

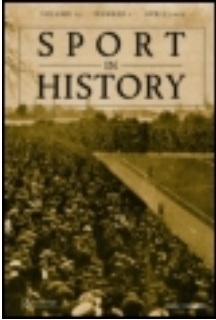
This article was downloaded by: [Birkbeck College]

On: 09 September 2013, At: 13:47

Publisher: Routledge

Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954

Registered office: Mortimer House, 37-41 Mortimer Street, London W1T 3JH, UK



Sport in History

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rsih20>

Women Climbers 1850-1900: A Challenge to Male Hegemony?

Clare Roche^a

^a Department of History, Classics and Archaeology, Birkbeck, University of London, London WC1B 5DQ

Published online: 02 Sep 2013.

To cite this article: Sport in History (2013): Women Climbers 1850-1900: A Challenge to Male Hegemony?, Sport in History, DOI: 10.1080/17460263.2013.826437

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/17460263.2013.826437>

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE

Taylor & Francis makes every effort to ensure the accuracy of all the information (the "Content") contained in the publications on our platform. However, Taylor & Francis, our agents, and our licensors make no representations or warranties whatsoever as to the accuracy, completeness, or suitability for any purpose of the Content. Any opinions and views expressed in this publication are the opinions and views of the authors, and are not the views of or endorsed by Taylor & Francis. The accuracy of the Content should not be relied upon and should be independently verified with primary sources of information. Taylor and Francis shall not be liable for any losses, actions, claims, proceedings, demands, costs, expenses, damages, and other liabilities whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with, in relation to or arising out of the use of the Content.

This article may be used for research, teaching, and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, redistribution, reselling, loan, sub-licensing, systematic supply, or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden. Terms & Conditions of access and use can be found at <http://www.tandfonline.com/page/terms-and-conditions>

Women Climbers 1850–1900: A Challenge to Male Hegemony?

Clare Roche

Winner of the Richard W. Cox Postgraduate Prize at the 2012 British Society of Sports History annual conference.

Middle-class women journeyed in increasing numbers to the Alps during the last half of the nineteenth century; a substantial minority climbed. They have received little attention from cultural, social or sport historians. Where they have been referenced, women climbers were seen either as an addendum to their fathers' and brothers' expeditions, as atypical 'new women' or simply non-existent until the early twentieth century. This paper will refute these premises, highlighting the wide variety of levels with which women engaged in mountaineering, from first ascents of major summits over 4,000 metres to lower level walks. It demonstrates these middle-class women ignored contemporary medical advice to avoid strenuous exercise and challenges the notion that climbing and the high Alps were a uniquely male space.

True it was late: true we were cold, hungry and tired; true we were sinking into the snow above our knees; but the Teufelsgrat [Ridge] was ours and we cared little for these minor evils.

This was the Alpinist Mary Mummery, triumphant upon reaching the summit of the Taschhorn (4,490m), a mountain in the Pennine Alps near Zermatt, in January 1888. She had conquered, for the first time in winter, the Teufelsgrat Ridge, which an experienced guide described as the 'embodiment of inaccessibility' because of its airy, knife-edged shape

Clare Roche, Department of History, Classics and Archaeology, Birkbeck, University of London, London WC1B 5DQ. Correspondence to: clarearoch@gmail.com

surrounded by steep, 1,000-metre drops. It was not an easy climb; the weather deteriorated and the climbing party was compelled to spend an unplanned night out on the mountain. The expedition lasted 28 hours with no sleep and plenty of sub-zero temperatures.¹

This ascent of one of the highest peaks in the Alps, which demanded a high level of fitness and endurance and contained a distinct element of danger, is not an activity that is immediately associated with middle-class women in the Victorian period. Although it is recognized that women were not as subordinate, submissive and confined to the domestic sphere as initially thought,² nevertheless, certain activities, such as competitive sport, education and extreme exercise, are still seen as largely inaccessible to women until the end of the nineteenth century.³ Davidoff and Hall's work in 1987 built on Welter's classic description of separate spheres where 'True Women' were the personification of piety, purity, submissiveness and domesticity.⁴ Although, as Kathryn Gleadle, Ruth Robbins and others have argued, the image portrayed of women by Coventry Patmore's 'Angel in the House' was an exaggeration, nevertheless, the view that middle-class women's lives centred on issues connected with domesticity and the traditional feminine roles of nurturing and caring predominates.⁵

The purpose of this paper is to focus on the activities of a group of women between 1850 and 1900, including people such as Mummery, who do not fit this paradigm. The actions of these women contest the notion that mountaineering was a uniquely male activity and demonstrate a blurring of the concept of separate spheres. They showed that a number of women willingly undertook extreme exercise often under conditions of utmost privation. Historians of mountaineering, sport and medicine have overlooked them.

Following a review of the work already published in these fields, the paper focuses on what women were actually doing in the mountains. This includes both the more casual climbers who merely extended their long walks to occasionally 'bag' a summit as well as those dedicated mountaineers whose main target was the major Alpine peaks. The frequency with which women were seen in the mountains and the necessary fitness and physicality involved remains the principal consideration. *Führebücher* – the books of mountain guides containing testimonials written by satisfied clients – provide previously unused sources that clearly show the frequent presence of women in the high Alps. Diaries, journals, letters, visitor books from high mountain huts, articles from the *Alpine Journal* and newspapers also provide valuable evidence.

'New women' and the climbing body

Accounts of Alpinism have accepted, and built upon, the view of Victorian commentators and climbers, such as the well-known mountaineer Edward Whymper, who claimed that climbing developed character and manliness.⁶ Many climbing historians have taken these claims at face value and not looked below the well-publicized male exterior of mountaineering to examine what was happening below the surface. As Kelly Boyd has pointed out, however, 'manliness' was not only a male preserve; women and boys could also be manly in a positive rather than adverse sense.⁷ The prolific, and definitely feminine, climber Elizabeth Le Blond declared there was 'no manlier sport in the world than mountaineering'⁸ – not something to proselytize if it had negative connotations for herself and fellow female climbers. Peter Hansen, a leading authority on the Alpine Club in the nineteenth century, claims mountaineering was both a way middle-class men forged an identity for themselves and created a form of vicarious imperialism. In this supposedly testosterone-laden world of adventure, danger and conquest of virgin territory, women, he maintains, were rare and tended to be masculine in build and nature.⁹ The women who climbed in the 1860s and 1870s, he asserts, were 'New Women'.¹⁰

This phenomenon, however, although arguably having antecedents in the mid-nineteenth-century women's movement, only truly began in the 1880s and reached its apogee at the end of the century. Furthermore, the term 'New Woman', as Sally Ledger has shown, is itself problematic as it contains a number of contradictory meanings.¹¹ For example, it simultaneously stood for women who were loose, sexual predators, and for those who were chaste and independent or mannish and asexual; for those who 'trapped' men and for those who ignored them. The more unchallenged depiction of the 'New Woman' was of a university-educated woman, someone who worked professionally or clerically through choice rather than necessity, who lived independently from family, making her own life choices and often refused the mantle of motherhood. The New Woman was most prominent in literature – in the work, for example, of Henry James, Olive Schreiner, Mona Caird, Henrik Ibsen, Thomas Hardy and Sarah Grand. However, here again, there were different opinions as to whom she actually was.¹² Nevertheless, the New Woman was not merely a fictional figure; she existed among the growing numbers of formally educated middle-class women who were no longer content to have marriage and children as their sole life aim. The important point is that the groundswell of this phenomenon occurred mainly in the 1890s and

early years of the twentieth century. Most of the women mountaineers Hansen referred to had stopped climbing by then.

