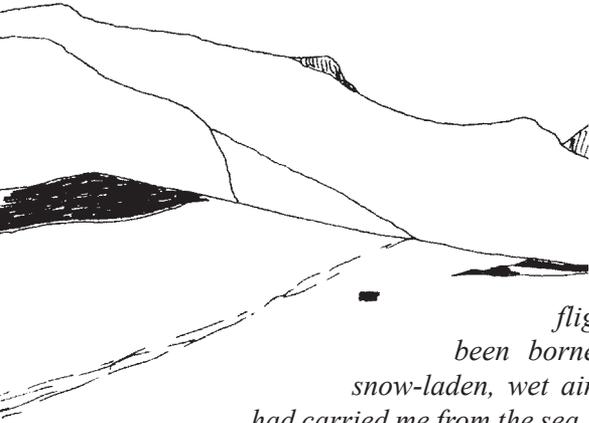


## CHAPTER TWO

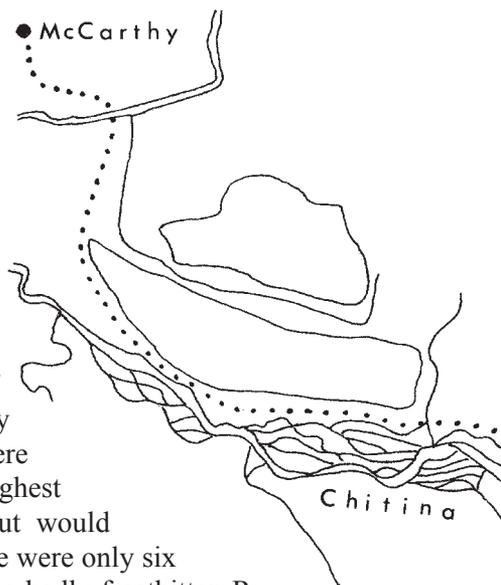
# The Long Haul to Mount Logan



*Carried by an intensely strong updraft I momentarily lost sight of the huge barrier of snow and ice that I knew was in my flight path. I had, suddenly, been borne high into cloud and the snow-laden, wet air by the ferocious wind that had carried me from the sea, across two large rivers of ice (the Malaspina and Seward Glaciers) toward the precipitous southern flanks of the largest mountain massif I had ever seen. I at least knew that I had to be high to fly over it. I really shouldn't have been in this predicament but there was no way I could buck the wind. Barely clearing what appeared to be a long ridge and dipping into a hollow, I really couldn't see very well, my attention was drawn toward a slender object that oscillated wildly in the wind. Whatever it was it stood out in great contrast to the surrounding environment that was all white, in fact sky and dear mother earth had merged to become one. I couldn't resist wheeling to investigate, curiosity is an integral part of my psyche, and as I turned something else caught my eye. It was the indistinct form of a creature plowing slowly, very slowly, through deep snow and heading directly toward the stick, or that is what it looked like to me.*

*Quork! Quork! Oh my! I had better pay attention to what I am doing. I forgot there's always a tremendous downdraft on the lee side of such topography and nearly banged into the snow.*

The creature plowing through the snow was Norman Read from Massachusetts. The year was 1925 and six members of an originally eight-man mountaineering expedition of four Americans and four Canadians were, at this point, fighting for their lives. Frostbitten, tired and suffering from the effect of high altitude, the whiteout conditions had imposed a total loss of direction as they made their way across the high plateau. They were returning from the summit of the highest peak in Canada, Mount Logan, but would they survive to tell their story? There were only six because Henry Hall had to escort the badly frostbitten R. M. Morgan to a lower camp prior to the day of the summit bid.



