

No desire to rush peaks or to break records was to be found in Conrad Kain, and his increasing proclivity for lingering near timberline may be attributed largely to his appreciation of mountain beauty, as it was understood by guides in the Golden Age of mountaineering in the Alps. "Eile mit Weile" was a proverb learned from Sepp Innerkofler in the days of his youth. He knew full well that life is not compounded solely of action.

In his philosophy there should be no evident sadness in parting: "It is good to have been once young," he said, "if only you have happy memories." The song must go on. He played a part in the inspiring moments of many lives, and gave more to life than he asked of it. "He will be much missed," wrote his neighbors in the Columbia Valley, "for he was a kind, honest man."

Kain was undoubtedly the most glamorous figure in Canadian mountaineering, and those who climbed with him know that his death separates all that went before from whatever the future may bring forth, rounding out (as it almost does) the first half-century of Canadian alpinism, during which the principal peaks of the Rockies and the Interior Ranges were conquered. Guides in days to come will scarcely have such great experience in travel, of new ascents, of trail-breaking.

A candle burned at both ends—a brave soul gone too soon. Let it be remembered that some of us would have given our right hands to delay Time's turning down of Conrad's glass.

J. M. T.

TOM WILSON

1859-1933

TOM WILSON, last of the Canadian Pacific trail-blazers and explorers, died at Banff on September 20th, 1933, at the age of seventy-four.

His life was so full of meaning in everything pertaining to human interest that, in order to do it justice in the space allotted, the principal historical points of his career must be passed over very briefly.

Wilson was born at Bondhead, Ontario, on August 21st, 1859. At the age of sixteen he began to seek adventure and went to Sioux City, Iowa, on the western frontier. From there he returned to Barrie where he had been educated, and later joined the Northwest Mounted Police. When the first exploring parties were organized in connection with the building of the Canadian Pacific he applied for a discharge and in 1881 joined Major

Rogers, the so-called "swearing Major." The Major had a very gruff manner and at first there were misunderstandings between the two. On one occasion of their early acquaintance the horses had become lost and Major Rogers blamed Wilson in a manner that the latter thought entirely unjust. For several days there was considerable silence and constraint around the camp, until at length the Major put his hand in Wilson's and apologized. This was the beginning of a life-long friendship between the two and Wilson recognized that a warm heart lay beneath a rough exterior. Another incident is recorded, when after a long day's march, Wilson had started to make camp on the shore of what is now known as Bath Creek. The Major came up, wanting to go on, but Wilson said the horses had done enough for one day and that the creek was too high. "Afraid eh? Want the old man to show you?" remarked the Major, and immediately started to cross. The horse was submerged in the raging stream and Wilson finally brought his chief ashore by aid of a pole. The horse got out lower down and the Major was content to sit by the fire and get warm. After that, whenever Bath Creek was high and muddy the men said that the Major must be taking a bath.

This was in 1881. The next season, Tom and Fred (later Sir Frederick) Aylmer were the only two to rejoin the party. In that year, 1882, Wilson discovered Lake Louise and Emerald Lake. In 1884 he blazed two trails into Lake Louise and took Mrs. James Ross and party to the lake. These were the first white women to see it. In 1887 he opened up a new trail for John Enselwood of the Canadian Pacific, who took in an extra gang of men, built a lean-to shelter and put a boat on the lake. This shelter was the first building at Lake Louise.

In 1884, Wilson met at Silver City, now Castle Mountain, the niece of Rev. George McDougall, the missionary who was frozen to death on the plains in the early days. He married her at Edmonton in 1885. Their honeymoon trip was a drive from Edmonton to Morley in a buckboard, camping on the way. They had a little log-cabin back of the Indian Reservation and their nearest neighbor was half a mile distant. There were four children, Ada, John, Rene, and Edd when they moved to Banff in 1893. Two more, Bessie and Dora were born at Banff. The writer first became acquainted with Wilson in 1894 and subsequently, when he was outfitted for early trips up the Bow, to Mt. Assiniboine and other places. Since that time up to Wilson's

death he has been in more or less constant touch with him, either by personal visits to the mountains, or by an uninterrupted correspondence.

