

**SCRAMBLES  
AMONGST THE ALPS  
IN THE YEARS 1860-'69**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649001590

Scrambles amongst the Alps in the years 1860-'69 by Edward Whymper

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

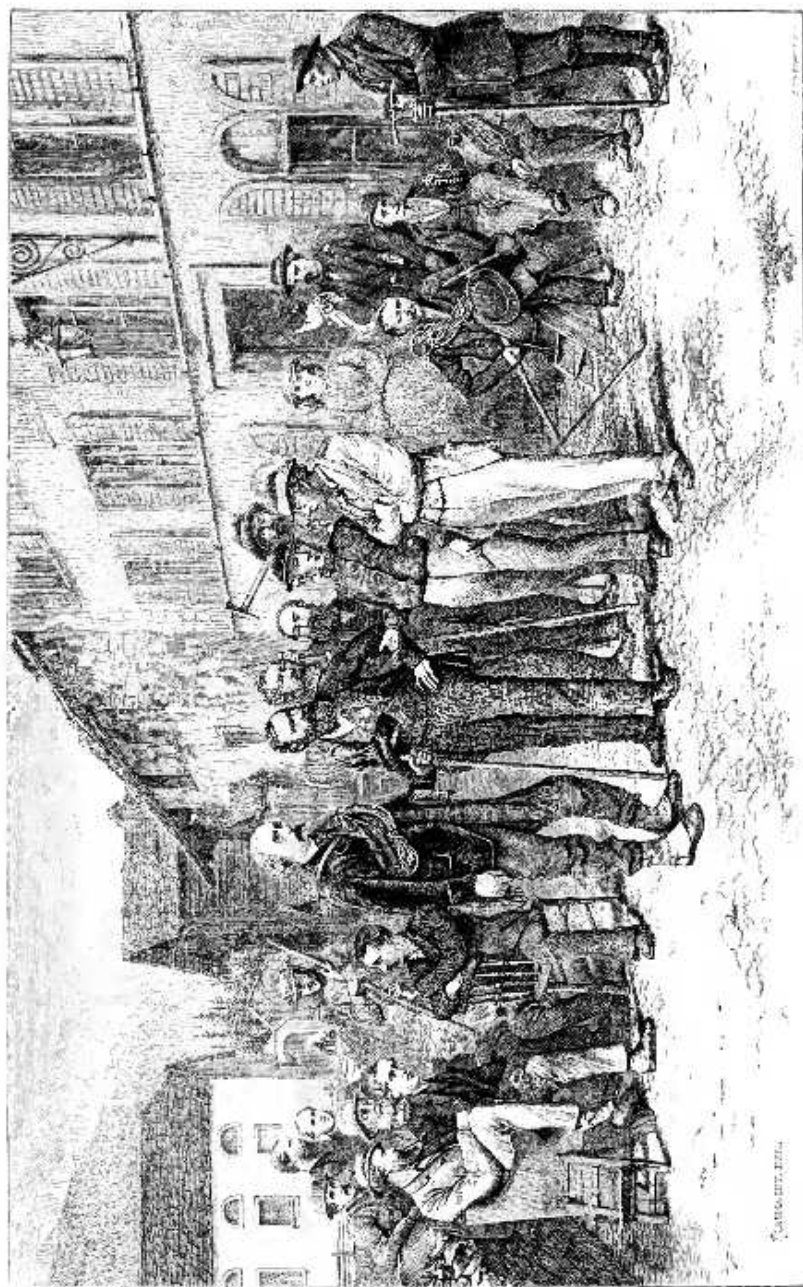
This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**EDWARD WHYMPER**

**SCRAMBLES  
AMONGST THE ALPS  
IN THE YEARS 1860-'69**





THE CLUB OF MEN OF FERRATE, A. 1864.

FRONTISPIECE.

# SCRAMBLES AMONGST THE ALPS

IN THE YEARS 1860-'69.

BY

EDWARD WHYMPER.



*WITH OVER 300 ILLUSTRATIONS.*

---

Toil and pleasure, in their natures opposite, are yet linked together in a kind of necessary connection.—LIVY.

---

PHILADELPHIA  
J. B. LIPPINCOTT & CO.

1872.

## PREFACE.

---

IN the year 1860, shortly before leaving England for a long Continental tour, a certain eminent London publisher requested me to make for him some sketches of the great Alpine peaks. At this time I had only a literary acquaintance with mountaineering, and had even not seen—much less set foot upon—a mountain. Amongst the peaks which were upon my list was Mont Pelvoux, in Dauphine. The sketches that were required of it were to celebrate the triumph of some Englishmen who intended to make its ascent. They came—they saw—but they did not conquer. By a mere chance I fell in with a very agreeable Frenchman who accompanied this party, and was pressed by him to return to the assault. In 1861 we did so, with my friend Macdonald, and we conquered. This was the origin of my scrambles amongst the Alps.

