

I began climbing mountains to attain a summit long enough ago that I knew & probably climbed with those whose names are encountered in books on mountaineering. Jim Whittaker, the 1st American on Mount Everest with whom I was on Mt. Kennedy. Dee Molenaar, an American on K2. Hans Gmoser, probably met in Diamond Head, who became a Guide. Leif Paterson, of Swedish origin, with whom I was to go to Dhaulagiri, who died in an avalanche in the Selkirks. Martin & Esther Kafer, of Swiss origin, who probably climbed more mountains in different parts of the Province & did 1st ascents than anyone living today. Alice Purdey with whom I made many BCMC trips, & private. Paddy Sherman described her as "the leading woman mountaineer of her era, in Canada & possibly North America. She was with me on Mount Logan where she, a nurse, cleaned out the porridge pot, boiled up water & the needed instruments, to "put 14 stitches in Thompson's head." Somewhere it is recorded that "the high point of her career came in 1971 when she reached the summit of Mt. St. Elias with a BCMC expedition". I was on the party. Asked why she climbed she said: "I never really bothered about what I climbed. It was the doing which was ...important". In the many accounts of Mountaineering in Canada following the 1950's, I would know all whose names were recorded for some 25 years after I began, & people who would have ventured into unknown areas. The BCMC camps were for some years intended to produce 1st ascents, several.

I had been in the mountains on skis & on foot, hiking & it must have been with the joining of the BCMC that I began climbing, for I don't believe I had a friend who was a mountaineer. Once I joined I was in or on the verge of the Law trade & so had both the money & the time to climb & must have derived some satisfaction in attaining a summit because I was attending annual BCMC Summer Camps & weekend climbs organized by the Club. I think myself fortunate to have being a member, so often, of a 1st ascent party, & to have been invited on difficult climbs such as Mt. Waddington.

I began going in to mountain country when I was a High School student living in the West End, when friends Jack Fleck & George Entwistle, both now dead, & I would ride to Horseshoe Bay laden with sleeping bag, canvas sheet, Kraft Cheese dinner & probably pork & beans, cookies & cake & perhaps instant coffee. The bikes we would hide in the bush by a track of sorts & walk up to Whyte Lake (20-30 minutes above, I believe). I don't know what we did there. We must have taken an air rifle or 22 on some occasions. I have a faint recollection of having been shot in the backside with a 22 by George. I continued to ski on Grouse Mountain until I left for Edmonton & RCAF training. Before departing, I am told I climbed both Crown Mountain & The Lions. I don't know why or with who. With the War end & my 1st trip in to Diamond Head Lodge in Garibaldi Park, to do some work there eventually, I was introduced to the mountaineering world. The transfer to the BCMC world began, I don't know how or when. I was in the right profession to be so engaged.

When I began going on Club trips, this part of the world was 'unclimbed-in'. Summer camps were of short duration & would be situated where there may have been only 1 peak climbed with another 10 unclimbed. Access might be by a long walk from gravel road end by trail or none. At other times access was by float plane & walk, heavily laden with equipment & food & taken in 1 walk. Bey recalls 1 trip with me (was it Lake Louise Water?) when she, W. P., J. walked in with me. I had been in for a week & came out to pick them up.. W., said B., bitched the whole of the walk in. There was no trail. We worked our way through bush. W. complained 4 hours. We maintained a steady pace for the camp had a cook for its 2nd week & we were having steak for dinner

I became known in the profession as a 'Climber' & in my early days, there may have been no other lawyers who were climbers. These were the happy days when I knew the fellow members of the profession & what they did besides practice Law for & on people. They were, too, days in which equipment was simple. A tent didn't require a book of instructions to assemble. A pack was a large bag mounted on a frame with a couple of side pockets & a set of straps from which the pack hung. Hardware was a piton, hammer & carabiners. Crampons, rope, slings, an axe & sunglasses might complete

what I travelled with. A gas stove, gas, pot & shovel in snow terraing sufficed.

In the climbs I was doing, we were not seeking the technically difficult, climbs such as the Squamish Chief. I think most of us were interested in attaining a summit. The long walk in, laden with all that you could carry & needed, the planning & assembly of food & equipment, the finding of a campsite, climbing daily if the weather permitted, setting up higher camps if needed, the strenuous ascent of 4-5-6-7,000 feet above camp & then the return to camp for food & rest. This was the time to think about the climb & attaining a summit; building a cairn to confirm a 1st ascent. We would return to camp, tired, stumbling often over logs & stumps & rocks in our tiredness with a joy in our achievement, our company, the blessing of silence & the incredible peaks about us. This was a world few would ever attain & it was ours.