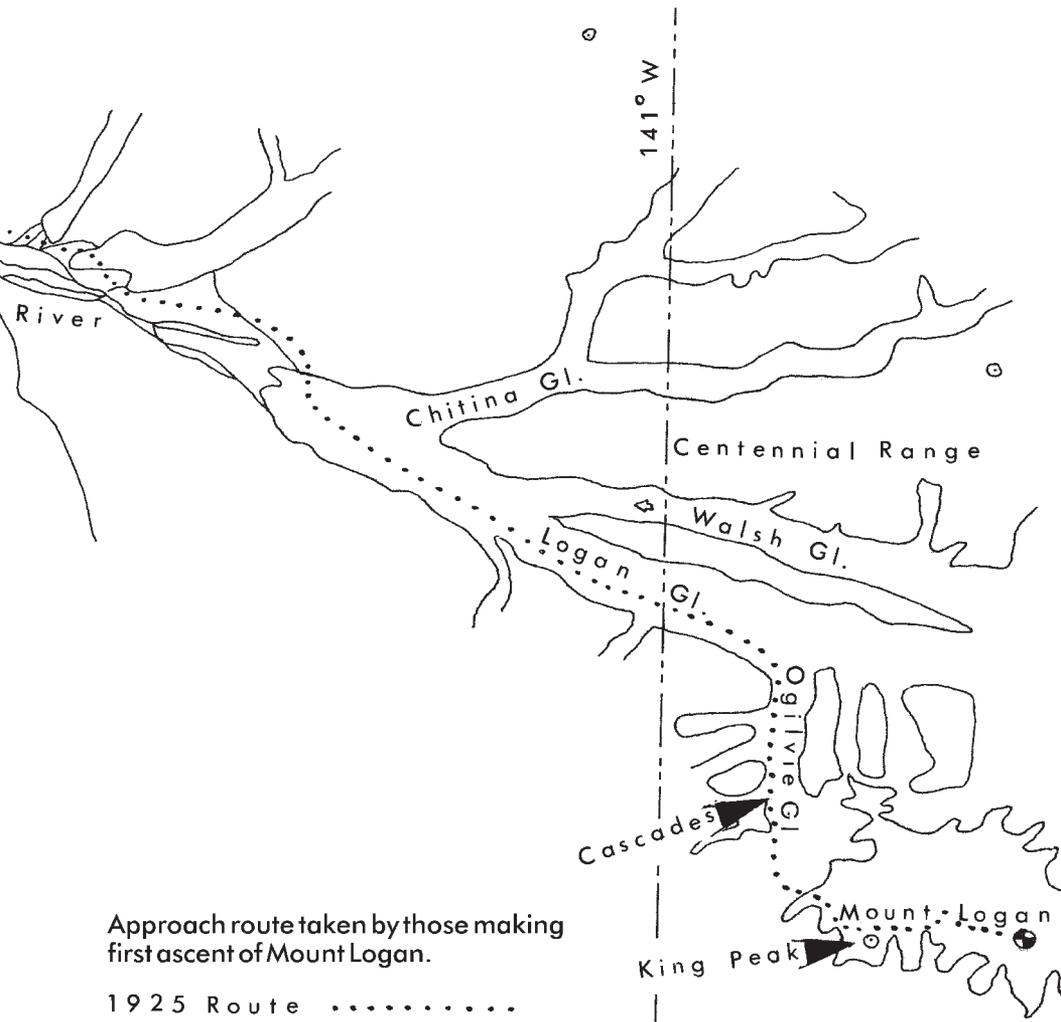
If the reader will forgive me, I have been encouraged by my exuberant and sagacious friend the raven to enter the narrative of this first ascent at a most critical moment in the expedition.

Had Read not spotted a trail marker (wand) of thin bamboo, the outcome might have been very different. At the time, separated into two ropes of three, exhausted and suffering from varying degrees of frostbite and virtually lost in the blizzard, it was imperative that someone in the group find a marker wand to guide them to a lower camp.

It is not difficult to understand why Mount Logan is such a popular objective for mountaineers. Not only is it Canada's highest mountain 5,959 meters (19,545 ft.), but also North America's second highest being only 236 meters (775 ft.) lower than Mount McKinley in Alaska. However, it is also attractive for less obvious reasons. Mount Logan is remote, of relatively high latitude, and is the high point of one of the largest mountain massifs in the world. To give some perspective, at the 4,570-meter (15,000-foot) level, it measures 20 kilometers (12 miles) east to west and 8 kilometers (5 miles) north to south.

This great mountain was named in 1890 by explorer Prof. I. C. Russell who first spotted its southern flanks while attempting the

# Mount Logan



Approach route taken by those making first ascent of Mount Logan.

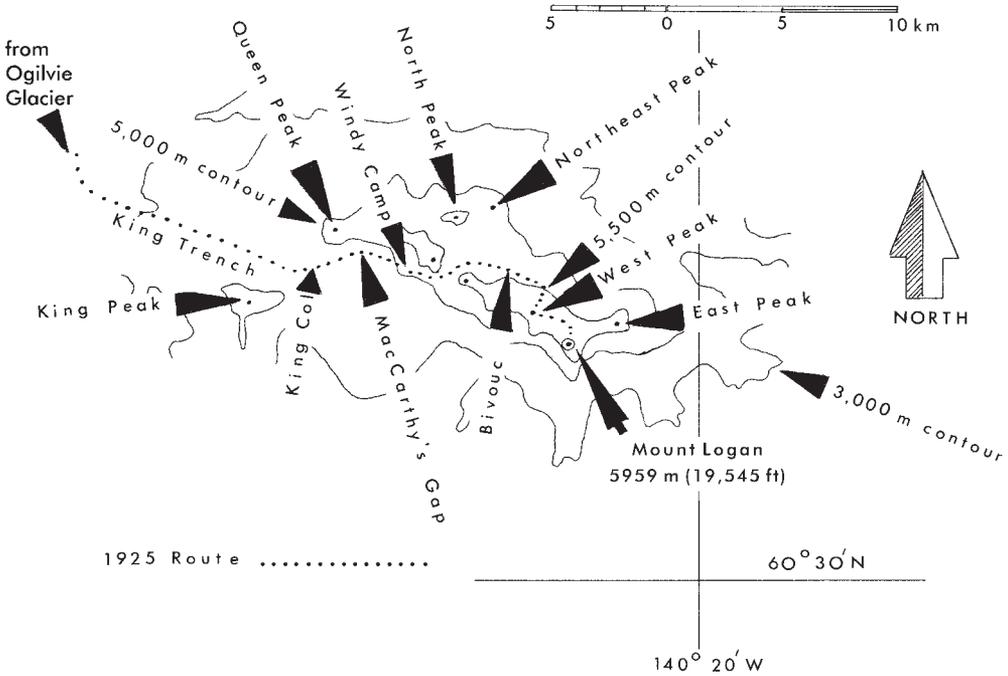
1925 Route .....