The ascent of Mont Pelvoux (including the disagreeables) was a very delightful scramble. The mountain air did *not* act as an emetic; the sky did *not* look black instead of blue; nor did I feel tempted to throw myself over precipices. I hastened to enlarge my experience, and went to the Matterhorn. I was urged toward Mont Pelvoux by those mysterious impulses which cause men to peer into the unknown. Not only was this mountain reputed to be the highest in France, and on that account was worthy of attention, but it was the dominating point of a most picturesque district of the highest interest, which, to this day, remains almost unexplored. The Matterhorn attracted me simply by its grandeur. It was considered to be the most thoroughly inaccessible of all mountains, even by those who ought to have known better. Stimulated to make fresh exertions by one repulse after another, I returned, year after year, as I had opportunity, more and more determined to find a way up it, or to *prove* it to be really inaccessible.

A considerable portion of this volume is occupied by the history of these attacks on the Matterhorn, and the other excursions that are described have all some connection, more or less remote, with that mountain or with Mont Pelvoux. All are new excursions (that is, excursions made for the first time), unless the contrary is pointed out. Some have been passed over very briefly, and entire ascents or descents have been disposed of in a single line. If they had been worked out at full length, three volumes instead of one would have been required. Generally speaking, the salient points alone have been dwelt upon, and the rest has been left to the imagination. This treatment has saved the reader from much useless repetition.

In endeavoring to make the book of some use to those who may wish to go mountain-scrambling, whether in the Alps or elsewhere, undue prominence, perhaps, has been given to our mistakes and failures; and it will doubtless be pointed out that our practice must have been bad if the principles which are laid down are sound, or that the principles must be unsound if the practice was good. It is maintained in an early chapter that the positive, or unavoidable, dangers of mountaineering are very small, yet from subsequent pages it can be shown that very considerable risks were run. The reason is obvious—we were not immaculate. Our blunders are not held up to be admired or to be imitated, but to be avoided.

These scrambles amongst the Alps were holiday excursions, and as such they should be judged. They are spoken of as sport, and nothing more. The pleasure that they gave me cannot, I fear, be transferred to others. The ablest pens have failed, and must always fail, to give a true idea of the grandeur of the Alps. The most minute descriptions of the greatest writers do nothing more than convey impressions that are entirely erroneous—the reader conjures up visions, it may be magnificent ones, but they are infinitely inferior to the reality. I have dealt sparingly in descriptions, and have employed illustrations freely, in the hope that the pencil may perhaps succeed where the pen must inevitably have failed.

The preparation of the illustrations has occupied a large part of my time during the last six years. With the exception of the views upon pp. 18, 19 and 24, the whole of the illustrations have been engraved expressly for the book, and, unless it is otherwise specified, all are from my own sketches. About fifty have been drawn on the wood by Mr. James Mahoney, and I am much indebted to that artist for the care and fidelity with which he has followed my slight memoranda, and for the spirit that he has put into his admirable designs. Most of his drawings will be identified by his monogram. Twenty of the remainder are the work of Mr. Cyrus Johnston, and out of these I would draw especial attention to the view of the Matterhorn facing p. 36, the striated rock upon p. 63, and the bits from the Mer de Glace upon pp. 138, 139. The illustrations have been introduced as illustrations, and very rarely for ornamental purposes. We have subordinated everything in them to accuracy, and it is only fair to the artists who have honored me by their assistance to say that many of their designs would have ranked higher as works of art if they had been subjected to fewer restrictions.



## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

The Drawings were made on the Wood by  
H. J. BOOT, C. JOHNSON, J. MAHONEY, J. W. NORTH, P. SKELTON, W. G. SMITH, and C. J. STANLAND;  
and were Engraved by J. W. and EDWARD WITZNER.