Female mountaineers, even into the 1890s, were an eclectic mix and do not easily fit a particular 'type'. Many, beginning with Mrs Hamilton in 1854 and continuing to Mabel Neruda in the 1890s and beyond, climbed with their husbands.¹³ Others preferred brothers, sisters and friends of either gender as climbing companions. Although in the 1890s there were some climbers who fitted the description of New Women – Maud Meyer, a Girton mathematician, and Gertrude Bell, an Oxford-educated archaeologist and political administrator, are the most notable – it would be an exaggeration and distortion to label all, even at a time when the New Woman was at her height, with this epithet.¹⁴ Hansen's rather naive comment is a typical example of the cavalier and superficial way in which some historians have dealt with women mountaineers. Welcome exceptions to this trend are works by Ann Colley and Carole Osborne. *Victorians in the Mountains; Sinking the Sublime* (2010) by Colley highlights the substantial number of women who walked and climbed in the Alps and hints at the effect this had on the popular view of the mountains. Osborne's study examines the involvement of women in the development of climbing clubs – something that largely occurred after 1890.¹⁵

The study of women's engagement with sport and exercise has also left women climbers unrecognized. Kathleen McCrone has charted the gradual rise of sport in girl's schools as they emulated boy's public schools. Competition, a normally male characteristic, was slowly admitted, but sport, although it became more common for girls, retained a distinctively feminine edge, concentrating on character and fitness rather than power and domination.¹⁶ Mangan has written of how robust fitness was seen as vulgar. Exercise was fine so long as it was genteel and not too extreme.¹⁷ The qualities to be nurtured, and explained to parents who might be concerned for the health of their daughters, were fitness and character, not manly displays of power and domination as encouraged in boy's schools.¹⁸ In charting this development, the activities of women Alpinists, where extreme exercise and the desire to be the first woman on a summit were commonplace, are overlooked. McCrone wrote that 'By 1914 the granddaughters of 1860 were able to bicycle and climb mountains', not recognizing that some grandmothers had been actively climbing for 40 years by 1900.¹⁹ Parratt recognized the existence of women mountaineers but felt they only came into being in the 1890s, whereas most female first ascents of the major Alpine summits were complete by 1880.²⁰

Historians agree that the limitation put upon middle-class women's exercise was based around the perceived need to protect their reproductive system. Women's identity was largely biologically determined, centring as it did on the role of wife and mother.²¹ The concentration in historical work, however, has been more on what was prescribed for middle-class women rather than what they actually did. Patricia Vertinsky based her study of women and exercise, for example, largely on 'establishment medical reports and literary debates.'²² Her argument is that middle- and upper-class women's understanding of their bodies and the extent to which they embraced exercise came principally from their physicians. According to this view, women were passive and led by doctors to understand the risks and benefits of exercise; a premise that, surely, requires more support from women's own personal accounts to be credible. This was a point recognized by one reviewer, who noted that Vertinsky continued the well-trodden route of the physician's view of women.²³

The eponymous 'Eternally Wounded Woman' referred to the invalid status bequeathed on women, by doctors, every month during menstruation. Medical journals certainly contained lengthy discussions – letters, articles and conference proceedings – on the purpose, dangers and character of menstruation and its management.²⁴ There was almost universal agreement, among doctors, that rest should play a significant role, but this does not necessarily mean women were compliant with that advice.

With this in mind it is important to recall that women mountaineers came principally from the upper middle class. In towns and cities throughout Britain, members of this class played pivotal roles in literary, philosophic, scientific and natural history societies. Gunn, using Bourdieu's notion of habitus, has convincingly demonstrated these activities were one of the most reliable markers of the class.²⁵ As a group, they were generally inquisitive, questioning and self-confident. Educated and cultured, most women climbers in this study, for example, spoke fluent French and German with Italian being a common addition.²⁶ Several came from dissenting Unitarian or Quaker backgrounds.²⁷ It was not an upbringing to encourage uncritical compliance with any advice, medical or otherwise.

It is unsurprising, therefore, that while doctors debated among themselves the management of female puberty and menstruation, disquiet about their general usefulness engaged sections of the middle class. In part, this can be traced to the challenges and difficulties within the profession of medicine. The British Medical Association was established

in 1855 to counter the power and influence of the two Royal Colleges (of Physicians and Surgeons) and provide some unified representation for general practitioners. The Medical Act of 1858 was an attempt, for the first time, to marginalize quacks and unqualified practitioners. There were power struggles between the different sections within medicine and a desire to distance themselves from irregular unqualified 'healers'. Socially, doctors were not always thought 'respectable'; Lady Chettam in George Eliot's *Middlemarch* (1872) viewed them 'more on a footing with servants'. Given these internal struggles and ongoing efforts to assimilate new scientific developments, often coming from Germany and France, it is hardly surprising that medicine did not always seem to be unified or credible.²⁸

The personal correspondence and diaries of the middle class, in an age that suffered the ravages of epidemics, chronic disability and the prospect of early death, overflow with discussion of their health. These frequently display profound misgivings with doctors and their pronouncements. Peter Gay records several accounts of people witnessing the 'wrong treatment and incapacity on the part of doctors' who nevertheless were perceived as 'safe under the sanction of their diplomas'. One woman, in 1885, after suffering a miscarriage, claimed she trusted her sister's opinion more 'than fifty doctors'. Another noted 'No doctors and all got well' when her family contracted smallpox. These were common opinions of distrust, which the educated middle class regularly expressed.²⁹ Ruth Robbins makes the interesting point that the large number of advice manuals published about health may indicate the neglect, rather than compliance, with doctor's recommendations.³⁰

Given these attitudes, it is reasonable to assume that some women and their families disregarded medical advice in relation to women's invalidity and attitude to exercise. Towards the end of the century, physicians began slowly to alter advice on exercise for women, possibly because many were already ignoring them and embracing the new pastime of cycling.³¹ Nevertheless medical advice for women, while stressing the benefit of exercise, insisted it should be in moderation, a prescription which mountaineering did not align with.

