

IN MEMORIAM

WILLIAM WILLIAMS

1862-1947

William Williams was born in New London, Conn., on 2 June 1862, a son of Charles Augustus and Elizabeth Hoyt Williams. He was a descendant of William Williams who signed the Declaration of Independence. A bachelor, he died in New York City on 8 February 1947, at the University Club, where he had lived since 1899.

During his early education (1873-76) at Sillig's School, Vevey, on the Lake of Geneva, he acquired his fondness for mountaineering, at the age of 13 making an ascent of Monte Rosa with his father. He received an A.B. from Yale in 1884, and his LL.B. from Harvard in 1888. During most of the next 12 years he was in the law office of Simpson, Thacher and Barnum, New York City. After 1900, except when he was holding government posts, he was engaged in private practice. In 1892 he served as junior counsel in the Bering Sea arbitration proceedings with Great Britain; and he was Commissioner of Immigration, Ellis Island, 1902-05 and 1909-13, and Commissioner of Water Supply, Gas and Electricity for the City of New York, 1914-17.

At the outset of the Spanish-American War, Williams joined Squadron A (cavalry), but was transferred to the quartermaster's department in Puerto Rico, being commissioned a major. In World War I he was a lieutenant colonel of ordnance, 1918-19. Since 1916 he had been a vestryman of St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church; and he was a trustee of the Presbyterian Hospital and the Seamen's Church Institute. His clubs included the Down Town, Metropolitan and Union. *American Lawn Tennis* recently listed him as one of the four oldest active tennis players in the world, as he played at Nantucket, Mass., in the summer of 1946.

Williams joined the Alpine Club (London) in 1882 and, becoming senior American member on the death of Justice Holmes (1935), was elected to honorary membership. He joined the American Alpine Club in 1921, and his extensive climbing record is given in full in our published lists. After 1885 his visits to the Alps were only occasional; his ascents, however, include the traverse of the Drus (1889, the second ascent of both peaks in a single day), Aiguille Verte, Mont Blanc (twice), as well as major peaks of the Oberland, Eastern Pennines and Bernina. In the Eastern Alps he

had ascended the Ortler and Gross Glockner. He made three ascents of Piz Bernina, once in winter and once by a new route (1885) from the Tschierva Glacier via Fuorcla Scersen-Bernina. In Ecuador he reached the summit of Pinchincha, and in Colorado he climbed Longs Peak.

In 1888 he joined H. G. Broke and H. W. Topham on their expedition to Mount St. Elias, the first to attempt this mountain, gaining an elevation of 11,400 ft. on the S. ridge, an account of which he wrote for the *American Alpine Journal* (1942) as well as for publications of earlier date (*Scribner's*, April 1889; *Alpine Journal*, August 1889).

His figure will be missed at the dinners of the Club, which he regularly attended, being present at the meeting of December 1946, to hear the account of the first complete American ascent of Mount St. Elias, 58 years after his own experience.

J. M. T.

HERSCHEL CLIFFORD PARKER

9 July 1867-12 March 1944

In 1905 a kind fate led me to the smoking room of a westbound Canadian Pacific train.* The only occupant was a man whose physical and facial characteristics were so unusual that I was instantly drawn to him.

In the first meeting, which covered an hour of animated talk, I found that my fellow traveller's name was Herschel C. Parker, that he was the head of the Department of Physics at Columbia University and that he possessed a fanatical zeal for difficult mountain ascents.

In subsequent meetings he stated that he was planning an expedition to climb a fabulous Alaskan mountain that had just come into popular ken through an article in the *New York Times* written by W. A. Dickey, a young Princeton graduate who had seen the great peak from the Susitna Valley and named it Mount McKinley. As I had seen the mountain from the Kenai Range and was familiar with conditions in Alaska, he asked me to join his venture. The chance meeting thus ripened into a friendship that carried us through many strange scenes and adventures and lasted until his death, 40 years later.

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