\* *from Photographs.*    \*\* *Designs.*

### FULL-PAGE ILLUSTRATIONS.

	PAGE
** 1. THE CLUB-ROOM OF ZERMATT IN 1864.....	<i>Frontispiece.</i>
2. MONT PELVOUX AND THE ALÉFROIDE, FROM NEAR MONT DAUPHIN.....	16
* 3. THE MONT CENIS ROAD AND THE FELL RAILWAY, ON THE ITALIAN SIDE.....	30
4. THE MATTERHORN, FROM NEAR THE SCIMIT OF THE THÉODULE PASS.....	36
5. "IN ATTEMPTING TO PASS THE CORNER I SLIPPED AND FELL".....	54
** 6. A CANNONADE ON THE MATTERHORN (1862).....	57
7. "THE CHIMNKY".....	64
8. THE CRAGS OF THE MATTERHORN DURING THE STORM, MIDNIGHT, AUG. 10, 1863.....	71
** 9. DESCENDING WESTERN ARÊTE OF THE POINTE DES ÉCRINS.....	89
** 10. "WE SAW A TOE--IT SEEMED TO BELONG TO MOORE; WE SAW REYNAUD A FLYING BODY".....	95
** 11. THE SUMMIT OF THE MORING PASS IN 1864.....	108
12. THE BERGSCHRUND ON THE DENT BLANCHE IN 1865.....	117
13. THE MATTERHORN FROM THE KIFFELBERG.....	121
* 14. THE GRANDES JORASSES FROM THE VAL FERRÉ.....	133
15. THE SUMMIT OF THE COL DOLENT.....	134
16. FOG-BOW, SEEN FROM THE MATTERHORN ON JULY 14, 1865.....	157

### IN THE TEXT.

1. BEACHY HEAD.....	9
2. THE DEVIL OF NOTRE DAME.....	10
** 3. MULES.....	10
** 4. A CURÉ IN DIFFICULTIES.....	13
5. AT THE ST. BERNARD.....	13
** 6. WHICH IS THE BRUTE?.....	13
** 7. "GARIBALDI!".....	15
* 8. BRIANÇON.....	16
9. MONT PELVOUX FROM ABOVE LA BESSÈRE.....	18
10. IN THE VAL D'ALÉFRED.....	19
11. THE GRAND PELVOUX DE VAL LOUISE.....	20
12. BUTTRESSES OF MONT PELVOUX.....	21
* 13. PORTRAIT OF R. J. S. MACDONALD.....	23
14. OUTLINE TO SHOW ROUTE UP MONT PELVOUX.....	24
15. THE BLANKET BAG.....	27
16. NATURAL PILLAR NEAR MOLINIS.....	29
** 17. CROSSING MONT CENIS.....	30
** 18. THE LITTLE POSTILION.....	31
19. THE CENTRE RAIL ON A CURVE.....	32
20. SECTION OF THE FELL RAILWAY.....	32
* 21. THE COVERED WAYS OF THE FELL RAILWAY.....	33
22. THE CENTRE-RAIL BRAKE.....	34
23. OUTLINES OF THE MATTERHORN FROM THE NORTH-EAST.....	37

