

BULASHAIA GORA 26,000 FEET.

-or-

"MOUNT DENIAL" or "MOUNT MCKINLEY."

-----

(By D. E. STUBBS, McKinley Park, Alaska.)

The early Esquimos and Russians called the highest mountain on the North American Continent BULASHAIA GORA, or Big Mountain, and the Russians in their early maps and records gave the height of Bulashaia Gora, above sea level, as 24,000 feet, at which figure it stood for more than half a Century.

Other nick-names some times applied, are Treleyka and Tenually, both meaning the Great One. Other, but inappropriate nick-names, have been applied by notoriety-seekers, whose ambition was to play to the grand stand, but whose silly efforts are without basis of fact, merit, rhyme or reason.

Let us hope that in the not too distant future the true name of Bulashaia Gora may be restored.

Of the ten expeditions up to the present time, to attempt or climb Bulashaia Gora, the first, second, fourth, sixth, seventh and ninth were unsuccessful in reaching the summit. Evidence points that the third, fifth, eighth and tenth were successful.

James Wickersham in 1903, made the first attempt to climb Bulashaia Gora. The attempt was unsuccessful.

An attempt to climb Bulashaia Gora in 1903 was made by Dr. Frederick A. Cook. He probably reached an elevation of around 10,000 or 11,000 feet.

A second expedition in 1906 by Dr. Frederick A. Cook to climb Bulashaia Gora was successful when he reported arriving at the top September 16, 1906.

In 1910 Belmore Browne and Herschel G. Parker tried to climb the mountain, and like Dr. Cook in 1903, probably got up to 10,000 or 11,000 feet, and turned back.

In 1911, R. C. Bates with two men, tried to climb Bulashaia Gora, and got up around the same distance as former parties--about 11,000 feet.

Bulashaia Gora has a double summit. Dr. Cook claimed he climbed the South Peak in 1906.

The Tom Lloyd party, (better known as the Sourdough party,) claimed they climbed both peaks in 1910, and left a marker in the form of a pole on the North Peak, and which was first seen by Esquimos who were with the Stuck party in 1913.

Another expedition of Messrs. Browne & Parker occurred in 1912, and claimed they almost reached the Southern Peak.

Hudson Stuck party claimed they climbed to the top of the Southern Peak in 1913, and said they reached the summit June 7, 1913. They left a thermometer at a point a long ways below the summit, and which was found by the Lindley party in 1932; a date written on a card was: June 7, 1913. The thermometer had no minimum reading.

In the summer of 1928, a man calling himself an expert Polish Mountain Climber, left McKinley Park Station, saying that he was going to climb Bulashaina Gora alone; that the climb wasn't "so much," and that former parties had taken the matter too serious. He started without supplies, ice creepers or any equipment, he was taken as far as an auto could run, then mushed away toward the mountain. He was missing for awhile, got lost and a rescue party found him and brought him back to the railroad. He failed.

In 1932 the Lindley and Stromm party claimed they climbed both peaks. This party had their supplies and equipment relayed by Park dog teams, in which task all park rangers and 30 dogs took part; trails were broken out and tents erected for night stops. They left the railroad April 4th, and got back May 15th, taking 40 days from railroad and back. Their first base camp was at foot of Muldrow Glacier; their second base camp at head of Glacier, reaching there May 1st. They left second base camp May 6th, reached the summit of Bulashaina Gora May 7th, and returned to base camp No. 2 May 8th. May 9th, on their way down, they found the frozen body of Theodore Koven, a member of the ill-fated Cosmic Ray party. They were 11 days from base camp No. 1 to top and back. The descent was made in 40 hours.

There were no eye-witnesses of any of the attempts except that of the Lindley and Stromm party in 1932. The

pilot and two members of the Cosmic Ray party, who arrived in Alaska at a much later date than the Lindley party and traveled by airplane, reported on May 7th they saw two men near the top of Bulashaina Gora. This report agreed with the report of the Lindley and Stromm reports they reached the top on May 7th, 1932.

The only marks left on the top of Bulashaina Gora by any of the parties was by the Tom Lloyd party in 1910, who erected a pole or mast, which they planted on the North Peak, in the belief it could be seen through a powerful telescope at some point between the mountain and Fairbanks, and thus give proof they reached the top. The pole was never seen through a telescope, but was found by Esquimes with the Stuck party, and then observed by all members of the Stuck party in 1913.

Nearly all the mountain climbing parties up to and including the last party in 1932, with exception of Dr. Cook and the Polish climber in 1928, have denied and denounced previous parties as fakers.

It seems now most proper to call the Mountain:

"MOUNT DENIAL."

Lloyd denies Dr. Cook. Browne denies Dr. Cook and Lloyd. Stuck denies Dr. Cook and Lloyd, and while not denying Browne, repeats several times that Browne did not reach the top. The Lindley and partner denies any evidence exists that earlier parties had reached the top.

In all a perfect avalanche of denials. Stuck insisted naming the Mountain "Denali," which leads to the

suggested nick-name of "Mount Denial," as more appropriate, if new names are to be applied from time to time. But all oppose the use of such nick-names as "denali" since it is not an Esquimo word, and is an anagram of "denial."