Scale: 1:500,000



# MASSIF OF MOUNT LOGAN

Scale: 1:125,000



ascent of Mount St. Elias. He called it after the founder, and for many years director, of the Geological Survey of Canada, Sir William E. Logan.

While the topography of Mount Logan is such that a high summit plateau is literally fringed by a number of peaks that are at the most within 700 meters (2,300 ft.) of one another, there is of course only one true summit located on the south side of the plateau slightly east of a topographical center. The massif is so large and offers so many challenging routes and objectives that mountaineering parties have considered the attainment of subsidiary peaks worthwhile objectives in themselves, particularly the East and West peaks.

While there is a relatively easy, nontechnical route to the high summit plateau, by way of the King Glacier (often called the King Trench), expeditions have reached the "top of Canada" by a number

of routes and from all directions. Especially challenging is the negotiation of one or other of the many buttresses that extend outward in all directions from its impressive flanks. Since Mount Logan's longest dimension is in an east-west direction, there are many such ribs that emanate from the north and south faces. Ascents of most of these involve the negotiation of long, sharp, broken ridges that offer considerable objective danger and demand a high level of technical expertise.

Since the summit plateau is large and flat enough to accommodate the landing of a turboprop ski-plane, the region was chosen as a suitable site for a high altitude research station. The High Altitude Physiological Study (HAPS) was initiated in 1967 by pioneer altitude-sickness researcher Dr. Charles Houston. Because glacier pilots, the late Philip Upton and his current successor Andrew Williams, could land at the 5,311-meter (17,424-foot) level with their supercharged Helio-Courier, it was possible to compare the physiology of subjects airlifted to the station, with no chance of acclimatization to altitude, to a control group who had gradually acclimatized by climbing the King Trench route. Many other important tests relating to the effects of altitude on a human being were carried out in cooperation with the Canadian Army during this valuable and most important program.

Between the first sighting and naming of Logan by I. C. Russell and Dr. Houston's HAPS experiments, the mountain has been the objective of many expeditions. But it is the first attempt to climb it that deserves special mention. First ascents, like first sea or land crossings, are bound to be special because they are journeys into the unknown. On those occasions where climate and altitude threaten physical performance, the problems associated with route finding are not always the most critical ones to overcome. It was not so much the negotiation of the terrain as the battle against the elements that made the first ascent of Mount Logan so difficult.

When Professor A. P. Coleman of the University of Toronto, veteran geologist and mountaineer, presented to the Alpine Club of Canada in 1922 the idea of attempting to climb Mount Logan, he was, without knowing it, proposing several expeditions. In 1923, the Club appointed an executive committee and tentatively named the climbing party. The Alpine Clubs of Great Britain and the United States were asked to send representatives so that it would be a truly

international project, and rightly so, since much of the exploration of the region so far had involved representatives of many countries. While it was initially envisaged the climb would take place the following year, shortness of time and slow funding made this impractical. It was this delay that gave renowned mountaineer A. H. MacCarthy of British Columbia, the chosen leader, the chance to make a preliminary reconnaissance.

The following three avenues of approach were evaluated: 1) Whitehorse-Kluane by wagon road, followed by a 96-kilometer (58-mile) trek through unexplored and heavily glaciated terrain. 2) Yakutat-Malaspina-Seward, and around to the southwest side of the massif, another 100-kilometer-long approach almost entirely on glacier ice and fully exposed to the vile storms that sweep inland from the Gulf of Alaska. 3) Railway to the mining town of McCarthy in Alaska, thence up the Chitina River Valley by pack train to the foot of the Chitina Glacier. From there the route led across the Chitina and Walsh Glaciers to the smoother Logan Glacier.

This last approach was selected mainly because there were fewer unknowns. Reading the reports and examining the photographs and maps of the International Boundary Commission survey parties of 1912 and 1913, the organizers had a pretty good idea of the terrain over which they would have to travel.

