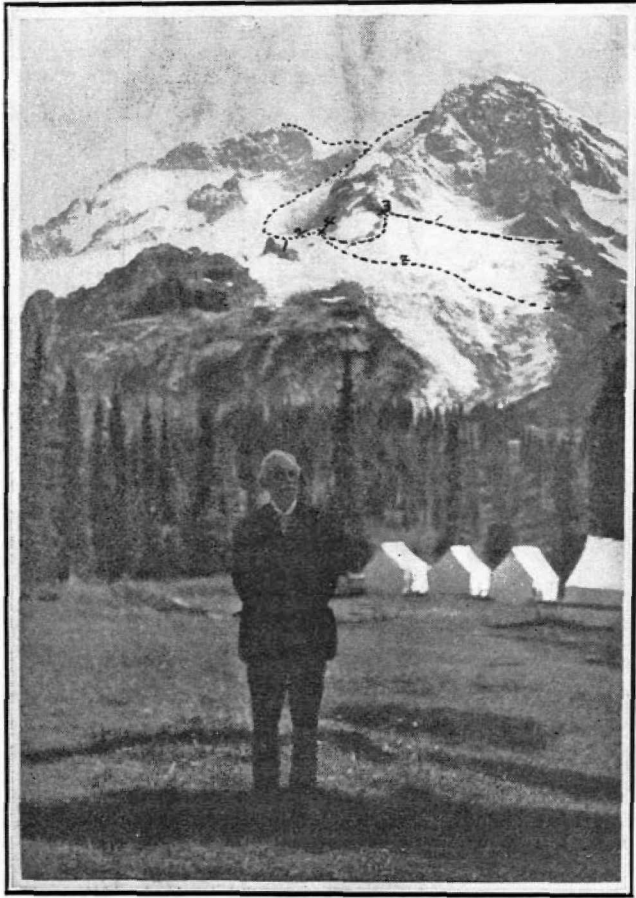
who make the ascent in these days very few go to the top of Columbia Crest, and probably North Peak and Peak Success have been visited not more than a dozen times in all the years. Register Rock, the Ultima Thule of the vast majority of climbers, is located on the rim of the small crater and is several hundred feet lower than Columbia Crest and a half mile or more distant. That Lieutenant Kautz did not reach the top of any of the peaks and thereby failed of a completely successful ascent is certain from his own words, but it seems equally certain to the writer that he did go through the saddle and onto the snow fields at the top. If Lieutenant Kautz in his account is truthful, and there is certainly no reason for doubting his veracity, we believe that to him must be given credit for the pioneer achievement in climbing the great peak.

Thirteen years after, in 1870, was made the first completely successful ascent, this time by the Gibraltar route, by General Hazard Stevens and P. B. Van Trump. Only two months after this climb F. S. Emmons and A. D. Wilson of the Geological Survey duplicated the achievement. A statement by Emmons to that effect started a controversy with General Stevens and the exchange of letters in "The Nation" became quite heated, the General maintaining that the others could not have made the ascent. Fourteen years then elapsed before the next party climbed and from then on ascents by the Gibraltar route have been numerous until now it is made many times each season.

Next in importance to the Gibraltar route comes that over the Emmons Glacier on the northeast side, the one used in 1909, '12, '15 and '19 by The Mountaineers. There is a legend that, in 1885, three men from Snohomish climbed this way. A diligent search of records and inquiry among people living in Snohomish at the time failed to corroborate the statement. In 1886 and 1887 Major E. S. Ingraham made unsuccessful attempts to reach the summit from this side, on both occasions being turned back by untoward weather conditions after he had reached a point very near the top. It was not until 1896 that the first successful trip was made, this time by the Geological Survey party of I. C. Russell, George Otis Smith, and Bailey Willis. After spending the night in a steam cave they descended to Paradise Valley and returned to their camp on the north side by traversing the glacier above Little Tahoma.

What is probably the most hazardous and difficult route ever used is that by way of the North Tahoma Glacier. P. B. Van Trump, in the summers which he spent at Indian Henry's, told many times of his climb with George B. Bayley in 1892 and the difficulty of the return after Bayley had been injured by falling

into a crevasse. In his note on the picture belonging to Mr. George H. Kendall he mentions a climb with a man he names as Riley a year previous, of which ascent there seems to be no other record. The only other ascent by this route was made under the guidance of Joseph Stampfler in 1914 and his companions on that trip express themselves as very thankful to be alive and willing to testify to the difficulties of the ascent.



Memorandum on the reverse of this photograph in Mr. Van Trump's handwriting:

"Dot lines show Van Trump's routes in ascending mountain in years 1891 & 1892. Riley and V. T. in 1891 used route (across Success glacier) shown by dotted line No. 1. Bayley and Van T., in 1892, used line No. 2 over said glacier. Black cross No. 3 shows camping site of Riley and Van T. Cross No. 4. site of Bayley and Van T.'s camp in 1892. From point No. 4 the two lines of ascent coincide. Peak Success in foreground hides Crater Peak, the true summit of the mountain. Van Trump calls the glacier in foreground of the picture Success Glacier because it heads wholly in P. Success. On some of the maps it is called South Tahoma Glacier, the main Tahoma Glacier being called on them "North Tahoma" Glacier, thus making a needless repetition of the name.