	PAGE
* 24. PORTRAIT OF J. J. BENNEN.....	38
* 25. PORTRAIT OF JEAN-ANTOINE CARREL.....	40
26. THE COL DU LIGON; LOOKING TOWARD THE TÊTE DU LIGON.....	41
** 27. AT BREUIL (GIOMEIN).....	44
28. OUTLINES OF THE MATTERHORN FROM THE THÉODULE PASS.....	46
29. DIAGRAM TO SHOW MANNER OF FASTENING TENT-POLES.....	47
30. ALPINE TENT.....	47
31. CLIMBING CLAW.....	51
32. ROPE AND RING.....	51
33. THE MATTERHORN FROM BREUIL.....	58
** 34. "BUT WHAT IS THIS?".....	59
35. AN ARCH OF THE AQUEDUCT IN THE VAL TOURNANCHE.....	61
* 36. WATER-WORN ROCKS IN THE GORGE BELOW THE GORNER GLACIER.....	62
37. STRIATIONS PRODUCED BY GLACIER-ACTION.....	63
** 38. "CARREL LOWERED ME DOWN".....	67
* 39. PORTRAIT OF MONSIEUR FAYRE.....	73
* 40. CROSSING THE CHANNEL.....	74
** 41. A NIGHT WITH CROZ.....	75
* 42. PORTRAIT OF MICHEL-AUGUSTE CROZ.....	76
43. THE AIGUILLES D'ARVE FROM ABOVE THE CHALETS OF RIEU BLANC.....	78
* 44. PORTRAIT OF MELCHIOR ANDEREGG.....	81
45. MAP OF THE BRECHE DE LA MEJE, ETC.....	82
* 46. THE VALLON DES ÉZANÇONS.....	83
47. MAP OF THE CENTRAL DAUPHINÉ ALPS.....	84
48. THE POINTE DES ÉCRINS FROM THE COL DU GALBIER.....	86
49. OUTLINE TO SHOW ROUTE ET POINTE DES ÉCRINS.....	86
50. FRAGMENT FROM THE SUMMIT OF THE POINTE DES ÉCRINS.....	88
** 51. A SNOW COULGIR.....	93
** 52. PORTRAITS OF MR. KELLY ON A WET DAY.....	99
53. OUR CAMP ON MONT SEC.....	100
54. ICE-AVALANCHE ON THE MORNING PASS.....	108
55. FAC-SIMILE OF A LETTER FROM CROZ.....	112
56. PART OF THE SOUTHERN RIDGE OF THE GRAND CORNIER.....	113
57. PART OF THE NORTHERN RIDGE OF THE GRAND CORNIER.....	114
* 58. PORTRAIT OF LESLIE STEPHEN.....	116
* 59. PORTRAIT OF T. S. KENNEDY.....	119
60. DIAGRAMS TO SHOW DIP OF STRATA ON THE MATTERHORN.....	122-3
* 61. MY TENT-BEARER—THE HUNCHBACK.....	125
* 62. THE BOUQUETIN.....	127
63. A CRÉPIN OF AOSTA.....	129
64. MY ICE-AXE.....	135
65. KENNEDY ICE-AXE.....	136
66. STEPHEN ICE-AXE.....	136
67. CRAMPON.....	136
* 68. PORTRAIT OF CHRISTIAN ALMER.....	137
* 69. ON THE MER DE GLACE.....	138
* 70. ICE-PINNACLES ON THE MER DE GLACE.....	139
* 71. WESTERN SIDE OF THE COL DE TALÈPRE.....	142
** 72. GLISSADING.....	143
** 73. THE WRONG WAY TO USE A ROPE ON GLACIER.....	146
** 74. THE RIGHT WAY TO USE A ROPE ON GLACIER.....	146
75. "CROZ! CROZ! COME HERE!".....	153
76. THE ACTUAL SUMMIT OF THE MATTERHORN IN 1865.....	154
77. THE SUMMIT OF THE MATTERHORN.....	155
78. ROPE BROKEN ON THE MATTERHORN.....	157
* 79. PORTRAIT OF MONSIEUR SEILER.....	158
80. MANILLA ROPE BROKEN ON THE MATTERHORN.....	159
81. THE "SECOND" ROPE BROKEN ON THE MATTERHORN.....	160
** 82. THE END.....	162
83. NATURAL PINNACLES IN THE VALLEY OF THE DURANCE.....	163

## CONTENTS.

---

CHAP.	PAGE
I.—INTRODUCTORY.....	9
II.—THE ASCENT OF MONT PELVOUX .....	16
III.—THE MONT CENIS PASS AND THE FELL RAILWAY—THE GREAT TUNNEL THROUGH THE ALPS.....	30
IV.—MY FIRST SCRAMBLE ON THE MATTERHORN.....	35
V.—RENEWED ATTEMPTS TO ASCEND THE MATTERHORN.....	44
VI.—THE VAL TOURNANCHE—THE BRÉUILJACH—ZERMATT—ASCENT OF THE GRAND TOURNALIN.....	59
VII.—OUR SIXTH ATTEMPT TO ASCEND THE MATTERHORN.....	69
VIII.—FROM ST. MICHEL TO LA BÉRARDE BY THE COL DES AIGUILLES, D'ARVE, COL DE MARTIGNARE, AND THE BRÈCHE DE LA MEJE.....	75
IX.—THE ASCENT OF THE POINTE DES ÉCRINS.....	83
X.—FROM VAL LOUISE TO LA BÉRARDE BY THE COL DE PILATTE.....	91
XI.—PASSAGE OF THE COL DE TRIOLET, AND ASCENTS OF MONT DOLKNT, AIGUILLE DE TRÉLATÈTE AND AIGUILLE D'ARGENTIÈRE.....	96
XII.—THE MORING PASS—ZERMATT.....	105
XIII.—THE ASCENT OF THE GRAND CORNIER.....	110
XIV.—THE ASCENT OF THE DENT BLANCHE.....	116
XV.—LOST ON THE COL D'HËRENS—SEVENTH ATTEMPT TO ASCEND THE MAT- TERHORN.....	119
XVI.—ON THE VALLEY OF AOSTA, AND THE ASCENT OF THE GRANDES JORASSES.	126
XVII.—THE COL DOLENT.....	133
XVIII.—ASCENT OF THE AIGUILLE VESTE.....	137
XIX.—THE COL DE TALÈPRE .....	142
XX.—ASCENT OF THE RUINETTE—THE MATTERHORN.....	144
XXI.—THE ASCENT OF THE MATTERHORN.....	150
XXII.—THE DESCENT OF THE MATTERHORN.....	155
APPENDIX .....	162