The first expedition was a reconnaissance carried out by Mr. MacCarthy in June and July of 1924. Spending forty-four days in the field, he was able to make the ascent of the Logan Glacier as far as the foot of the Ogilvie Glacier. It became very apparent to MacCarthy that to relay a sufficient quantity of supplies over such a distance would require an army of packers. The alternative was to carry out a winter freighting program, using horses and dogs as far as the Chitina Glacier and dog teams from that point forward.

The second expedition began on February 15, 1925, when freighting parties left MacCarthy with 8,600 kilograms (19,111 lbs) of supplies, equipment and fodder to be cached at strategic points along the proposed route. The third and final expedition started on May 2, 1925, when the Mount Logan Expedition sailed from Seattle.

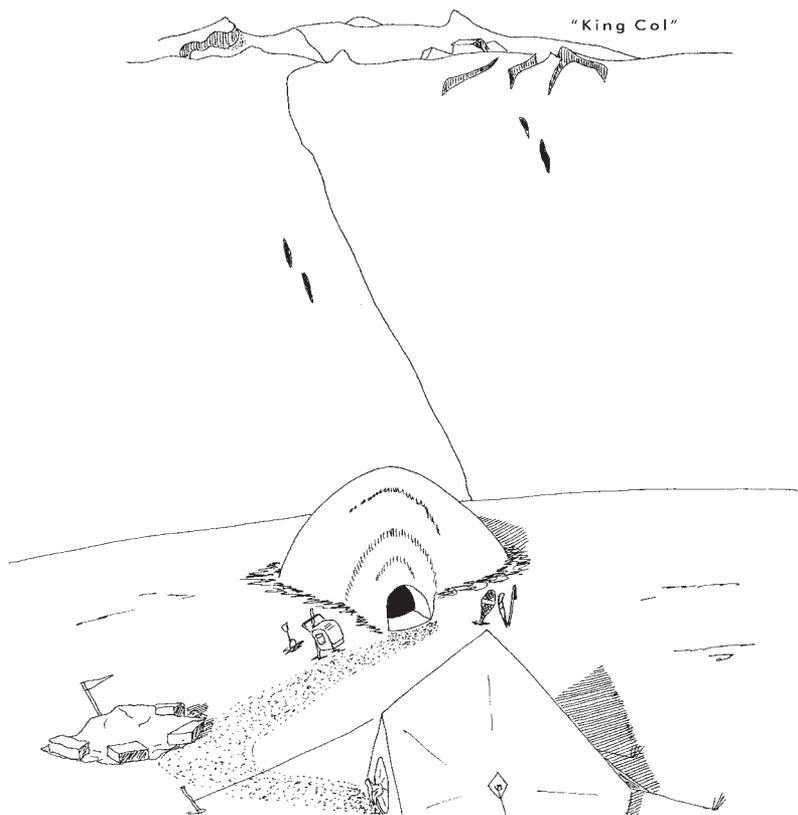
Party members of this third expedition were as follows: A. H. MacCarthy (leader) from British Columbia; H. F. Lambart (deputy leader), a Dominion Land Surveyor from Ottawa; Allen Carpe, an

electrical engineer, representing the American Alpine Club; Lt. Col. W. W. Foster of Victoria, who was at that time deputy minister of Public Works for British Columbia and a climbing buddy of MacCarthy's; R. M. Morgan, Henry S. Hall, Jr. and N. H. Read, three volunteers from Boston who paid their own way; H. M. Laing, a government biologist from Comox, B.C., who was the naturalist of the expedition and A. Taylor, a local guide—these two joined the party at McCarthy, Alaska.

On May 12, a pack train of six horses and four mules left McCarthy. Six days later they reached the Chitina Glacier. That was as far as the beasts of burden were required to go. Alternately man-hauling sleds whenever this was advantageous and otherwise backpacking, the party made good progress to the foot of the icefall that marked the head of the Ogilvie Glacier. Dubbed Cascades, this camp at 2,377 meters (7,800 ft.) could be viewed as the beginning of the ascent proper. At that time there remained one big unknown. Did the head of the King Glacier end in a cul-de-sac or was there a practical route to Logan's upper regions? This was one thing that could not be ascertained from the International Boundary Survey photos. If the King route failed to provide access to the summit plateau, they would never have enough time to retrace their steps and find another route that year.

After laboriously hauling supplies over a jumble of ice to a point 300 meters (980 ft.) above Cascades, they were finally at King Trench. Allotting themselves twenty-eight days for the climb, they packed rations in sacks, each one providing sustenance for eight men for two days. At twenty-nine kilograms (64 lbs) one sack was considered a reasonable load for one man. Other items included 1,000 one-meter-long willow wands for the marking of the trail at intervals of about thirty-one meters (100 ft.).