Women in the mountains: Walks and early climbs

The retrospectively designated 'Golden Age' of mountaineering ranged from 1854, when Alfred Wills climbed the Wetterhorn (3,692m), to 1865 when Whymper first stood on the Matterhorn (4,478m). During this

period, men climbed most of the principal summits for the first time. By 1900, few remained untouched. What is less well known is that women were quick to follow. Mrs Hamilton, for instance, in the same year Willis climbed the Wetterhorn, became the first British woman to climb Mont Blanc (4,810m); the 'Golden Age' was not as exclusively male as first appears.³² Miss Forman followed her in 1856 and by 1861 women made the ascent on an annual basis. By the mid 1870s, a woman had stood on most Alpine summits.³³ Women in the mountains had clearly been transgressing notions of moderate exercise for over 40 years prior to 1900. Like the men, their activities varied; some climbed the highest most difficult peaks while the majority walked and attempted more modest summits or passes.

The larger group of women were those whose initial aim was simply enjoyment of the mountain ambience. The middle classes travelled to the Alps in significant numbers from the 1860s following the development of the European railway.³⁴ This increased substantially in subsequent decades when entrepreneurs such as Thomas Cook offered popular walking tours.³⁵ An account from *The Times* gives an excellent description of the people and atmosphere on the way into Chamonix in the summer of 1872:

the road yesterday was like a fair. Group succeeded group all making for the mountains - ladies on mules and men on foot and at times by way of variety, men on mules and ladies trudging stoutly along with petticoats looped up and alpenstocks in hand. At Chatelard two vigorous English damsels, who had tripped over the mountain from Martigny by the Col du Trient route and who afterwards trudged through the valley braving the rays of a very hot sun, arrived at Argentieres quite as soon as those who had ridden - a good 20 miles or a trifle more the greater part of it up or down steeps . . . strong and active walkers are our English ladies.³⁶

This clearly demonstrates not merely women's widespread presence in the mountains but their physical involvement and lack of passivity. The 'damsels' walking over the col were clearly physically fit; they achieved a considerable mileage for a day's walking which also included over 1,000 metres of ascent and 500 metres of descent. The mountains were attracting large numbers of people, men and women, many of whom walked or climbed. There were almost daily ascents of Mont Blanc, as this comment in *The Times* from 1872 makes clear:

A young scotch lady went up on Thursday. The guides say there really is now no danger in the ascent, if proper lookout is kept for crevasses

covered by snow, all that is needed is strength of limb, good wind and nerve. Ascents by ladies seem likely to become common.³⁷

As indeed they did. By 1887, 71 women had climbed it, three having done it at least twice.³⁸

Not everyone wanted, initially, to stand on summits, however. Frances Havergal (1836–1879), the hymn writer, is a good example of someone who went, at first, for gentler reasons, drawing, writing and walking, either with her sister and brother-in-law but often with only another female friend. Walking began at just a couple of miles a day but within a fortnight became 14 to 20. In subsequent years the mountains extended their grip on her and she climbed, among others, the Furcahorn (3,165m), Sparrenhorn (3,160m) and Gerner Grat (3,230m) – lower-level walks were no longer sufficient.³⁹ Havergal continued to extend her exploits, culminating with the first ascent of the season to the Grand Mulets hut (3,051m), a high refuge perched on rocks among heavily crevassed glaciers seven hours climb below Mont Blanc's peak and open to all the dangers of the high mountains.

Although alluding to her frailty, this did not deter her from taking on these challenges; rather the reverse. 'I did not know till the summer before last what a combination of keen enjoyment and benefit to health . . . was to be found in a *pedestrians tour by unprotected females!*'⁴⁰ she wrote, in 1871, when touring the Alps with a friend. She found the mountains invigorating and like other women felt able to do more in that environment than in England.⁴¹ 'Oh', she exclaimed,

the delicious freedom and sense of leisure. . . . How we spied grand points of view from rocks above and (having no one to consult, or to keep waiting, or to fidget about us) stormed them with our alpenstocks and scrambled and leaped and laughed and raced as if we were not girls again but *downright boys!*⁴²

The sense of liberty, joyfulness and contrast with life in England is striking, as is the recognition of gender difference. The important point is that this woman of delicate build, a committed Christian more drawn to writing and charitable works than hill-walking nevertheless, while recognizing society's mores, did not hesitate to transgress them when the opportunity arose. Her family published her collection of personal letters and poems posthumously. Written with no apparent motive other than to record her personal feelings and experiences, they provide a more accurate reflection of the physicality enjoyed by women than the medical opinions over which some historians have laboured. Accounts

of other women climbers have also emerged after their death. Letters and journals, for example, were kept by mountaineers Emily Hornby and Elizabeth Spence Watson and the more episodic climber and ardent lepidopterist Mary de La Beche Nicholl.⁴³ Given the number of women who travelled to the Alps, many other correspondences describing similar exploits must have been lost or gone unrecorded and therefore unnoticed.

However, some accounts were published. These underline both the frequent presence of women in the mountains and their involvement in what medical opinion classed exceptional and therefore potentially harmful amounts of exercise. A *Lady's Tour Round Monte Rosa* (1859) written by Mrs Cole, records a series of excursions around the second highest alpine peak between 1850 and 1858. A summary of one typical day provides an example of what was involved. As with later expeditions, women and many men rode until they reached the glacier, which, on this occasion was an hour away at an altitude of 2,500m, which they reached at 6.45 a.m. The ascent to the pass took a further hour and a quarter with a height gain of 441m. While this is a comparatively short period of exercise, the rate of ascent considerably exceeded the 300 metres per hour expected of an averagely fit person above 2,000m today.⁴⁴ After reaching the pass, the Cole party descended 1,600m in four hours to Macugnaga; such steep descents are as arduous as the climbs. The important point is that she was an ordinary Victorian lady, with no apparent desire to divorce herself from the dress and conventions of femininity but saw no contradiction between this and the strenuous physical activity involved in her mountaineering. She wrote: 'I feel certain that any lady, blessed with moderate health and activity who is capable of taking a little exercise "al fresco" . . . may accomplish the Tour of Monte Rosa with great delight.'⁴⁵ Her book explicitly encouraged lady travellers, giving advice on clothes, training and necessary equipment, which insinuates there was a ready audience for such expeditions.

