

Adventure on the Rocky Mountains

A Former Scrantonian Describes a Trip to Pike's Peak.

THE SENSATION OF FREEZING

Terrible Experience of Miss Minnie Powell and a Party of Friends Who Made the Ascent Upon Foot in October.

Colorado Springs, Nov. 26.—I told you, I believe, that a party of us intended going horseback up Pike's Peak, a week or so after school commenced. Well, we went, but not horseback. We walked up and rode down. We made the trip Oct. 6 and 7. The party was to have consisted of Mrs. Argo, Mr. Caldwell, Miss St. Clair, myself, Mr. Argo, intended walking as far as the Half Way House and remaining there until we returned. Mr. Argo, you know, is here for his health. Mr. Caldwell is a young Kentucky gentleman who is here at the Springs with his bride for her health. She might cold on their wedding trip last June, and has since been very low with consumption. She is now recovering and able to drive out, but of course, not able to have joined the pedestrian party for the summit of Pike's Peak.

Our plans were all laid and we were to start early Saturday morning—returning on Sunday—spending the night on the Peak. Mr. and Mrs. Caldwell and a few other Kentucky friends drove up to the school Friday afternoon to have the last talk over the trip before starting. We compared notes and found that each of us had been solemnly warned to not take the trip on foot at this time of the year, by numerous cautious people, and on the other hand, urged on by non-cautious people. We were inclined to follow the advice of the latter, and went down to see how Mrs. Argo felt about it. We found her with a sick baby and no servant. That settled her going. Nothing daunted in our determination to go, Mr. Caldwell, Miss St. Clair and I looked elsewhere for a chaperone. We begged, we pleaded with all the non-cautious ladies of our acquaintance. One was afraid of her heart; another, that her respiratory organs would give out on such a climb and at such great altitude; another was afraid she would freeze to death. We laughed at such an excuse as that. Did we laugh later? Wait—you shall see.

At last we found a young lady—Miss Cornish, the boys' supervisor at the school, who really wanted to join our party. One was afraid of her heart; another, that her respiratory organs would give out on such a climb and at such great altitude; another was afraid she would freeze to death. We laughed at such an excuse as that. Did we laugh later? Wait—you shall see.

A Desirable Acquisition. While we were completing the arrangements that afternoon, a telegram was received by Mr. Argo from Mr. Gregory, saying he would pass through Colorado Springs that night with a couple car loads of horses en route to Kentucky, and wanted to join the Pike's Peak party. Their trip so he would stop off. We were delighted with this desirable acquisition to our party. Mr. Gregory is a great favorite. Large, young and strong and bubbling over with life and fun. At the time we were simply pleased that he would join us. Today we offer up a prayer of thanksgiving that he did join us. God, in His omniscience, sent Mr. Gregory to be one of our party. You will comprehend why, later.

That evening Miss St. Clair and I filled three good sized boxes with a very tempting lunch—enough for a party of ten instead of only five. Mr. Argo said he would drive us, Misses Cornish and St. Clair and myself, at 6 the next morning, west down to The Anthon, where we were to meet Messrs. Caldwell and Gregory. Miss St. Clair managed, with considerable exertion, both on her part and on mine, to induce me to rise at 5 a. m. Everything had been made ready the night before, so that we had nothing to do but dress, eat our breakfast of eggs, bread and butter and coffee, jump into the waiting carriage and be driven to the hotel. I shall take time to say, we dressed very warmly, wore light-weight coats and each carried a shawl in shawlstrap. Miss Cornish carried a small pig, containing bottles of Pond's Extract, alcohol, camphor, ammonia, smelling salts and brandy. At 6:45 a. m. we five boarded the cars for Manitou—a distance of six miles. Arrived there we took a carriage to the Cog Road station—about two miles. Now began our never-to-be-forgotten climb. From this point to the summit is twelve miles by following the cog road. The carriage road is twenty-one miles. We took the cog road. It was now 8:30 a. m. A glorious day—neither too cool nor too warm. We reached what is called the Half Way House at 11:15 p. m. None of us felt much fatigue. We ordered coffee and ate lunch. At 1:15 p. m. we continued our ascent. Mr. Caldwell

mighty wind. We had been told that at Windy Point the wind was blowing at eighty miles an hour, and as another hour's walking would bring us there, we naturally supposed that we were beginning to hear the wind. Something prompted Mr. Caldwell to look up the grade. To his horror he saw the toboggans heading down on us at a most terrible speed. His cry of "The toboggans! The toboggans!" roused us, and we just had time to roll off the track—some of us not yet on our feet—when the toboggans went literally flying by us. A second more we should all have been killed.