When a reconnaissance party reported that there was an exit at the head of the King Glacier, you can imagine the elation and zeal with which they began to sledge supplies to its higher reaches. It was not until they actually reached King Col (as the head of the trench was called) that they saw their hopes of easy access to Logan's upper regions shattered by the actuality of a steep ice ramp with ice blocks at its top. To see if the ascent of this was the path to take, a reconnaissance party climbed the east arete of King Peak, which forms the south flank of King Trench, to a height that afford-



The Ramp as viewed from King Col.

ed a view of terrain above the ramp. Morale was restored when they reported that a route did look feasible, and that, once through the seracs, the upper slopes seemed to present a relatively straightforward route.

On a day that started fine but in an hour or so became stormy, the party carefully negotiated a path through the seracs that adorn the crest of the ramp. They appropriately called this section MacCarthy's Gap. Enveloped in blinding snow, they succeeded in establishing Ice Cliff Camp at 4,755 meters (15,600 ft.). Impatient to proceed, they were not surprisingly confined to their tents by storm for the whole of the following day. Moving again on June 16, all went well until noon, when dense fog enveloped them. That would have been the end of progress had not the reconnaissance

party managed to find a route through a chaos of ice blocks and located a snowbridge that permitted the crossing of a large crevasse. Despite the poor visibility, the party was able to plant marker wands and establish a camp at the 5,090-meter (16,700-foot) level, which they called Windy Camp. MacCarthy made the following entry in his diary: “Group in fair shape but not strong for the work to be done.”

During the night the temperature dropped to  $-36^{\circ}\text{C}$  ( $-32^{\circ}\text{F}$ ). The intense cold made every action depressingly slower, and, though they had begun preparations for the day at 0330 hours, it was 0900 before they actually got underway! The whole party succeeded in reaching 5,600 meters (18,370 ft.) from which point they had hoped to glimpse the summit region, but clouds prevented such a view. After waiting for an hour in the hope of some clearing, they returned to Windy Camp. That night, June 17–18, they recorded their lowest temperature of  $-37^{\circ}\text{C}$  ( $-35^{\circ}\text{F}$ ).

On June 18 it was necessary for one rope to descend to the col for supplies while the other tried to wand (mark out a route with willow sticks planted in the snow at about 100-foot intervals) a route beyond 5,600 meters (18,370 ft.). Both ropes experienced extremely cold conditions with high wind chill. The supply party remained overnight at King Col. Conditions on June 19 imposed the heaviest toll on the supply party. Burdened by heavy loads and blinded by blowing snow, they had to literally bulldoze their way through deep drifts. The storm reached its peak as they passed the site of the Ice Cliff Camp. Fortunately, the reconnaissance party guessed they would have difficulty and went down to give them a hand. It wasn't until 2100 hours that all made it back to Windy Camp, only to be faced with the digging out of an almost totally buried camp.

June 20 at 1430, the party got away with supplies for the site of the 5,600-meter (18,370-foot) camp. In the ascent of Mount Logan using the King Trench Route, this particular point is one of the most significant. It is here that one breaches the rim of the summit plateau and it is here that the climber sees granite sticking out of the snow. After experiencing such a predominance of ice and snow, it affords an unmistakable, if inexplicable, feeling of comfort.

Most of the morning of June 21 the party remained in their tents while a storm raged outside. But at 1500 the sun suddenly appeared and the wind died. One can imagine the flurry of activity to take full

advantage of favorable conditions. Morgan had suffered so badly from the cold that he had frostbitten feet and fingers. Hall graciously and unselfishly volunteered to escort him to lower levels thereby sacrificing his chance at the summit.

The party, now six, replaced their shoepacs with four or five pairs of socks and dry-tanned, moose-hide moccasins before moving up to the cache at 5,600 meters. Erecting their tents, they speculated that this was in all probability the highest camp ever established on the North American continent. Andy Taylor prepared a wonderful meal and they recorded a minimum temperature of  $-27^{\circ}\text{C}$  ( $-17^{\circ}\text{F}$ ).

June 22, it was almost noon before they got away, with everyone feeling the effects of the altitude. Their movements were dreadfully slow, but they were well prepared with food for eight days. It took them the rest of the day to travel six kilometers (four miles), constantly battling against snow and wind. Plateau Camp, which had been pitched on the outskirts of a vast plateau of snow that sloped down toward the north, was at about 5,460 meters (17,900 ft.). MacCarthy's diary reads: "We must push and push fast as possible and then some more."

June 23, the storm through the night was of such ferocity that they feared the loss of the tents. Dying out in the morning, it left a thick fog that lifted quite suddenly at about 1000 hours. MacCarthy yelled, "The day!"