She was not alone in trying to inspire other women to forsake the valleys for higher summits and pastures. Frederica Plunket, who toured through the Alps in the early 1870s, claimed: 'My object in writing this book . . . is to show what can be done easily by ladies of active habit.'⁴⁶ The mountaineer Alfred Wills, who climbed Mont Blanc with his wife and daughter on more than one occasion, devoted a whole chapter to the same purpose.⁴⁷ Mrs Freshfield was the driving force in her family behind their summer tours to the Alps. She recognized that

'the Swiss alps has been not inaptly called the playground of England where the energy, enterprise and endurance of her grown-up sons find ample scope for exercise' but adds that this had made 'wives and sisters seek participation in the pleasures which they hear so vividly described . . . ladies may now enjoy the wildest scenes of mountain grandeur with comparative ease'.⁴⁸

A further compelling example of women in the Alps comes from a group who toured in 1874 (Figure 1). They were a mixed party: some hoped to do a little climbing and walking, others to merely sketch and 'botanize'. After a week of rambling in the Chamonix valley (1,055m), they extended their excursions to Montanvert (1,909m) and the Mer de Glace to visit the 'jardin' (2,300m) where two glaciers converge. The mountain environment quickly captivated them and they organized a more adventurous expedition to the Grand Mulets refuge (3,051m).

On their way through the crevassed glacier they passed another female party descending from the summit of Mont Blanc (4,810m). This made the women contemplate making the attempt themselves. Their guides encouraged them and the following morning they left the hut at 3.00 a.m. Reaching the summit around 10.00 a.m., they returned to the hut by 3.00 p.m. and continued to walk back to Chamonix that day,



Figure 1 'Five Ladies – Mary Taylor, Grace Hirst, Fanny Richardson, Marion Ross, Marion Neilson 1874'

Source: *Five Ladies, Swiss Notes* (Low Bentham: Peter Marshall, 2003)

arriving at midnight. This was a 21-hour day, containing a descent of over 3,750m after an 1,800m climb at high altitude – an amazing feat of physical endurance by any standard and at any period, but especially from girls brought up in a culture some feel espoused female frailty, and who had no previous experience of high Alpine climbing. They were the first party comprised only women to climb Mont Blanc. One group they met made the comment ‘we were very plucky to go about without gentlemen’, to which they replied ‘amongst the mountains, particularly the glaciers, guides were much more useful than gentlemen’. Which indeed they were when they ‘had to creep in and out of crevasses by means of steps cut in the walls of the ice. . . . Where these walls were more than perpendicular ladders were placed . . . to reach the tables above.’ This account not only clearly demonstrates some women were ignoring advice to moderate their exercise but also establishes women as a common sight on the mountain. On this one random day in 1874, four of the five climbing parties on the hill included women.⁴⁹

Vertinsky’s argument, as already outlined, centres on menstruation limiting women’s exercise, but Anna and Ellen Pigeon’s detailed records of their climbing seasons undermine this view.⁵⁰ They are an example of women who began by walking and over the years metamorphosed into experienced and dedicated mountaineers. In 1864, they had their first Alpine trip where they concentrated on modest peaks approximately 2,500m in height. For the next five years they continued in a similar vein, gradually extending their range to higher passes. An event in 1869 acted as a catalyst. It made them realize what they were capable of, after which the high mountains became their preferred choice.

Their intended route was to go from Zermatt (1,608m) to the neighbouring valley of Gressonay via the Lys-Joch pass (4,227m). This was high but a relatively easy gradient. Their guide, however, became lost and they ended by descending the notoriously steep rock face of the even higher Sesia-Joch (4,424m). Climbed only once before, it had never been descended, and was described as ‘the most daring of Alpine exploits’. Finishing on a glacier as light was fading, they sought refuge in a shepherd’s hut, only the next day realizing their guide’s mistake. They were in the adjacent valley of Alagna, not Gressonay, had made Alpine history and received extensive coverage in the local Italian paper as well as the *Alpine Journal*.⁵¹ This potentially fatal episode was their first experience of difficult, high altitude climbing but appeared only to have encouraged them.

They kept meticulous accounts of all their expeditions.⁵² This is important not just for recording their mountaineering achievements, but

crucially shows that, despite enormous physical endeavour, they could not have rested during menstruation. They arrived in the Alps around mid-July, and their detailed records show they climbed without a break, apart from when weather forced a retreat, until the second week in September. These sisters did not rest; they were doing the opposite – extreme physical exercise that some men would have recoiled from, even during their menses. Itineraries from other women such as Meta Brevoort, Lucy Walker, Elizabeth Spence Watson and Emily Hornby appear to support this conclusion.⁵³ These records, however, are not as minutely detailed as the Pigeon sisters and therefore less certain.⁵⁴

Women in the mountains: Challenging the male space

Those who particularly challenged the notion that the Alps were an exclusively male domain were the second group of women – the dedicated mountaineers. The sole purpose of their summer or winter tour was to climb some of the highest or most challenging mountains. Several of them became the first women to climb the major summits such as the Eiger (3,970m), Monte Rosa (4,634m) and Jungfrau (4,166m). Lucy Walker (1836–1917), the first woman to climb the Matterhorn (4,487m) in 1871, only six years after the famous tragic first ascent by Edward Whymper's party, demonstrates this perfectly. She began climbing with her father and brother in 1858 and continued until 1879. During that time, she was the first woman to the top of 16 summits, ten of which were over 4,000m. In total she completed 98 expeditions; one, the Balmhorn (3,698m), was a first ascent for either sex. Within the mountains, she became a legend in her own lifetime. Whymper called her a celebrity, describing how she 'excited much curiosity and inspired a large amount of talk' in the hotels of the Alps.⁵⁵ She attracted some attention in Britain after her Matterhorn ascent – *Punch* wrote a celebratory poem in her honour as did the actress and writer Fanny Kemble⁵⁶ – but generally, Walker remained little-known outside the mountaineering world. She nevertheless was a definite feminine presence among the most challenging peaks in the Alps. Climbing in a dress with her mountain provisions of champagne and sponge cake, she presents a distinct female counter to the prevailing view of the heroic male space of the mountains.⁵⁷

Walker, being one of the earliest, regular, female mountaineers, set an example for others to follow. The mountaineer William Coolidge wrote that had it not been for her his aunt, Meta Brevoort (1825–76), would never have started climbing.⁵⁸ Instead, she became a prolific mountaineer, claiming 12 first ascents for either sex and 14 for women. In total, she

climbed 44 significant summits, 16 over 4,000m. Brevoort, like Walker, became a common sight in the Alps. Unlike Walker, however, she even extended her climbing to the winter months, something that very few men were doing at that time.

These women who were exploring and conquering new territory, like the men, were competitive. They wanted to be the first to claim a summit. Katherine Richardson (1854–1927), for example, raced from Chamonix to the Dauphiné region in 1888 because she heard a woman was planning an attempt on the Meije (3,984m) – the last unclimbed major Alpine peak – only to find the lady being spoken of was herself.