In the same year, 1885, he joined the Steele Scouts, and took part in many skirmishes of the Riel Rebellion. During the next few years he was active in exploratory work in the mountains. He nearly lost his life during exploration of the Bow, Howse Pass and Blaeberry route for the railroad, before the Kicking Horse Pass was decided on. On another occasion he fell through a snow-bridge of the Pipestone River and was almost frozen to death. Space does not permit recording in detail the great amount of other exploration and trail-building done by Wilson in the early years. When Abbott was killed on Mt. Lefroy in 1896 he assisted in making arrangements for the recovery of his body. He outfitted Collie on the expeditions of 1897 and 1898, and C. S. Thompson in 1900. In 1901 he accompanied Whymper and Outram to the Yoho Valley and crossed the Kiwetinok Pass with Whymper and Klucker. In 1904 he went with Whymper to Crowsnest Pass, making with him and two Swiss guides the first ascent of Crowsnest Mt.

Wilson was a keen observer and lover of nature. He possessed an untiring curiosity to see what was beyond every pass or at every valley end. He could recall in most intimate detail, and relate in the most interesting manner, the unusual features of any part of the mountains he had ever seen. He spoke in the soft, low voice of the trapper or the prospector—in a word, of those who have lived long in the solitude of the wilderness. He had a keen sense of humor and a merry twinkle in his eye whenever he greeted an old friend. No doubt his cheerful and courageous spirit hid many a heart pain in the last two or three years of his life. Generous to a degree, he never turned away from his door anyone in need of food or money. He was fond of all wild life and particularly birds and for this reason regretted that cats were allowed in the National Parks. He was well known by the Stoney Indians and had many personal friends among them. He understood their customs, something of their language and the sign language as well. The tragic death of his friend, Chief Hector Crawler, two years ago, who after a life filled with adventure, was killed by an angry cow in a corral, affected Wilson deeply.

It was natural that he should have been interested in all that pertained to the history of Canada and the Northwest. This led

to the gradual acquisition of a valuable library of rare historical works, which gave him constant enjoyment and pleasure.

The death of F. W. Padmore in 1921 left Wilson and the Major's nephew the only surviving members of a group of twenty who had met at Wapta Lake and vowed to write once a year to one another. In 1924 a memorial tablet was unveiled in Wilson's honor in the Yoho Valley. A. L. Rogers' passing in 1929 put an end to their plans to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the discovery of Rogers Pass and Albert Canyon in 1931.

Wilson had in his employ at various times of his long career as an outfitter, many guides and packers who were famous for their local color and individuality. Among them were Bill Peyto, Harry Lang, Fred Stephens, Tom Lusk, Bob Campbell, Ross Peacock, Jim Wood and Nigel Vavasour. Most of these were Canadians, though Fred Stephens was formerly the swinger of a powerful axe in the Michigan forests, and Tom Lusk was a bronco buster from Texas. These were some of the guides who helped bring success to many notable exploring and mountaineering expeditions during the past forty years.

As the years passed and his old-timer friends were called by death, it was natural that Tom Wilson should make a host of new acquaintances among the tourists and mountain climbers who came from all parts of the world to enjoy the wonders of the Canadian Rockies. Many of these were accustomed to foregather, at least once each year on August 21st, his birthday, to spend a pleasant day at Lake Louise and later have a dinner at which all available friends were welcome. Among those who at one time or another were accustomed to attend these festivities were Prof. Fay, Alfred Castle, Dr. Hickson, Howard Palmer, Fred Armbrister, Val Fynn and many others, including the writer.

About two years ago Wilson was stricken with cataract of both eyes and the first symptoms of heart trouble made their appearance. In spite of these afflictions he kept up a cheerful attitude and courageous spirit. Toward the end he was unable to distinguish people except by their voices, and it is of interest to know that loyal friends had made all arrangements to send him to Chicago for operation when the proper time should arrive. Probably no man of the Canadian Northwest ever had a simpler and more kindly spirit, or left behind a greater number of admiring friends.

W. D. W.