Carrying emergency rations, extra clothing, cameras, an aneroid barometer and a thermometer, they set off at 1100. Moving around the margin of the basin, they lost some elevation and had lunch. Visible 450 meters (1,475 ft.) above them was a double-peaked summit. Was it their goal? Changing from snowshoes to crampons, they insulated their feet from the cold metal with felt insoles. By 1630 they were on the summit, but there was little cause for celebration. Improving visibility revealed, about three kilometers (mile and a half) to the east, another peak that looked higher. Using his pocket-level, Lambart confirmed its dominance. It was not so much the distance that presented the challenge, although that was bad enough, but the fact that there was an intervening depression of 300 meters (1,000 ft.). With the day well advanced, they lost no time in descending to the saddle. It was here they cached their snowshoes and other extras. Slowly cramponning up flinty ice, they emerged on the small triangular summit platform to mark the end of the road,

the goal toward which they had pressed so doggedly for so long! They were on the “Top of Canada.”

It was 2000 hours. They were too tired to exult and, with a storm approaching, there was no chance to savor their victory. “The Specter of the Brocken” appeared to them. This is a weird phenomenon seen on the tops of very high mountains under certain conditions of light and atmosphere, whereby the figure of each observer is seen silhouetted against the fog banks in the center of a circular rainbow of small size. Andy Taylor warned that a storm of some severity was coming in. They shook hands and read both the altimeter and thermometer, which registered  $-20^{\circ}\text{C}$  ( $-4^{\circ}\text{F}$ ).

Since the start, Carpe had been recording the expedition with a movie camera, which must have imposed considerable inconvenience in terms of weight, bulk and personal exposure. During the short time on the summit he conscientiously recorded the event on film and deposited a brass tube containing the expedition log. In all, they stayed on the summit barely twenty-five minutes.

What comes immediately and vividly to my mind as a chronicler is the memory of the conditions experienced by the Italians on Mount St. Elias twenty-eight years earlier, and the sharp contrast between the two summit days. Arriving on the summit of Mount St. Elias in excellent weather, wearing wool jackets, waistcoats and trousers, the ten Italians gave vent to their Latin temperament with expressions of great jubilation and humility, some sobbed with joy. They raised a flag and toasted their King, and they were able to enjoy the scenery all around them for an hour and a half. What a difference, the Logan party was literally chased off the summit by an enveloping storm. By the time they reached their cached snowshoes, a blizzard was in full force.

Since they had used the last of their willow wands just before reaching the Double Peak, and their tracks had been obliterated by wind and snow, they progressed by sensing the angle of the slope. After an hour or so, plodding forward without bearings and searching for a marker, they realized the futility of such effort in their already exhausted condition. Halting near a steep snowdrift at 0130 on June 24, ravaged by the ferocious wind and feeling the energy-sapping effect of altitude, they used their ice axes and snowshoes to excavate two small caves. Having been in a similar situation at 5,243 meters (17,200 ft.) on Mount McKinley, I can imagine their

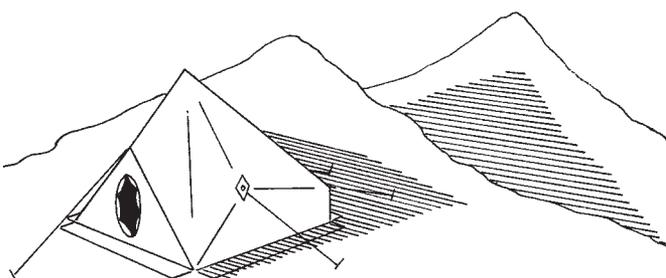
plight. One feels so exhausted that the simple act of excavating a hole becomes the greatest effort of will and physical endeavor. In the end, they could only produce the most minimal shelters that accommodated their bodies but not their legs. They guessed the bivouac to be at the 5,790-meter (18,990-foot) level. Here the six huddled, hungry, cold, ice-encrusted, through an endless night and into the late morning of the 24th. The atrocious, unrelenting weather had taken its toll. All suffered more or less from frozen fingers, snow blindness and one member had frozen toes. Prior to the loss of the max-min thermometer they had read  $-26^{\circ}\text{C}$  ( $-12^{\circ}\text{F}$ ). It wasn't so much the temperature alone but the combined effect of altitude, fatigue, cold, high wind and poor visibility.

By noon there was little change in the storm but a decision had to be made whether to endure another night or expose themselves in the hope of finding one of the trail markers. They decided on the latter course, but who knew what direction to take? Taylor led off. Without horizon or any reference, it was a case of floundering forward with little sense of what was ahead or on the flanks. Then, without warning, Taylor disappeared. He had fallen over a cliff and was prostrate in the snow ten meters (thirty feet) below them. Shaken but uninjured, he was able to climb out. Shortly after, exactly the same thing happened to MacCarthy.