Her activities not only show women's presence in the Alps – she had 116 major ascents to her name – but also the degree of fitness they possessed. She was particularly fast; a true athlete. One guide commented



Figure 2 Margaret and Edward Jackson.
Source: Alpine Club, London (c. 1876–1879)

ruefully: 'She does not sleep, she doesn't eat and she walks like the devil.'⁵⁹ On her successful climb of the Aiguille de Bionnassay, a first ascent that several men had previously attempted but failed, she had to stop for 45 minutes to allow her guide to recover.⁶⁰ She, like other female mountaineers, clearly paid no attention to any recommendations from doctors to avoid extremes of exercise. Like Walker, with her dainty, slim frame and insistence on wearing a skirt when others began experimenting with breeches, she brought a sense of femininity to the purportedly male environment of the mountains.

Margaret Jackson (1843–1906; see [Figure 2](#)) may not have been as fast as Richardson but she challenged men's dominion of the Alps in exactly the same way. She achieved seven first ascents of major peaks over 4,000 metres; more than any other woman and many men. Three of her climbs, on the Weissmies (4,031m), the Dom (4,545m) and the Dent Blanche (4,364m) were the first for either sex.⁶¹ Her total number of major climbs was 140.⁶² She became particularly renowned for a series of winter climbs in 1887, all of which were again first ascents for either sex. During an epic traverse of the Jungfrau (4,166m) the party were benighted and Jackson suffered severe frostbite that eventually ended her long climbing career.

Someone else who enjoyed winter climbing was Elizabeth Le Blond (1861–1934). She is interesting because she came to mountaineering in direct opposition to medical advice. Thought to be on the borders of consumption, on doctor's recommendation she went to rest in warmer climates where she deteriorated.⁶³ Arriving in Chamonix in the summer of 1881 she improved rapidly, and began gentle walking, which quickly metamorphosed into more strenuous ascents.⁶⁴ In December, she began what became a regular routine of winter climbing. Later she became the first woman to climb guideless, and therefore with no men in her climbing party. As with many other serious mountaineers – Hornby, Richardson, Pigeon and Isabelle Straton and Emmeline Lewis-Lloyd, pictured in [Figure 3](#) – the only other men in the party usually were guides and porters.

These are a sample from the many middle-class women involved in mountaineering. None of them accepted the notion of women being frail, needing male oversight, incapable of sustained physical exercise or hostage to their reproductive organs. Several were or became married and had children. Some published but most did not, rendering this sector of middle-class women largely invisible to historians who have concentrated on professions and institutions rather than eliciting women's own accounts.



Figure 3 Isabelle Straton (centre) and Emmeline Lewis-Lloyd (left) with guides and porters.
Source: Alpine Club, London (c. 1870–1873)

Climbing for men was competitive either in terms of conquering an unclimbed peak, proving themselves among their peers or in gaining new scientific insights. Publicly recording their achievements in national newspapers and the *Alpine Journal* marked their position in this society. This has made them more visible to historians and helped to build the claim that mountains were a male space. None of this applied to women, whose achievements were not widely publicized; as a result, their accomplishments have remained less acknowledged.

A resource, housed in the Alpine Club, of around 60 *führebücher* from the period 1850–1900 brings women, however, more to the foreground. They are a valuable resource for disclosing who was actually on the mountain. Close analyses of several of these reveal women were part of many climbing groups from an early date. The guide Peter Bohren, for instance, in 1855 took Catherine Lyons up the Schilthorn (2,973m), Titlis (3,238m) and across the Strahlegg pass (3,351m). The following year he accompanied a Catherine Waddell and her daughter on various mountain excursions.⁶⁵ Jacob Anderegg, Ferdinand Imseng, Josef Imboden and Christian Almer are just a few of several well-known guides who, from the 1860s, frequently led women to a variety of summits and high cols. Many of these, such as Mary Whitehead, Emily Ford and Mrs Mannering were not like the renowned climbers attempting first ascents, as discussed above, but merely women enjoying an Alpine holiday. They are not to be found in any narrative accounts of female mountaineering but remain unknown – tucked away in the pages of these books.⁶⁶ All the *führebücher* I have seen contain several entries by or on behalf of women. While it might be presumed that women Alpinists became more common in the 1890s, when social and political pressures had produced the more forceful and independent ‘New Woman’ phenomenon, the *führebücher* support the claim that many women were climbing 20 to 30 years earlier than this.

Discussion

It is clear from these few examples that women were a more common sight in the high Alps than has been depicted in most historical accounts. It is true they were not as numerous as men, but even today, more men are involved in climbing parties than women.⁶⁷ The obvious questions to ask are why they have remained hidden and what can be learnt from that fact. Men’s position in society for much of the nineteenth century was one of authority and dominance; it was a patriarchal system. As David Robbins has shown, for men, writing about their Alpine achievements was a way of cementing their position in society, giving credence to their

authority, strength, power and outgoing nature.⁶⁸ Mountaineer and man of letters Leslie Stephen admitted one of his motivations for attempting an unclimbed peak was to achieve a degree of immortality; his name would be forever associated with the mountain.⁶⁹ As Hansen noted, men wrote articles out of all proportion to the number who actually climbed.⁷⁰ They were positioning themselves among their peers, hoping to impress, even to further their careers.⁷¹ Men's climbing and their presence in the mountains was a very public affair. This has contributed to a distorted view of mountaineering. By contrast, middle-class women had less need to impress or prove themselves. Those that climbed, for example, were financially independent or had family willingly supporting them. Unlike men, women had little access to the professions or business, which removed any pressure to network or publicize. More importantly, attracting attention to the self was not something most women would entertain; it was unfeminine and ran against social mores. Sara Mills's study *Discourses of Difference* has shown that, partly to avoid the accusation of self-promotion, women's writing favoured the format of private journals, letters and anonymous publications.⁷² The style in which they wrote also differed to that commonly used by men. This is seen in several female climbers' accounts that are more self-effacing, and denigrating of their achievements compared to men's. Hornby, for example, claimed her success on the Dent Blanche was only because of favourable weather and not related to any natural talent on her part. Others, despite being out for more than 12 hours, claimed they were not in the least tired.⁷³ Any accidents or mishaps that occurred were dealt with in a perfunctory, dismissive, even joking, manner.⁷⁴ There is a notable absence of the heroic style more commonly seen in men's accounts.