We were weak enough before—Miss Cornish particularly. This was too much for her. She lay on the ground like one dead. Her heart gave a few wild jumps and then seemed almost to cease to beat. Imagine our feelings. Miles from any human habitation, no water, no vegetation, only a stony, barren mountain, snow capped peaks all around us, and an apparently dying girl. You see we were afraid of heart failure. People have dropped dead time and again from heart failure at that altitude. We worked with her twenty minutes before she was able to be lifted to her feet. She was too weak to walk. Mr. Gregory placed his arms around



Escape from the Toboggans.

her. She moved her feet. He pushed her up the mountain. Miss St. Clair and I were still able to go along at a reasonable rate. We felt extremely hungry and wanted to eat, but Mr. Caldwell suggested that we wait until we reach the sunshine, as we were all terribly chilled. The wind was now blowing in our faces at a rate of forty miles an hour. On we trudged, up and up—tired, thirsty, hungry and oh! so cold.

Mr. Caldwell strapped the shawls and lunch to his back and went on ahead of us. Mr. Gregory and Miss Cornish came next, he still all but carrying her up. Miss St. Clair and I were last, ten minutes walk behind Mr. Gregory and Miss Cornish, and about twenty minutes behind Mr. Caldwell. I felt myself becoming weaker and weaker. Miss St. Clair noticed it and said, "I am going to stop here. I am going to walk to the Peak. The same way at breakfast and likewise at lunch at the Half Way House. Do you wonder that I now feel hungry? 'Felt hungry' is putting it mildly. 'I was starving.' Miss St. Clair told me to come on as rapidly as I could and she would go ahead to stop Mr. Caldwell to get me some of the lunch and my shawl. In twenty minutes she was out of sight. We had now reached Windy Point. I can assure you it was truly named.

Business for Mr. Gregory. Mr. Gregory laid Miss Cornish down on the rocks and came back to help me, as he had noticed my falling strength. The wind had blown me down several times. I managed with Mr. Gregory's help to get as far as Miss Cornish. Then I lay down by her side too weak to stand even with the aid of Mr. Gregory's arm. He, poor man, was just exhausted. For two hours he had literally carried Miss Cornish, and now he had me unable to go a step farther. It was yet two miles and three quarters to the top of the Peak, and he alone with two girls unable to walk. He just thought the three of us would have to die right there. We must go on, to stay there would be to freeze to death. The odd superstition that comes from long exposure, at a great altitude in cold, was stealing over me. Strange noises sounded in my ears, and my feet and hands tingled. Down below in the valley the sun was shining warmly, but at this elevation the cold was piercing. A high wind had also risen as the day declined.

The fatal desire to be down and be at rest, with which frost fills, stole on me. I struggled hard against this mortal sleepiness and increasing numbness. At last I begged Mr. Gregory to let me lie on those rocks and sleep while he went on with Miss Cornish and sent back help for me. I did not realize my danger. I thought weakness and hunger had made me sleepy, and that if I could only lie there and sleep an hour, I should then have strength to go on. I was no longer cold, but so sleepy that I simply could not keep awake. Mr. Gregory would walk me, and in another second I would be in a sound sleep. Suddenly he had the horrible thought that I was freezing to death—I was really being chilled rather than actually freezing. He made one last supreme effort. He took me under one arm and Miss Cornish under the other, and was dragging us along, when he saw a man, with a shawl under his arm, approaching us. Just imagine his joy. The man came from a log cabin a mile away, and said that a lady had sent him to help us. The lady, of course, was Miss St. Clair. He said Mr. Caldwell had left the cabin about twenty minutes before Miss St. Clair reached there. You see, when Mr. Caldwell left us, Miss St. Clair and I were getting along very nicely. Only Miss Cornish had given out. So he thought he had better go on as fast as he could before he gave out entirely himself. He is not a very strong man, and at that time could not have lifted two ounces.

The thought of help being so near at hand, revived me somewhat. I stood alone and in a weak voice insisted on Miss Cornish being up with the man as it considered her in a worse state than I was. The man was fresh and strong, and he half led, half carried her with-out much difficulty. Mr. Gregory and I sat down to rest after we had slowly walked on a little distance. I had no

sooner sat down than I fell over unconscious. Mr. Gregory, at the same time, was taken with a severe chill, and was wild with anxiety about me. He forgot the few remaining drops of brandy between my freezing lips, rolled me on the rocks, shook me, called on me to rouse myself. Didn't I know that I was freezing to death?