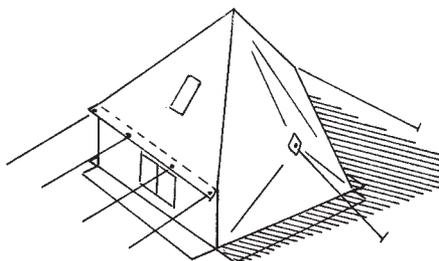
The effect of these events on the party would have been more traumatic had not Read, turning upslope, spotted a willow wand. That slender little stick, barely showing above the snow, gave them renewed courage and determination—it was the hand of Providence. From that moment, they proceeded with the utmost caution, never losing sight of one wand before finding another. By 2030, Lambart's rope, including Read and Taylor, reached Plateau Camp, but not MacCarthy's. Stopping to fix a pack, his rope had lost sight of the other and become disoriented. They backtracked toward the summit for an hour or so before Carpe questioned the angle of the slope. Reversing direction, they plodded forward in a nightmare world of ghostly images. Some had the impression that they were flanked by fences, barns and houses. What appeared to be ground inclines were in reality declines. Physical exhaustion has resulted in hallucinations in other climbs; Herman Buhl on his solo return from the summit of Nanga Parbat in 1953 was convinced that he had a companion.

To nurse their strength they rested twice in snow holes. It was not until 0500 on June 25 that MacCarthy, Carpe and Foster reached the safety of Plateau Camp. What a relief it must have been for them and for those who anxiously waited! Andy Taylor soon had the stove going to prepare boned chicken, granulated potatoes au gratin and mugs of Ovaltine. June 25 was understandably a day of much needed rest and recuperation for everyone, but especially for those who had spent two nights bivouacking at such an altitude in such intolerable conditions of wind and cold.

On June 26 a decision was made to muster all effort and get off the mountain as quickly as possible, at least as far as King Col. What a day it turned out to be! Starting on snowshoes, they soon had to switch to crampons to have any traction at all on the hard-crust-ed snow. Those with frostbitten fingers were unable to accomplish the most trivial task and had to be helped. The wind was so fero-



## ◀ LOGAN TENTS ▶



LOGAN BREAD	
3 CUPS -	WHOLEWHEAT FLOUR
1/2 CUP -	GOLDEN YELLOW SUGAR
1/2 CUP -	RAISINS
1/3 CUP -	CURRENTS
1 CUP -	DATES
1/2 CUP -	SESAME SEEDS
1/4 CUP -	WHEAT GERM
1/2 CUP -	HONEY
1/4 CUP -	BLACKSTRAP MOLASSES
3/8 CUP -	SAFFLOWER OIL
1 CUP -	WATER
3/4 CUP -	EVAPORATED MILK
15ml (1TBS)	BAKING POWDER
2ml (1/2TSP)	NUTMEG
1ml (1/4TSP)	SEA SALT
FILL TWO 20cm (8")	
SQU: GREASED CAKE TINS	
BAKE FOR 1 1/2 HR	
AT 150°C (300°F)	

Sketch of the Logan tent and a recipe for Logan bread.

cious that those wearing crampons had to assist those who were not. Reaching the granite rocks that marked their former 5,600-meter camp, how glad they were to rest in the lee of the crest! How comforting must have been the realization that from this point forward the route was downhill. Continuing their descent, they stopped briefly to retrieve their shoepacs from the Windy Camp cache, leaving other supplies behind. Forced to change frequently from snowshoes to crampons and back again, they came to dread the process. On the slopes above Ice Cliff Camp, they encountered a dense fog and the snow was so deep that they floundered along like a routed army. The narrow passages of MacCarthy's Gap were now filled with snow. They wallowed through them, and when the tents at King Col came into view, they plunged directly down in reckless abandon.

At King Col, the party licked its wounds. Foster held a clinic and the evidence of severe exposure was there for all to see: MacCarthy had all the first joints of his fingers and thumbs frostbitten and turning black; Lambart's toes were frozen; Foster's big toe and two fingers were frozen; Carpe had frozen two toes and two fingers; Andy one finger. They rested through the whole of June 27.

The route down the King Glacier was straightforward. The sled that had been left at the base of the King icefall was dug out of the snow and for a while they could enjoy travel free from heavy packs. The sled was abandoned above the Cascades camp, which they found in a state of complete chaos. The surface had ablated so much that derelict looking tents remained precariously perched atop pillars of ice. Salvaging tents and contents, they drew comfort from the fact that they were "off" the mountain.

Despite the fact that 220 kilometers (137 miles) still separated them from the railroad at McCarthy, the worst was over. So, it was here they celebrated their safe return and accomplishment. Resting and feasting on every conceivable delicacy, they enjoyed one of the few days on the mountain that was free from exposure and hard work.