If women adapted their writing to comply with social expectations of femininity, they also ensured their appearance, when they were close to habitation, did not attract undue comment. Richardson, as already noted, when her climbing companion Mary Paillon adopted breeches, persisted in wearing a skirt on all her mountaineering expeditions – albeit one that was easily shortened when climbing.⁷⁵ Walker always wore a dress and was not above riding a mule for the first part of an expedition.⁷⁶ Others wrote of readjusting their skirts and appearance prior to re-entering a village.⁷⁷ This contrast between their appearance above the tree-line as opposed to below, between what and how they wrote compared to what they actually did, was a useful compromise. It was a way of appearing not to challenge the heroic nature of climbing, to be demonstrably feminine, but simultaneously it created a space for them to pursue their mountaineering

unimpeded. As Alison Blunt has shown women travellers elsewhere adopted similar tactics. Mary Kingsley used parody extensively to deflect criticism of her activities and was insistent on maintaining a feminine appearance. On publication of her first book, she used the gender-neutral name M.H. Kingsley and was insistent ‘no picture of myself in trousers or any other little excitement [was] . . . added.’⁷⁸

A few influential men such as Leslie Stephen, however, regarded mountaineering as an essentially male affair. Women climbers, for Stephen, were interlopers. On meeting Jackson after her successful first winter traverse of the Jungfrau, he described her to his wife as a ‘queer dressed up little woman’. They only got as far as preliminary introductions whereupon Stephen commented acidly: ‘I hope I shall not have to get any further.’ On hearing her party had suffered frostbite he added ‘I would much rather Mrs J should be the sufferer’ than the guides.⁷⁹ It is hard not to conclude that Stephen was jealous of this woman who had just achieved another first ascent, something that was dear to his own heart as a younger man.⁸⁰

Marginalizing groups, marking people out as different, as Foucault made clear, was a way of exerting control. Physically and mentally, men, in the nineteenth century, represented normality; women by contrast were designated as ‘other’. The labelling of women who climbed mountains in a similar fashion to men, as unusual, ‘oddities’ or eccentrics was an effective way of further separating and ridiculing a subset of women who potentially threatened the cultural sense of male power and control. Stephen’s description of Jackson as ‘a queer little woman’ typifies this. Female display of physical skill, courage and risk-taking struck at the heart of what was thought essential to manliness.⁸¹ Branding female climbers bizarre and exceptional both belittled and denigrated their achievements and distanced them from male mountaineers. Women’s reticence to publicize their achievements, particularly outside the climbing community, and the adaptation of their appearance for different environments was a way of deflecting such labelling. It satisfied the social mores of a male-dominated society while allowing women to continue their mountaineering with less overt criticism. Some women, however, did publish and write articles and a brief survey of the British press shows newspaper coverage of various women’s mountain exploits, albeit written by men, were relatively common – from prominent ascents to accidents and book reviews.⁸² The *Alpine Journal* and *führebücher* contain numerous accounts of ‘ladies’ being members of climbing parties. Evidence that women were active in the mountains from a relatively early date is clearly there but it requires more searching to uncover them than it does for men.

The male dominance of the Alps, physical and cultural, has its counterpart in the predominantly male medical advice given to women regarding exercise and activity: both were forms of control, one concerned with geographical space and the other the female body. Just, however, as women mountaineers subtly usurped the perceived male space of the Alps, so they paid little attention to medical recommendations. Women's activities covered a broad range, from the simplest tour involving several hours of walking a day to a night spent in the open to achieve a high summit such as the Weisshorn (4,505m).⁸³ That some women began extraordinary feats of endurance at altitude only a few days after arriving in the mountains suggests they had not been leading indolent lives at home. Some undertook exhausting expeditions, crossing dangerous crevasses and ascending ladders; a few made unprecedented ascents. Frostbite and deaths were not unheard of.⁸⁴ At whatever level they participated, they were not complying with received medical advice to restrict their activity to 'moderate' exercise. The Pigeon sisters' account unequivocally showed how climbing was not interrupted by menstruation. Le Blond wrote part of her book explicitly encouraging women to eschew medical advice. Many of the women were also independent of male companions and surveillance. None were passive and confined to the domestic sphere.

The popularity of walking tours, the journals, memoirs, press coverage, books and signatures in visitors' books and *führebücher* all point to substantial numbers of women engaged in exercise in the mountains, to variable degrees, in the second half of the nineteenth century. This weakens the notion that Alpine mountaineering was a uniquely male space. There is even an argument to be made for the existence of a female 'Golden Age' of mountaineering from 1854 to 1880; during these 26 years women climbed most of the major Alpine summits for the first time. The historical picture frequently drawn of middle-class women being restricted to domestic concerns, subject to patriarchal supervision, avoiding excessive exercise and constrained by their reproductive system, has arisen because of the neglect of women's voices in preference to the more easily uncovered male-dominated medical, social and mountaineering discourses. As this paper reveals, women mountaineers had been a common sight for several years throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century.⁸⁵ As such, Kathleen McCrone's view that women only began climbing after 1900 and the view held by other historians that women mountaineers were rare, aberrant or 'New Women', requires some revision in light of the source material presented here.⁸⁶ The idea of middle-class Victorian women being subject to male control has governed

work by Vertinsky, Parke and more recently Strange.⁸⁷ This account, which has focussed on what women *were doing* rather than what medical and social discourse felt they *should be doing*, has shown they have ignored a significant sector that showed no such tendency.

Acknowledgments

Thanks are due to The Alpine Club for allowing access to many photographs, journals and fuhrebucher. In particular the Librarian Tadeusz Hudowski and archivist Glynn Hughes. I am also grateful to Peter Marshall for allowing use of the photograph in Figure 1.

Notes

1. Mary Mummery, 'The Teufelsgrat', in Alfred Mummery, *My Climbs in the Alps and the Caucasus* (London: Thomas Nelson, 1908), 94–122.
2. Kathryn Gleadle, *British Women in the Nineteenth Century* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001); Simon Morgan, *A Victorian Woman's Place: Public Culture in the Nineteenth Century*, International Library of Historical Studies 40 (London; New York: Tauris Academic Studies, 2007).
3. Sarah Delamont and Lorna Duffin, *The Nineteenth Century Woman. Her Cultural and Physical World* (Harper & Row, 1978); Martha Jeannette Vicinus, *Suffer and Be Still. Women in the Victorian Age* [by various authors], ed. Martha Vicinus (Bloomington, IN and London: Indiana University Press, n.d. [1972]); Patricia Vertinsky, *The Eternally Wounded Woman* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990); Roberta Park, 'Sport, Gender and Society in Transatlantic Victorian Perspective', in *From Fair Sex to Feminism. Sport and the Socialisation of Women in the Industrial and Post Industrial Eras*, eds J.A. Mangan and Roberta Park (London: Frank Cass, 1987), 58–96.
4. Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class 1780–1850* (London: Hutchinson, 1987); Barabara Welter, 'The Cult of True Womanhood', *American Quarterly* 18, no. 2, part 1 (Summer 1966): 151–74.
5. Ruth Robbins, *Medical Advice for Women, 1830–1915* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2008), 3–7; Michael Mason, *The Making of Victorian Sexuality: Sexual Behaviour and Its Understanding* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 195–6; Amanda Vickery, 'Golden Age to Separate Spheres? A Review of the Categories and Chronology of English Women's History', *Historical Journal* 36, no. 2 (1993): 383–414; Gleadle, *British Women in the Nineteenth Century*.
6. Peter H. Hansen, 'British Mountaineering, 1850–1914' (PhD diss., Harvard University, 1991); Edward Whymper, *Scrambles Amongst the Alps in the Years 1860–69* (Berkeley, CA: Ten Speed Press, 1981), 161.
7. Kelly Boyd, *Manliness and the Boy's Story Paper in Britain: A Cultural History, 1855–1940* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2003), 45.
8. Aubrey Le Blond, *True Tales of Mountain Adventure for Non-Climbers Young and Old* (New York: E P Dutton, 1903), preface, ix.