This libeling of the highest and greatest mountain on the North American Continent, whose elevation above sea level given by the early Russian records and maps as 24,000 feet, but believed by many as nearer 26,000 feet, and that by a bunch of self-appointed climbers, is a decidedly rotten deal for the Big Mountain. That so majestic a mountain, with its giddy height and mighty glaciers has been turned into a cockpit into which to hurl denials, leaves a decided brown taste for such mountain climbers and nick-namers.

Dr. Cook's climb was unassailed for three years. Edward Bessille, Dr. Cook's companion on the climb, appeared to make no denial until three years after--if he ever did make any, as reported.

Browne denies Dr. Cook's climb and names a 9,000 foot peak, "Fake Peak," which he says that Cook photographed for the top of the mountain.

Browne does not directly deny the climb of Tom Lloyd party--simply ignores it--but does say he did not see the pole left erected by the Lloyd party. The Stuck party all admitted seeing the pole after an Esquimo member of the party first discovered and pointed it out to them. Browne's denial of the Lloyd part proving incorrect, gives a doubt of his criticism of Dr. Cook being correct.

Stuck, in his turn, denies all of his predecessors. Since Browne and Parker did not claim they reached the top, Stuck states flatly that Dr. Cook and Lloyd did not get to the top of Balashain Gora, which then leaves Stuck party as the first to climb the mountain, and he wrote in Scribner's Magazine, 1913, page 532: "So that it seemed as if the mountain top had waited for us."

Yet, in a letter answering a criticism to another letter, which appeared in the New York Sun, of Saturday, January 3, 1914, Stuck admits he made a mistake; also admits there may have been higher ground (visibility was zero as they neared the top) than any they reached. Stuck changed his story of the climb after the first published account.

Question: Was Stuck paid to change his story?

Stuck then admits the Tom Lloyd party scaled the North Peak, but in Scribner's Magazine, 1913, page 546, says: "As to which feat a great deal of incredulity has existed in Alaska, not without some reason."

Stuck with much pains and in several places in his book states that Parker, Browne and LeVoy did not reach the top of the mountain.

Mr. Strom, who was with Lindley in the 1932 climb, said over the radio in the winter of 1933, that only two former attempts had been made to climb Balashain Gora, and both unsuccessful. This, like Stuck's story, leaves the Lindley party the only one "the mountain top had waited for."

Of all the parties, Dr. Cook by far, was the best trained by previous experience. He had spent one winter in the Arctic with Admiral Peary, and one in the Antarctic with Captain de Gerlache, and had made two trips into the foot-hills of Bulashaina Gora. His winter in North Greenland, and a winter in West Antarctic made him an expert on ice and snow, and in the use of instruments. Besides he was the first to climb the mountain and find the trail to the top. Dr. Cook had been a highly respected member with the Belgian Antarctic Expedition.

The Tom Lloyd (Sourdough party) were not so well educated, and had had no mountain experience, nor knew much if anything of the use of scientific instruments.

The Browne and Parker party were better educated, but short on mountain experience. And it was strongly hinted they had received \$25,000 to make one of their trips for the express purpose of discrediting Dr. Cook's climb, after the North Pole controversy got to going good.

Mr. Stuck was born in England, and disapproved of about everything American, describing at some length meeting Americans who were not familiar with the novels of Dickens, and proposed to eliminate a lot of "illiterate Ph.D.'s," (pages 110-114 his book.) He had no scientific training nor a speaking acquaintance with scientific instruments, else would not have packed a single, unhandy, mercurial barometer, with the help of one of the party, part way up the mountain. There could be no better illustration of his lack of knowledge

of such instruments. Mr. Stuck in his book gives a number of supposed quotations from the Bible, about which Book he professed to know something. Yet everyone of his quotations are misquoted!! Not being an American by either birth or adoption, and attempting to attach a name to the mountain, showed something of his "monumental" crust. He inserted many pages of figures in his book for the purpose of adding verisimilitude to his yarn.

Dr. Cook traveled light, while Lloyd, Browne, Stuck and Lindley and Stromm went "heavy," using most of their time relaying, covering the same ground from five to seven times, which probably explains the big difference in their time making the trip up and back.

The Lindley party gave only a brief description of their climb, carried no instruments, with the single exception of a small pocket barometer scaled to read up to 20,000 feet; they were expert with skis; made no attempt at a scientific description of the climb. From the statements of a pilot and two members of the Cosmic Ray party (whose arrival at the mountain Lindly and party knew nothing about) who were passengers in the plane, reported they saw the two men, they identified as Lindley and Stromm, as they were near the top of the mountain, May 7th, 1932, (Visibility perfect) and had a clear view of their trail and steps cut in the ice and snow, extending a long ways down the mountain. There seems much reason to believe they reached the top of both the North and



South Peaks, as they claimed they did. Of the nine former expeditions there were no eye-witnesses.

It is the firm belief of the writer that the whole darned bunch, that is, those who claimed they did, all went to the top of Bulashain Corn, 26,000 feet, but came back a bunch of sore-heads, because they found somebody else had got ahead of them. Anyway, Dr. Cook gave the best and most scientific description of the top of the mountain of any of them, and revealed the facts as found at the top.