

## The Story So Far

**My roving summer began in Zermatt. Then I met Edward Whymper in Zinal.**

believe that our Matterhorn, their Monte Cervino, will finally capitulate.

He is determined to make the best of his time with Michel Croz, so has ambitious plans for the coming weeks. They include the Matterhorn! So I will pass some days in Val Tournanche. It is from this, the Italian side, that many



The Village of Val Tournanche

## Newsletter

MATTERHORN 2015

Post 3 — Thursday June 22<sup>nd</sup> 1865  
from Val Tournanche

### The Grand Cornier conquered

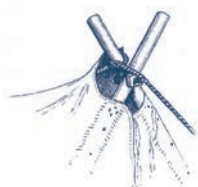
## 150 Years Ago — First Ascent of the Matterhorn

### It is Summer 1865...

**...and how many unclimbed Alpine peaks will have been conquered by the time the cool damp air of Autumn returns?**

Mountaineers, many of them British, are planning their routes and engaging their favourite local guides to assist. So I, whose scribbles usually cover London society events and gossip, have packed my notebooks and pens with my climbing ropes and nailed boots. I will follow those

intrepid climbers, witness their achievements and post back my reports. Many of the summits of Europe have been conquered over the last fifty years, those left must rank as among the most challenging. Grandes Jorasses, Aiguille Verte, Matterhorn – who will be the first to set foot on your proud peaks?



## The Grand Cornier conquered!

**N**ot only did Edward Whymper succeed in making a first ascent of the mighty Grand Cornier but he decided to have a go at the Dent Blanche as well. Of course, it would not be a first ascent as Mr Kennedy claimed that prize during his legendary season of 1862. Second to the summit of a challenging peak, however, is still an achievement.

nedly had left on the peak of the Dent Blanche.

“Oh no sir,” laughed Mr Kennedy, “We left no cairn in 1862. That must have been left by the man who went up last year.” So it was in fact a third for Mr Whymper. He describes the Dent Blanche as the toughest climb he has ever attempted.

### Nights in a Hovel

Arriving at the hamlet of Abri-colla, Mr Whymper found the place deserted and the chalets burnt out shells. Biner and Croz chose to walk all the way down to Evolène in search of comfort and of course returned rather later

But... Last Monday, in Zermatt, I joined Edward Whymper and Thomas Kennedy as they shared experiences and Mr Whymper mentioned the cairn he assumed Mr Ken-



Reaching the Summit of the Grand Cornier

## The Matterhorn really is impregnable and will never be conquered.

next morning than arranged. Then on Sunday they started too late again as Biner had to go back to Evolène to hear Mass before going anywhere. Then a dreadful storm left them going round in circles as the snow swirled and mists shrouded the route, each guide calling the others imbeciles for not finding the way. Only on the third attempt did they make it over to Zermatt.

### Foray on the Matterhorn

Whympfer and his team have been investigating the possibilities offered by an ascent of the east face that they call the Hörnli. However, unforeseen difficulties, such as the shrinking glacier and ricochets of rocks, have impeded the would-beconquerors.

I get the impression that Biner and Almer are becoming discouraged and these trials are reinforcing the



The descent of the Grand Cornier was a challenge

belief, shared by so many, that the Matterhorn really is impregnable and will never be conquered.

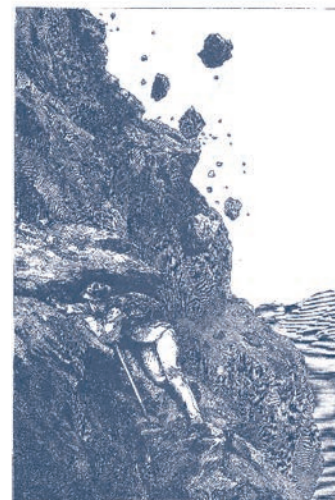
And that is how it shall stay for now. Mr Whympfer sounded the retreat and they are setting out towards the region of the Mont Blanc. It must be that unclimbed Aiguille Verte that calls them.

Mr Kennedy's eyes also turn towards the Matterhorn in anticipation of an assault later in the season. For now he passes sociable

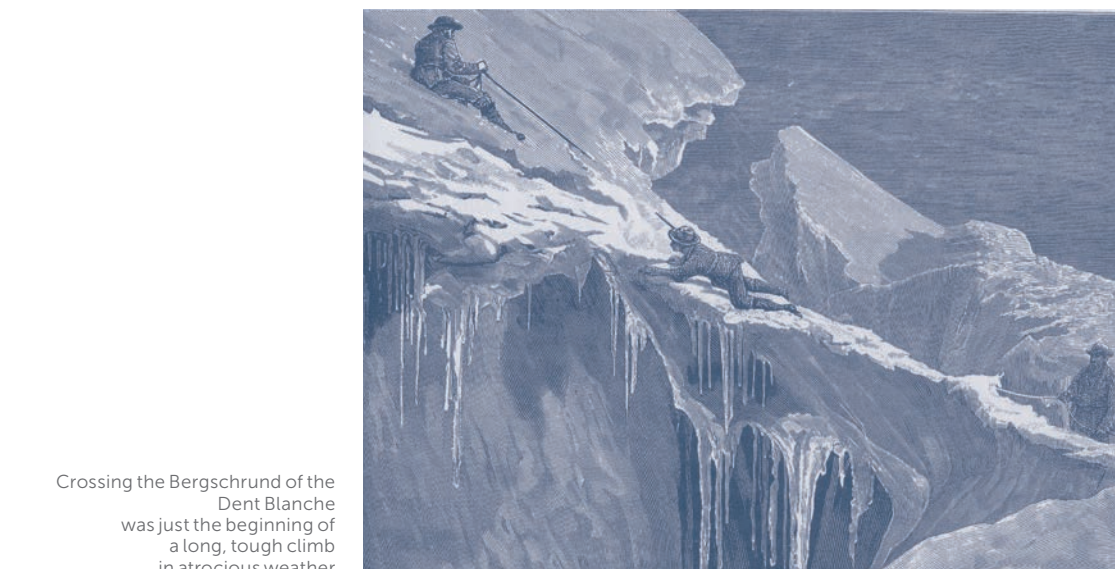


Whympfer was determined to scramble up the couloir to the Matterhorn's east face

But they were turned back by a cannonade of falling rocks



days in Zermatt in the company of his lady wife and their adventurous dog. On Sunday he will leave Zermatt to travel to Chamonix, there to join up with Messrs Hudson and McCormick to begin their campaign. ■



Crossing the Bergschrund of the Dent Blanche was just the beginning of a long, tough climb in atrocious weather



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