9. Hansen, 'British Mountaineering', 307.
10. Jim Ring, *How the English Made the Alps* (London: John Murray, 2000), 104; Fergus Fleming, *Killing Dragons. The Conquest of the Alps* (London: Granta, 2000), 320–1; Darren Bevin, *Cultural Climbs. John Ruskin, Albert Smith and the Alpine Aesthetic* (Saarbrücken: VDM Verlag Dr. Muller, 2010), 143.
11. Sally Ledger, *The New Woman: Fiction and Feminism at the Fin de Siècle* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), 1–31.
12. *Ibid.*, 10.
13. Arnold Louis Mumm, *The Alpine Club Register, 1857–1890*, 3 vols (London: Edward Arnold, 1923).
14. Hansen, 'British Mountaineering', 311.
15. Ann C Colley, *Victorians in the Mountains: Sinking the Sublime* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010); Carol Osborne, 'Gender & The Organisation of British Climbing 1857–1955', (PhD diss., University of Lancaster, 2004).
16. Kathleen McCrone, *Sport and the Physical Emancipation of English Women 1870–1914* (London: Routledge, 1988).
17. J.A Mangan, ed., *A Sport-Loving Society: Victorian and Edwardian Middle-Class England at Play* (London: Routledge, 2006).
18. Kathleen McCrone, "'Play Up! Play Up! And Play the Game!'" Sport at the Late Victorian Girls Public Schools', *Journal of British Studies* 23 (1984): 108–14.
19. *Ibid.*, 108–10, 114; McCrone, *Sport and the Physical Emancipation of English Women*.
20. Cartriona Parratt, 'Athletic "Womanhood": Exploring Sources for Female Sport in Victorian and Edwardian England', *Journal of Sport History* 16, no. 2 (Summer 1989): 140–58.
21. Mangan, *A Sport-Loving Society*; Vertinsky, *The Eternally Wounded Woman*; Jennifer Hargreaves, *Sporting Females: Critical Issues in the History and Sociology of Women's Sport* (London: Routledge, 1994).
22. Vertinsky, *The Eternally Wounded Woman*; Carroll Smith-Rosenberg and Charles E Rosenberg, 'The Female Animal: Medical and Biological Views of Woman and Their Role in Nineteenth-century America', *The Journal of American History* 60, no. 2 (1973): 332–56.
23. Regina Markell Morantz-Sanchez, 'The Eternally Wounded Woman: Women, Doctors, and Exercise in the Late Nineteenth Century (review)', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 70, no. 3 (1996): 542.
24. Arthur W Edis, 'The Rational Treatment of Menorrhagia', *The British Medical Journal* 2, no. 1131 (September 2, 1882): 409–11; Lawson Tait, 'The Hastings Essay Prize', *The British Medical Journal* 1, no. 701 (June 6, 1874): 733–6; Edward John Tilt, 'Education Of Girls', *The British Medical Journal* 1, no. 1370 (April 2, 1887): 751; Alfred H. Carter *et al.*, 'A Discussion On The Claims & Limitations Of Physical Education In School', *The British Medical Journal* 2, no. 1557 (November 1, 1890): 995–1001; Willoughby Francis Wade, 'Clinical Lecture On The Relation Between Menstruation And The Chlorosis Of Young Women', *The British Medical Journal* 2, no. 602 (July 13, 1872): 35–7; 'Lumleian Lectures On the Convulsive Diseases of Women', *The Lancet* 101, no. 2591 (April 26, 1873): 585–7.

25. Simon Gunn, 'Translating Bourdieu: Cultural Capital and the English Middle Class in Historical Perspective', *British Journal of Sociology* 5, no. 1 (2005): 49–64.
26. Emily Hornby, *Mountaineering Records* (Liverpool: J.A. Thompson & Co Ltd, 1907); J. Miriam Crane, *Swiss Letters and Alpine Poems* (London: Bibliolife, 1881); Aubrey Le Blond, *The High Alps in Winter; or, Mountaineering in Search of Health [With Plates, Including a Portrait, and Maps]* (London: Sampson Low, 1883); Frederick Gardiner, 'In Memoriam. Miss Lucy Walker', *The Alpine Journal* 214 (February 1917): 97–102; Sophia Matilda Holworthy, *Alpine Scrambles and Classic Rambles: A Gipsy Tour in Search of Summer Snow and Winter Sun... By the Author of 'Scylla and Charybdis'* [i.e. Sophia Matilda Holworthy], *Etc* (London: J. Nisbet & Co, 1885).
27. The Spence Watsons, Forsters and Tucketts were Quakers, The Wills family, Gaskells and Winkworths were Unitarians.
28. For an overview of the history of medicine see Roy Porter, *The Greatest Benefit to Mankind. A Medical History of Humanity from Antiquity to the Present* (London: Harper Collins, 1999); also Toby Gelfand, 'The History of the Medical Profession', in *Companion Encyclopedia of The History of Medicine*, eds W.F. Bynum and Roy Porter (London: Routledge, 1993), 1113–43.
29. Peter Gay, *The Bourgeois Experience: Victoria to Freud* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984), 313–15.
30. Robbins, *Medical Advice for Women, 1830–1915*, 7.
31. E.B. Turner, 'A Report on Cycling in Health and Disease', *British Medical Journal* (May 9, 1896): 1158.
32. A Tourist, 'To The Editor of the Times', *The Times*, September 5, 1854, Letters.
33. A work in progress as part of my PhD is collating for the first time all women's first ascents.
34. James Buzard, *The Beaten Track: European Tourism, Literature, and the Ways to Culture, 1800–1918* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993).
35. Jemima Morrell, *Miss Jemima's Swiss Journal: The First Conducted Tour of Switzerland* (London: Routledge/Thoemmes, 1998).
36. 'Switzerland', *The Times*, August 27, 1872.
37. 'Mountaineering. Hotel Des Alpes Chamonix', *The Times*, August 23, 1872.
38. Madame Vallot, 'Annuaire Du Club Alpin Francais', *Alpine Journal* 14 (89 1888–1889): 150–1.
39. Crane, *Swiss Letters and Alpine Poems*, 115, 124, 133.
40. *Ibid.*, 164.
41. *Ibid.*, 125; Holworthy, *Alpine Scrambles and Classic Rambles*, 32.
42. Crane, *Swiss Letters and Alpine Poems*, 169.
43. Hornby, *Mountaineering Records*; Hilary M Thomas, *Grandmother Extraordinary: Mary De La Beche Nicholl, 1839–1922* (Barry: S. Williams, 1979); Elizabeth Spence Watson, 'Journal of Elizabeth Spence Watson', personal diary (private ownership, 1865–7).
44. Peter Cliff, *Mountain Navigation*, 3rd edn (Great Britain: Peter Cliff, 1986), 32.
45. Henry Warwick Mrs Cole, *A Lady's Tour Round Monte Rosa: With Visits to the Italian Valleys of Anzasca, Mastalone, Camasco, Sesia, Lys, Challant, Aosta, and Cogne* (London: Longman, Brown, Green, Longmans, and Roberts, 1859), 6–19.

