

In Memoriam

HENRY SNOW HALL, JR.
1895-1987

A very proper Bostonian, in every positive sense of the word, Henry Hall has been the most important single figure in the maturity of the American Alpine Club.

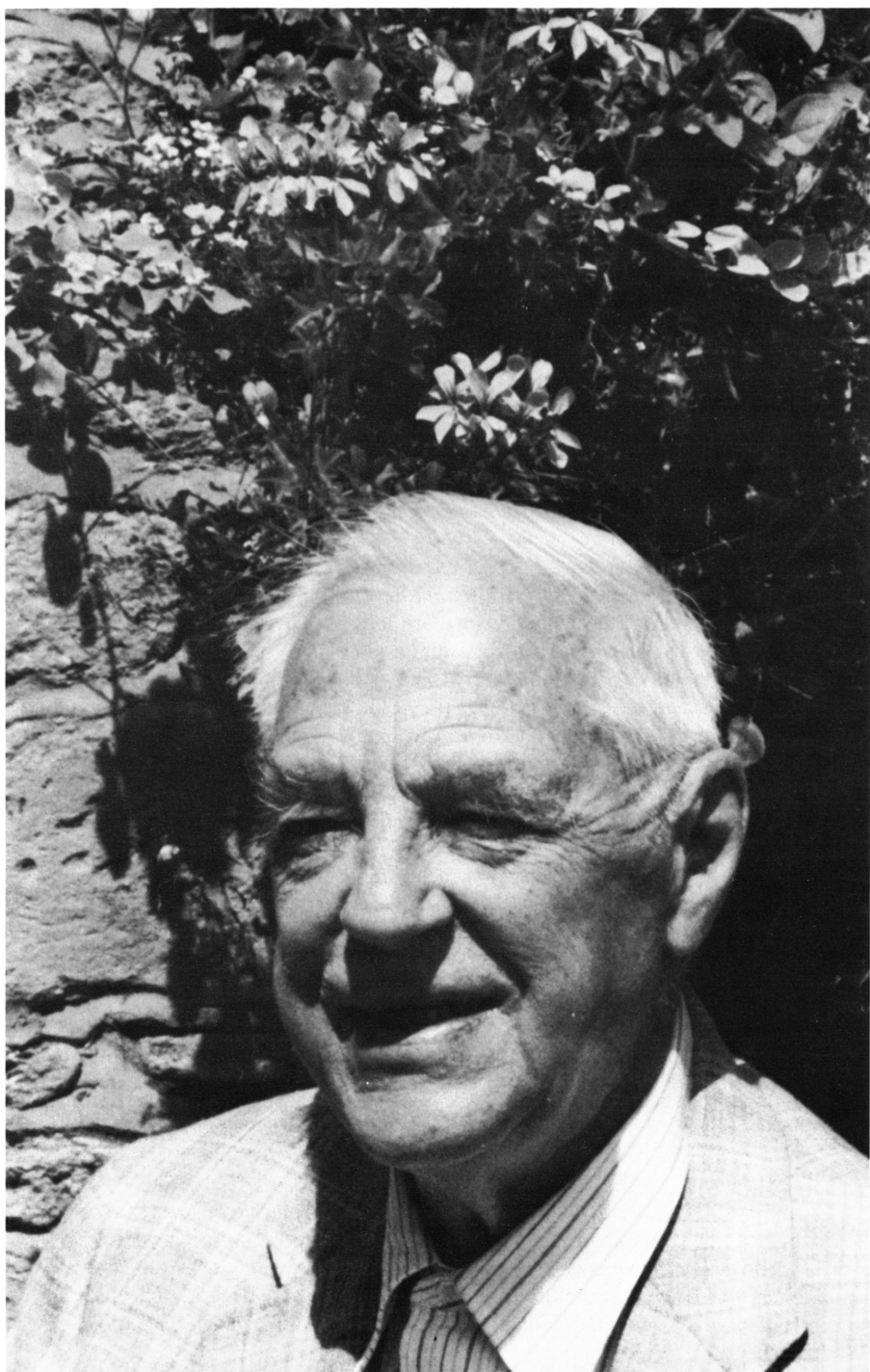
Born June 3, 1895, Henry was educated at Saint George's School in Newport, Rhode Island and graduated from Harvard College with the Class of 1919. He was in infantry officer in World War I. He is survived by his wife, Lydia, and daughter, Edith Overly.

Our first Honorary President served the Club in various capacities, Counsellor, Secretary, President and Honorary President, since becoming a member in 1918. While he partook of many interests in his life, including a prominent part in community and public service endeavors in the Greater Boston area, the ongoing interest of Henry's life has been mountaineering, which he took up as a teenager on a visit to Switzerland, and The American Alpine Club.

The Club's accomplishments during Henry's long membership became one with his own and are best summed up in his own words, "Mountaineering is now recognized as a legitimate sport for thousands of people. The AAC was instrumental in making it a respectable pastime."

To him, our Club's greatest single accomplishment came in 1941, when he, and the other Club officers, convinced General George Marshall that the United States would have to have trained mountain troops before the war could be won in Europe and perhaps elsewhere. This was the genesis of the 87th Mountain Infantry Regiment, which saw service in the Aleutian Islands in 1943. It then became part of the 10th Mountain Division, which broke the "Gothic Line," was the first unit to reach the Po River and forced the surrender of the German troops in Italy, initiating the collapse of Hitler's rule in 1945. Having stimulated the formation of mountain troops, Henry set out to help recruit members for it, including a variety of Harvard mountaineers, and others, for whom he wrote one of the required three letters necessary for acceptance into this elite corps.

