

## VARIOUS NOTES

### ALASKA

*Minimum thermometers on Mt. McKinley.* The thermometers left on Mt. McKinley by the Parker-Browne expedition and by the party of Archdeacon Stuck have been the cause of much speculation. That of the former expedition had been placed "in a crevice on the highest rock of the main ridge . . ." <sup>1</sup> Archdeacon Stuck looked for it the following year, 1913, among the last, but not the highest, rocks on the N.E. ridge. When he discovered his mistake, fatigue was so great that he "would not climb up again for fifty thermometers." <sup>2</sup> In 1942 Captain Bates and Captain Jackman, of the U. S. Army Alaskan Test Expedition spent half a day fruitlessly searching for the thermometer in all likely places.

Archdeacon Stuck left a minimum thermometer beside his cache below Browne Tower. <sup>3</sup> The minimum marker of this thermometer, when found by the Lindley-Leik expedition in 1932, was withdrawn into the bulb, which Stuck had stated would require a temperature of  $-105^{\circ}$  F. <sup>2</sup> Although this finding has been given wide publicity, it is doubtful that any significance can be attached to it since the hair in a minimum thermometer might be worked in either direction by the continued flow of the liquid caused by changing temperature.

Upon descending the mountain for the last time, we paused to place our two minimum thermometers on the rock shown in plates 1 and 2. This rock is located on the ridge crest about 50 yards below the rock on which Stuck placed his thermometers. <sup>4</sup> Plate 3 shows Stuck's cache rock which was also used by the Lindley-Leik party in 1932 to mark their cache. <sup>5</sup> Plate 4 shows Capt. Bates and Mr. Nilsson standing below this rock with Browne Tower in the background. This picture was taken from the foot of the rock on which the two thermometers were placed.

These thermometers were firmly placed in a crack near the top of the rock around which a rope was tied. Care was taken to place the bulb end slightly higher than the rest of the tube so that any motion of the hair caused by flow of the thermometer liquid would tend to be towards higher rather than lower temperatures. The

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<sup>1</sup> *The Conquest of Mt. McKinley*, Belmore Browne, p. 349.

<sup>2</sup> *The Ascent of Denali*, Hudson Stuck, pp. 106-107.

<sup>3</sup> Ref. 2, pp. 119-120.

<sup>4</sup> Ref. 2, photograph opposite p. 72.

<sup>5</sup> The Lindley-Leik cache was on the S. side of the rock, while that of Stuck was "at the foot or W. of the upward facing side of the great slab." We did not search for Stuck's cache, being unaware of its exact location, and apparently did not find all of the one left by Lindley-Leik. Grant Pearson remembered leaving a 5-gallon can of gasoline under the portions of the cache that we discovered.

two thermometers are intended to guard against fortuitous behavior of either, but we realize that they might not be adequate.

The temperature two feet below the surface of the snow on the summit of Mt. McKinley on July 24th, 1942 was  $-16^{\circ}$  F. Since it was changing only slowly with depth, the value is possibly near the average temperature on the summit. Minimum temperatures observed by the U. S. Army Alaskan Test Expedition on the upper portions of Mt. McKinley were about  $20^{\circ}$  F. lower than temperatures at equivalent heights over Fairbanks, Alaska, during the same period. It is now known that lower temperatures are to be expected in quiet air pockets near the ground than on wind swept summits of high mountains.

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#### ROCKY MOUNTAINS OF CANADA

1944 marks the 50th anniversary of the first ascent of Mt. Temple, in 1894, by the guideless party of S.E.S. Allen, L. F. Friswell and W. D. Wilcox. This was the first ascent of a peak of the Canadian Rocky Mountain above 11,000 ft.

*First Ascent of Mt. Lilliput.* In July of 1940, Dr. Alvin Cox and I drove over the newly opened highways from Revelstoke to the Athabaska Glacier. The weather was pretty continuously unpleasant—lots of rain and low-lying clouds, but we did make a few climbs in between, including the first ascent of Mt. Lilliput (9500 ft.) on the Wapta Icefield. We backpacked up to the head of Sherbrooke Valley, camping apparently at the place where the unfortunate contretemps with the bear and Christian Häsler and companion occurred the preceding fall. The warden was reluctant to let us go—they were still looking for the bear and rode up several times to see if we were O.K. We saw plenty of traces of bear but no bear—however, several fine elk and moose. The first attempt was defeated by a particularly violent and bitterly cold storm which became so bad on the icefield that we were hardly able to turn back. By the time the weather turned for the better, our provisions were out, but on very short rations, something like four prunes apiece and a can of tomato juice for the 24 hours, we finally completed the trip in excellent weather. We contoured around Mt. Niles, crossing the col between it and Mt. Daly. From here there is a drop of 1000 ft. or more and it must be 6-7 miles across the icefield to Mt. Lilliput. The icefield was in a miserable state for traveling, being in an advanced honeycomb stage—sharp narrow spines and troughs knee-deep sometimes. It certainly was laborious to have to lift each foot so high with each step and slip around on the uneven footing in the troughs. We had intended to combine the climb with Mt. Balfour, but this was effective persuasion to leave that mountain alone. We climbed up broken rock to the ridge leading up to the Balfour