They left Cascades on July 1 and four days later stepped on soil for the first time in forty-four days. At this Baldwin-Fraser Camp, as it was called, a bear had found the key to what had been thought a bear-proof cache. Fortunately, it was not a supply upon which they were relying.

Continuing down valley to Hubrick's Camp, they were met by Laing who told them that Morgan and Hall had already gone out. You may recall that Morgan had been sick high on Logan and Hall had escorted him down. While on the way in they had crossed the Chitina using horses, it had been decided that tools would be left to permit the construction of two boats, not so much to cross the Chitina but to travel the river and thus reach a point closer to McCarthy. Since few were fit enough for such an exercise in construction, it was decided to build two simple log rafts instead. Two five-log wide rafts, five meters (sixteen feet) in length, were constructed in two days. Laing said that he would wait for a pack train to help him carry out all his specimens, and how terribly prudent that was!

On July 11, they launched their crafts on the fast, silt-laden Chitina River. Most glacier streams, with their numerous and ever-changing channels, offer wild rides—this was no exception.

The film of the expedition records scenes of this experience. Again one may well wonder at the painstaking perseverance involved in filming them: it required leaving Carpe on shore to record the departure of the raft and its passage down river, then forced its occupants to turn this nearly uncontrollable craft around and beach it again to pick up the cameraman. But that's not the end of the adventure.

On the other raft, Taylor, Read and Lambart made a great run of eighty kilometers (fifty miles) to bring them to within 48 kilometers (30 miles) of McCarthy, which they duly covered on foot the following day. MacCarthy, Carpe and Foster were less fortunate. They had only covered 30 kilometers (19 miles) when their raft overturned in rapids. They fought desperately to land the upturned craft and save their baggage, but without much success. Carpe must have at least saved his film! There was nothing for the trio to do but hike the remaining 100 kilometers (62 miles) to McCarthy. Though much weakened by so many hardships, they made an incredible march to reach McCarthy by noon of July 15.

The first ascent of Canada's highest peak was now history. In summary, and in order to appreciate the full extent of the achievements of MacCarthy's party, one must highlight a few significant points. They had made the longest approach march in the history of mountaineering and had endured both low temperatures and most

terrifying winds. Despite such exposure, they had exhibited a party spirit, courage and determination that must evoke the greatest admiration.

Since then, many have experienced the joys and frustrations of climbs, following many different routes, on this largest and highest Canadian mountain.

Another Logan “classic” took place in 1959, which in many ways duplicated the experience of the 1925 expedition. Led by Hans Gmoser with companions Willy Pfisterer, Philip de la Salle, Ron Smylie, Don Lyon and Karl Ricker, this all-Canadian party skied to the base of Logan’s east ridge where supplies had been air-dropped. Their route from the Alaska Highway at Kluane Lake, up the Kaskawulsh Glacier and over the divide to the Hubbard Glacier, was in large part one of the alternatives considered by the 1925 party. Then, having successfully made the ascent of Logan’s east peak, they elected to return to the highway using the Donjek Glacier and the river of the same name. When they reached the three rubber rafts that had been air-dropped near the glacier terminus, they found they had been so badly damaged that they required extensive repair, but eventually the party committed itself to the fast, silt-laden waters. This glacier stream was not any easier to navigate than the Chitina had been to the 1925 expedition. Ironically they did remarkably well to a point only a mile or so from the Donjek Bridge where the flotilla foundered on a driftwood barrier and much equipment was lost. Who says that history does not repeat itself!

In 1985 I was invited to attend a gathering of Pioneers of the St. Elias, organized by Parks Canada to celebrate their centennial. It was a happy and appropriate coincidence that we also celebrated the sixtieth anniversary of the first ascent of Mount Logan. The highlight of the program, graced by the presence of such longtime personal friends and renowned mountain explorers as Walter Wood and Bradford Washburn, was an amplified telephone conversation with Norman Read, currently residing in Boston. To hear his recollections of that first ascent brought us all so close to that memorable climb. Since that celebration, Read’s ice ax may be examined at Kluane Park headquarters at Haines Junction. Willy Pfisterer of the 1959 party was also there to swell the roster of pioneers. It is interesting to note that even though Norman Read could not join the 1985 celebration, he had returned in 1950 to make a second ascent

of Mount Logan. He did so in the company of Andre Roch, the celebrated Swiss mountaineer, photographer and glaciologist. However on this later occasion he experienced much better weather—and I think the mountain owed it to him, don't you?

I cannot leave the topic of Mount Logan without mention of the lifetime work carried out on the mountain by glaciologist Dr. Gerald Holdsworth. Dr. Holdsworth has carried out extensive topographic surveys and cored the high plateau to effectively date not only historical weather patterns but also a record of environmental change. As I refer to Dr. Walter Wood as the father of the St. Elias mountain range, so I would call Dr. Holdsworth the father of Mount Logan.