Henry's serious climbing activities began before World War I and continued until well after World War II. First in the Bernina Alps and later in the Valais, he returned year after year to the mountains of his youth. But his greatest accomplishments in mountaineering were in North America, in Alaska and British Columbia. Henry's list of first ascents include little known peaks such as Mount Hallam in the Monashees, and well known ones like the North Peak of Mount



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Waddington, in the Coast Range and a new route on formidable Mount Robson. Along the way have been dozens of other ascents, first and otherwise. He was not among the summit team on the first ascent of Mount Logan as he volunteered to help another member, who had frozen his feet, down the mountain from 17,000 feet.

Of them all, the Coast Range of British Columbia was probably Henry's favorite haunt, and his living room, for fifty years, was adorned by a painting of the area done for him by Belmore Browne. He made several visits to these mountains, sometimes approaching from the sea, and other times from the Interior, often in company with Don and Phyllis Munday, and packer Batisse Dester. While he knew he did not possess the technical skill to climb the higher South Peak of Waddington, he noted it as "one of the most remarkable culminating points of any mountain range in the world."

Henry's climbing record also included ascents in New Zealand, Mexico, the Caucasus, Japan, Columbia, besides many parts of the United States. New country was his specialty, opening new vistas by backpacking and horse-train ventures. Others were to follow later and make other ascents, but Henry's were always the unique and opening moves. Some of his "bear stories" were priceless, but this is not the place for them. Between climbs, Henry was a hiker, sometimes walking dozens of miles each day, and routinely climbing Mount Monadnock in southern New Hampshire.

While he enjoyed an almost lifetime association with the AAC (being six years older than the Club, itself) Henry was also the founder and guiding light of the oldest collegiate mountaineering organization in the country, the Harvard Mountaineering Club, in 1924. His persistent support of this group enabled many of its members to become among the most prominent alpinists of the country, and provide leadership to countless other mountaineering ventures.

The Hall residence in Cambridge was always open to visiting alpinists, from all over the world. Countless Club members have been guests there, planned expeditions while sitting around his living room floor, studied the records and maps in his enormous library, and picked his brains on approaches, sources of supply, people to look up and the myriad trivia of getting set to go into new country. Invariably, Lydia Hall (née Storer), who married Henry in 1921, would receive us with that same gentle graciousness she displayed to the entire American Alpine Club when finally elected a member. Lydia had long met all the Club's criteria for membership, with several seasons among glacier-hung peaks and numerous prominent ascents to her credit, but she had always preferred to leave the alpine spotlight to shine alone on her generous husband. In 1982, the Club's Board of Directors decided she had been under wraps long enough.

Henry Hall was honored at home and abroad for his persistent support of alpinism in all its forms, of which the most prestigious was being elected to Honorary membership in the Alpine Club in 1962 (after 38 years as a member). But to the American Alpine Club, and American mountaineering of which he has been the most persistent and generous supporter in history, the Club's *An-*

gelo Heilprin Citation, given Henry at our 1985 Annual Meeting, said it best: “. . . always quiet, always in the background, but always ready to help. Without Henry modern American expeditionary mountaineering would never have grown to its present stature. Yet no one, perhaps not even Henry himself, will ever know precisely where he assisted and by how much. Minya Konka? Nanda Devi? K2 in 1938 and several times later? Mount Everest? The laurels went to the climbers. Henry remained in the shadows. Only the poor and simple alpinists of this world, like Ed Feuz, have ever expressed their gratitude and appreciated the greatness of his generous anonymity.”

Edward Feuz, Jr. (1884-1981), Swiss guide of Canada, climbed with Henry Hall on many occasions, starting to do so at the insistence of Henry's father, in 1916. His judgment, rendered in 1924, was: “I'll bet he'll do more for mountain climbing than all the guides and climbers who've been out here in Canada put together.” How well he saw the future!

But Feuz was not alone in visualizing the place in alpinism of our loving and generous Honorary President. Fritz Wiessner knew; “Henry has been one of the most active and important members of the AAC and other mountain clubs in the world. His intense interest and correspondence with other leaders in the field made him probably the best informed American alpinist.” And from a co-founder of the Harvard Mountaineering Club, William Osgood Field: “Henry personally knew just about everybody in the mountaineering field in North America and many more at the Alpine Club in London and on the Continent.”

Our distinguished past President, Professor T.C.P. Zimmerman summed it up, too: “Throughout all the achievements of our national mountaineering organization runs the thread of Henry Hall's continuous and often anonymous generosity.”

Henry Hall was a thoughtful and generous catalyst, who made possible many of the works of the American Alpine Club, most particularly visible in the renowned quality of our *Journal*. Without him, the American Alpine Club will never be the same.

WILLIAM LOWELL PUTNAM

FRITIOF MELVIN FRYXELL
1900-1986

Fritiof M. Fryxell, geologist, professor, writer and mountaineer, died December 19, 1986 at his home in Rock Island, Illinois. He had been a member of the American Alpine Club for 56 years and was elected to honorary membership in 1981. Professor Fryxell's professional life was rich and varied. Born April 27, 1900, in Moline, Illinois, he attended Augustana College, Rock Island, earned an MA in English from the University of Illinois and a Ph.D. in geology from the University of Chicago in 1929. His dissertation on the glacial features