How It Feels to Freeze. What I shall tell you now is what has been told me. I remember nothing until I came to my feet. Mr. Gregory said that presently I muttered, as if talking in my sleep, "I am so comfortable, so warm, but so hungry. Give me something to eat. Do get me some soup. I am starving to death and will not give me anything to eat. Do not move me. I am so sleepy. So sleepy. So sleepy—'y'." Then I ceased to speak and lay as if dead. With superhuman strength Mr. Gregory picked me up in his arms (I weigh 125 pounds) and carried me the remaining half mile to the little log cabin on the side of the mountain in among the rocks. How he ever did he says he cannot say. He knows that he simply must. If he did not I should die.

Miss St. Clair was on the lookout for us, and threw open the door when she

was blowing, howling around that cabin at eighty miles an hour. Last year I thought I had heard wind. Now I know that I had never heard wind until that night. You can have no conception of how it blew. It was a hurricane. Toward morning it abated somewhat, and at day-break, breakfastless, we resumed our walk for the summit. We still had a mile and three quarters of the most difficult grade to climb.

We started out quite briskly, considering all things. We had gone about a quarter of a mile when to my utter dismay, I began to be very sick. I struggled against it with all my might, but sick I was, and deathly sick, too. It was the great altitude that was affecting me. The cold was intense, and the higher up we went the colder blew the wind. When we reached the top they told us that the wind was blowing at 100 miles an hour. It blew strong Mr. Gregory and Miss St. Clair over a number of times. Not to mention strong (7) Miss Cornish and myself. Girls are not to be trusted on their hands and knees. Miss St. Clair had to help Miss Cornish. Mr. Gregory had more than his hands full with poor sick me. The thought of my suffering makes me weak yet. I entreated Mr. Gregory to go on and let me lie down to die. I really wished to die. I was so sick that death would have been welcome. I lay on my back, unable to speak or move, but still conscious. It was quite a while before I was able to do anything but shriek with the awful pain in my hands and feet. They rubbed my face and hands with snow and ice water, and in about a half an hour I was allowed to go to the fire. Then I had first one chill and then another. Indeed, I had such severe chills, and for so long a time, that I began to wonder if they ever would stop, when I was told by Mr. Caldwell that I was alive, he and the telegraph operator took shawls and went in search of the girls.

They found them at the foot of that long, steep grade. Miss St. Clair rubbing Miss Cornish's hands with snow; Miss St. Clair was neither sick nor freezing. She was only weak from battling with that terrific hurricane. She surely is as tough as leather. It is simply marvellous how well she stood the trip. I really expected the two men would be in both the girls either dead or dying. Miss St. Clair coming in without any help, threw over both her shawls, came briskly up to the fire, rubbed her hands together and said: "My! but isn't it cold. Do let us have some hot coffee and a warm breakfast at once." The thought of breakfast made me shiver. Miss Cornish's hands were freezing when they brought her in, and she suffered about as much as I did when they began to thaw.

The black cook soon had a hot steaming breakfast of coffee, hot rolls, fried eggs, mutton chops and fried potatoes ready. By the way, you may or may not know that it takes two hours and a half to boil eggs on the Peak. You can put your hand into boiling water without burning. I tried it. Miss St. Clair and Mr. Caldwell ate a hearty breakfast. The others of us scarcely tasted anything. We paid \$5 for the breakfast. I forgot to tell that we paid \$1.25 each for sitting around the fire at the old cabin. It seemed cheap to us then.

Mr. Caldwell had reached the top at 8 p. m. the night before with his fingers frost bitten. He has since had no feet. He was in a state of great excitement when he came in sight of the signal station at a stupor state over him and he lay down in the snow. He was just dropping off in the fatal sleep when he realized his danger and forced himself to go on. We had telephoned from the Saddle House telling him we should stay there all night.

The Summit at Last. It was 7:30 a. m. Sunday when we reached the top. We stayed there until the train came up at 11:30 a. m. with seventeen passengers. Only one was sick—a young lady. She was unconscious most of the time she was up there. Just as soon as the train reached a couple of thousand feet lower altitude she was herself again.

Those who came up on the train missed the grand scenery we had had early in the morning. Until 8:30 a. m. we could see nothing below us but soft billowy clouds. The sun was shining on the Peak above them. Then they cleared away and we had a view of hundreds and hundreds of miles. Colorado Springs looked about as large as a dining room table. We could see our school. It looked like a toy. It is hardly necessary to say we took the train down the mountain. We left the Peak at 11:30 and reached the station at Manitou a little after 1 o'clock. We took a carriage through Manitou to the electric car and reached the school at 2:45 p. m. Loud and long was the applause which greeted us. We were not any worse for our trip after a day or two. Mr. Gregory went on to Kentucky that night.