46. Frederica Louisa Edith Plunket, *Here and There Among the Alps* (London, 1875), 4.
47. Alfred Wills, *Wanderings Among the High Alps* (London: Richard Bentley, 1858), 34.
48. Mrs Henry Freshfield, *Alpine Byways or Light Leaves Gathered in 1859 and 1860 by a Lady* (s.l.: Longman, 1861), 1–2.
49. Five Ladies, *Swiss Notes* (Low Bentham: Peter Marshall, 2003), 29–43.
50. Ellen Pigeon, *Peaks and Passes* (The Alpine Club, 1885).
51. Anon, 'Passage of the Sesia-Joch from Zermatt to Alagna by English Ladies', *The Alpine Journal* 5 (1870): 367–72.
52. The sisters achieved 68 peaks over 10,000ft, 26 above 4,000m, 51 passes over 10,000ft and 33 lower summits.
53. Mary Paillon, 'Les Femmes Alpinistes. Miss Brevoort', *Annuaire de Club Alpin Francais* 26 (1899): 273–96; Hornby, *Mountaineering Records*; Spence Watson, 'Journal of Elizabeth Spence Watson'; Gardiner, 'In Memoriam. Miss Lucy Walker'.
54. Pigeon, *Peaks and Passes*.
55. Edward Whymper, 'Two Lady Alpine Climbers', *The Girls Own Paper*, December 15, 1885.
56. 'A Climbing Girl', *Punch*, August 26, 1871; Fanny Kemble, 'Lines Addressed to Miss L.W.', *Temple Bar*, March 1889.
57. Gardiner, 'In Memoriam. Miss Lucy Walker'.
58. *Ibid.*, 98.
59. Marie Dronsart, 'Miss Katharina Richardson', in *Les Grandes Voyageuses* (Paris: Hachette, 1894), 373–5; T.A. Nash, 'A Day and Night on the Aiguille Dru', *Temple Bar* 88, no. 353 (1890): 497.
60. William Augustus Brevoort Coolidge, 'Aiguille de Bionassay First Ever High Level Traverse over the Aiguille and on to the Dome Du Gouter', *The Alpine Journal* 14 (1888–9): 150.
61. Helmut Dumler and Willi P Burkhardt, *The High Mountains of the Alps* (London: Diadem, 1993).
62. Mumm, *The Alpine Club Register, 1857–1890*, vol 2, 203.
63. Le Blond, *The High Alps in Winter*, 185–7.
64. *Ibid.*, v.
65. 'Peter Bohren Fuhrebuche', 1880–1855, L1, Alpine Club. London.
66. 'Josef Imboden Fuhrebuche', n.d., K21, Alpine Club. London; 'Jacob Anderegg Fuhrebuche', n.d., K21, Alpine Club. London; 'Ferdinand Imseng Fuhrebuche', 1881–1863, K39, Alpine Club. London; 'Christian Almer's Fuhrebuche' n.d., L7, Alpine Club. London.
67. The author noted only four women out of 70 people staying at a high alpine refuge near Chamonix in 2011.
68. David Robbins, 'Sport, Hegemony and the Middle Class: The Victorian Mountaineers', *Theory, Culture & Society* 4 (1987): 579–601.
69. Leslie Stephen, *The Playground of Europe* (London: Longman, 1904), 83.
70. Hansen, 'British Mountaineering', 3.
71. *Ibid.*, 121.
72. Sara Mills, *Discourses of Difference: An Analysis of Women's Travel Writing and Colonialism* (London: Routledge, 1991), 40–42.

24 C. Roche

73. Five Ladies, *Swiss Notes*, 40; Holworthy, *Alpine Scrambles and Classic Rambles*, 32; Crane, *Swiss Letters and Alpine Poems*, 129, 138.
74. William Augustus Brevoort Coolidge, 'A Day and a Night on the Bietschhorn', *The Alpine Journal* 6 (April 1872): 123–4; E.P Jackson, 'A Winter Quartette', *The Alpine Journal* 14 (February 1889): 209; Five Ladies, *Swiss Notes*, 37; Hornby, *Mountaineering Records*, 7–8.
75. Clinton Dent, *Mountaineering* (London: Longman, Brown, Green, Longmans, and Roberts, 1892), 32–4.
76. Adolfus Warburton Moore, *The Alps in 1864*, vol. 2 (Oxford: Blackwells, 1939), 220.
77. Hornby, *Mountaineering Records*, 121; Cicely Williams, *Women on the Rope* (London: George Allen, 1973), 64.
78. Alison Blunt, *Travel Gender & Imperialism: Mary Kingsley and West Africa* (London: Routledge, 1992), 75–8, 62.
79. John Bicknell, *Selected Letters of Leslie Stephen* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1996), 357–9.
80. Stephen, *The Playground of Europe*, 83.
81. John Tosh, *A Man's Place: Masculinity and The Middle-Class Home in Victorian England* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1999), 111, 122.
82. W.E Utterson, 'Jungfrau Conquered by an English Lady', *The Times*, August 20, 1863; 'Mountaineering in 1888', *The Morning Post*, December 31, 1888; Anon, 'Miscellaneous – News from Grindelwald', *York Herald*, February 7, 1874; 'Alpine Climbing', *Bell's Life in London and Sporting Chronicle*, July 19, 1873.
83. Pigeon, *Peaks and Passes*, 17.
84. A Mourner, 'Late Fatal Accident on Mont Blanc', *The Times*, August 16, 1870; Le Blond, *True Tales of Mountain Adventure for Non-Climbers Young and Old*; Jackson, 'A Winter Quartette'.
85. Anna Pigeon, 'Letter to William Coolidge', personal letter to W.A.B. Coolidge, September 9, 1896, A.Ms 2008.28, 3, Zentralbibliothek, Zurich; Five Ladies, *Swiss Notes*, 54.
86. McCrone, "'Play Up! Play Up! And Play the Game!'" ; Hansen, 'British Mountaineering, 1850–1914'; Ring, *How the English Made the Alps*, 104.
87. Julie-Marie Strange, 'Menstrual Fictions: Languages of Medicine and Menstruation 1850–1930', *Women's History Review* 9, no. 3 (2000): 607–28.