Yelm, Wash. 10|31-1911

P. B. VAN TRUMP."

To one who has made the Success Cleaver climb the account of the first ascent that way reads almost like fiction. In 1905 two young men, Glascock and Dudley, were camped with the Sierra Club in Paradise Valley and they had, together, made the Gibraltar climb, thought it too easy and looked for more worlds to conquer. They heard that a party had left for Indian Henry's to attempt the Success Cleaver and to forestall them the boys started early in the morning for the Cleaver. That part of the journey would ordinarily be considered a fair day's work even if the climbers ran into no difficulties, but these boys became lost in the maze of crevasses on the Kautz and wasted considerable time before they were finally able to cut their way out. Later, on the Cleaver, they steered around the impassable side of a huge rock which blocked their course and found that they must drop way down on to the Tahoma Glacier only to climb back immediately to the Cleaver. Despite all of these set-backs night found them in the Crater where the Sierra Club main-climb party came to them the next morning. To substantiate the fact that he really was a mountain climber, Glascock, with another companion, shortly after that ascended the north face of Pinnacle Peak, a feat only once accomplished since then.

From 1905 a period of fifteen years elapsed in which more people visited the mountain than had ever been there before and yet no new climb or attempt was made until, in two weeks early this summer, the two ascents on the south side were successfully negotiated.

Two of the important ascents were made, it will be noted, at unusual seasons of the year, the Emmons-Wilson in the middle of October and Lee-Pickett's in May.

The only person who has made the up and down trip by three routes is Margaret Hargrave, and her nearest competitors are Joseph Stampfler and J. H. Weer, who have made round trips by two routes and one way on the third.

SCHEDULE OF THE ASCENTS OF MOUNT RAINIER

HARRY McL. MYERS

FIRST APPROACH

August, 1833. Dr. Wm. T. Tolmie, probably to Tolmie Peak, near Mowich Lake. (See Meany's "Mount Rainier.")

FIRST ASCENT (DISPUTED)

July 15, 1857. Lt. A. V. Kautz (Wapowety, Indian guide.) Route and measure of success not positively determined. (See *Overland Monthly*, 1875, P. 394-403, also Meany's "Mount Rainier").

GIBRALTAR ROUTE

August 17, 1870. General Hazard Stevens and P. B. Van Trump (Sluisin, Indian guide). (See Meany's "Mount Rainier" also "Mazama" Vol. 3, also *Atlantic Monthly*, November, 1876, also report of lecture by P. B. Van Trump to Mountaineers, copy of which is with Club Historian).

October 17, 1870. F. S. Emmons and A. D. Wilson. (See *American Journal of Science and Arts*, Vol. 101, 1871, P. 161, also "The Nation," Vol. 23, P. 312),

August 17, 1884. P. B. Van Trump, Geo. B. Bayley, Jas. Longmire (Sotolick or Indian Henry, guide). (See *Overland Monthly*, 1886, P. 266).

August 11, 1888. P. B. Van Trump, John Muir, E. S. Ingraham, Dan W. Bass, A. C. Warner, Norman O. Booth and C. V. Piper. (See *Mountaineer "Annual"*, 1909, P. 39, and 1915, P. 50).

1890. Miss Fay Fuller, first woman.

NORTHEAST SIDE OR EMMONS GLACIER

July 23-24, 1896. Bailey Willis, Geo. Otis Smith and I. C. Russell, F. H. Ainsworth and Wm. B. Williams. (See 18th Annual Report Geological Survey, 1896-7, Part 2, P. 355, also *Scribner's Magazine*, August, 1896, also *Mountaineer "Annual"*, 1915, P. 48).

NORTH TAHOMA GLACIER ROUTE

1891. P. B. Van Trump and (?) Riley.

1892. P. B. Van Trump and Geo. B. Bayley. (In regard to both these ascents see photograph and account in possession of Geo. F. Kendall, Tacoma, copy of which is with Club Historian).

July 16-17, 1914. Jos. Stampfler, Wynthrop T. Hovey, Roy Young, Roscoe Young and David Young. Return by Gibraltar. (See account by W. T. Hovey with Club Historian).

SUCCESS CLEAVER ROUTE

July 27, 1905. John R. Glascock and Ernest Dudley. Return by Gibraltar. (See *Sunset Magazine*, Vol. 16, P. 49, also *Seattle P.-I.*, July 30, 1905, P. 10).

July 2, 1912. Jos. Stampfler, Phil Barrett and Frank Kandle. Return by Gibraltar.

July 28, 1914. Jos. Stampfler, Dr. Karl F. Meyer, W. N. Ellis, Fred Vinton and Alvin Bogardus. Return by Gibraltar.

August 15, 1914. Jos. Stampfler, Margaret Hargrave and Henry T. Dill. Return by same route.

August 17, 1918. J. Harry Weer, R. S. Wainwright and Harry Myers. Return by Gibraltar.

INGRAHAM GLACIER ROUTE

September, 1885 or 1886. Al. L. Brown and Yakima Indians. (See account in this issue).

SPRAY PARK—PTARMIGAN RIDGE ROUTE

May 18, 1905 or 1906. Lee Pickett and another man whose name is now forgotten. (He described the ascent to Geo. E. Wright and Asahel Curtis. See also letters with the Club Historian).

VAN TRUMP—KAUTZ GLACIER ROUTE

June 26-8, 1920. Roger W. Toll, Hans Fuhrer, Henry Fuhrer and Harry Myers. Return by Gibraltar. (See account by Toll and by Myers with the Club Historian).

NISQUALLY GLACIER ROUTE

July 2, 1920. Jos. T. Hazard, Payton M. Farrer, Thos. Hermans, Hans Fuhrer and Henry Fuhrer. Return by Gibraltar. (See clippings with the Club Historian).

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ASCENTS OF LITTLE TAHOMA

1895 (about August 29). J. B. Flett and H. H. Garrison. (See account by J. B. Flett with the Club Historian).

August 6, 1919. E. F. Peterson, Cecil V. Reddin and Arthur J. Emmrick. (See letter from Secretary of The Mazamas with the Club Historian).