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We started out quite briskly, considering all things. We had gone about a quarter of a mile when to my utter dismay, I began to be very sick. I struggled against it with all my might, but sick I was, and deathly sick, too. It was the great altitude that was affecting me. The cold was intense, and the higher up we went the colder blew the wind. When we reached the top they told us that the wind was blowing at 100 miles an hour. It blew strong Mr. Gregory and Miss St. Clair over a number of times. Not to mention strong (7) Miss Cornish and myself.

Girls are not to be trusted on their hands and knees. Miss St. Clair had to help Miss Cornish. Mr. Gregory had more than his hands full with poor sick me. The thought of my suffering makes me weak yet. I entreated Mr. Gregory to go on and let me lie down to die. I really wished to die. I was so sick that death would have been welcome. I lay on my back, unable to speak or move, but still conscious. It was quite a while before I was able to do anything but shriek with the awful pain in my hands and feet. They rubbed my face and hands with snow and ice water, and in about a half an hour I was allowed to go to the fire. Then I had first one chill and then another. Indeed, I had such severe chills, and for so long a time, that I began to wonder if they ever would stop, when I was told by Mr. Caldwell that I was alive, he and the telegraph operator took shawls and went in search of the girls.

They found them at the foot of that long, steep grade. Miss St. Clair rubbing Miss Cornish's hands with snow; Miss St. Clair was neither sick nor freezing. She was only weak from battling with that terrific hurricane. She surely is as tough as leather. It is simply marvellous how well she stood the trip. I really expected the two men would be in both the girls either dead or dying. Miss St. Clair coming in without any help, threw over both her shawls, came briskly up to the fire, rubbed her hands together and said: "My! but isn't it cold. Do let us have some hot coffee and a warm breakfast at once." The thought of breakfast made me shiver. Miss Cornish's hands were freezing when they brought her in, and she suffered about as much as I did when they began to thaw.

The black cook soon had a hot steaming breakfast of coffee, hot rolls, fried eggs, mutton chops and fried potatoes ready. By the way, you may or may not know that it takes two hours and a half to boil eggs on the Peak. You can put your hand into boiling water without burning. I tried it. Miss St. Clair and Mr. Caldwell ate a hearty breakfast. The others of us scarcely tasted anything. We paid \$5 for the breakfast. I forgot to tell that we paid \$1.25 each for sitting around the fire at the old cabin. It seemed cheap to us then.

Mr. Caldwell had reached the top at 8 p. m. the night before with his fingers frost bitten. He has since had no feet. He was in a state of great excitement when he came in sight of the signal station at a stupor state over him and he lay down in the snow. He was just dropping off in the fatal sleep when he realized his danger and forced himself to go on. We had telephoned from the Saddle House telling him we should stay there all night.

The Summit at Last. It was 7:30 a. m. Sunday when we reached the top. We stayed there until the train came up at 11:30 a. m. with seventeen passengers. Only one was sick—a young lady. She was unconscious most of the time she was up there. Just as soon as the train reached a couple of thousand feet lower altitude she was herself again.

Those who came up on the train missed the grand scenery we had had early in the morning. Until 8:30 a. m. we could see nothing below us but soft billowy clouds. The sun was shining on the Peak above them. Then they cleared away and we had a view of hundreds and hundreds of miles. Colorado Springs looked about as large as a dining room table. We could see our school. It looked like a toy. It is hardly necessary to say we took the train down the mountain. We left the Peak at 11:30 and reached the station at Manitou a little after 1 o'clock. We took a carriage through Manitou to the electric car and reached the school at 2:45 p. m. Loud and long was the applause which greeted us. We were not any worse for our trip after a day or two. Mr. Gregory went on to Kentucky that night.

No more Pike's Peak on foot for me. Miss St. Clair says she would like to go again, but she does not want me along. She could not stand another such fright as she had when she saw Mr. Gregory crawling in on his hands and knees. I wonder what will happen to me next? Nothing short of a trip with Peary will seem like anything to me.

Minnie Powell. Birkerto Exempt. From the Detroit Tribune. "Have," shouted Chorus, "where are you going?" "I am going to the shade," I was electrocuted, but have been resuscitated. The boatman gazed into the turbid waters of the styx. "I was electrocuted," he exclaimed, with marked accent, "comes pretty near to giving us the double cross."

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