

GMC Route Information - Battle Brook, 2010

Grand Mountain 3287m

Grand Mountain is the massive peak rising southeast of Mount Wheeler and sitting astride the backbone of the southern Selkirks. It forms the southern boundary of the Deville Neve. From the neve, Grand appears to be a large, glaciated snow and ice mass with a curious gabled rock summit. The west face however, is a large, steep rock wall quite different from the icy eastern aspect. Grand Mountain creates a significant barrier in the Rogers Pass-Battle Range traverse and sees surprisingly few ascents.

North Ridge PD 5.1
Edward W.D. Holway, Howard Palmer

August 18, 1910

The north ridge is a fine line in a spectacular setting while the summit offers a grand panoramic view of the entire southern Selkirks.

From Bishops Camp, ascend the Bishops Glacier and cross Bishops Pass to the Deville Neve (most parties will now reach the same point from Glacier Circle Hut and the Deville Chimney). Travel south across the neve towards the toe of the long southeast ridge of Mount Wheeler. As recently as the 1970s it was a casual hike around the toe to gain the northern snow slopes leading to Grand Col, the slight dip in the northeast ridge of Grand Mountain. Glacial recession however, is creating a growing depression in the ice around the toe, leading to extensive crevasses, which are becoming more difficult to negotiate, particularly late in the season or in low snow years. Thus far, the route follows the Rogers Pass-Battle Range Traverse.

From Grand Col, turn right (west) and go along the upper part of the easy northeast ridge to the northern subsummit of Grand. From this peaklet, continue south on the often corniced, north snow ridge. Some ice may be encountered on this narrow arête. The ridge terminates in the summit tower, which is about 125m high.

Two rock steps or turrets bar direct access to the ridge crest leading to the summit. The 1st ascent party turned the first step by traversing a horizontal ledge leading out on the left (east) face and then climbing cracks and ledges to regain the ridge above the first turret. The second turret, overhanging on the east, was bypassed by descending a snow couloir on the west side of the ridge until it was possible to work onto a series of downsloping ledges, which are climbed to regain the ridge crest above the second step. The remainder of the summit ridge is low angle but narrow and often icy and corniced. The south summit, separated from the main summit by a narrow arête, is very slightly lower.

Subsequent parties have climbed the towers directly and this is perhaps preferable as it avoids the complicated route finding, down sloping ledges and loose rock on the flanks of the ridge. Ascent: 8-10 hours from Glacier Circle Hut.

- ✓ Party size -
- ✓ Equipment Required -
- ✓ Length of Trip
- ✓ Highlights
- ✓ Hazards

Mount Wheeler 3336m

Named for the redoubtable Arthur O. Wheeler, mountaineer, surveyor par excellence and “Grand Old Man” of the Alpine Club of Canada. Mount Wheeler is a peak of impressive mass and bulk. Its most elegant aspect is appreciated during the approach from Glacier Circle, as it rises from the southern end of the Deville Neve to become a great, glacier-covered pyramid, atop a dark, rock base.

Northwest Ridge F 4th
 Topographical Survey (Arthur O. Wheeler), Friedrich Michel September 11, 1902

The northwest ridge is best climbed as part of an enchainment following an ascent of Mt Kilpatrick. From the Wheeler -Kilpatrick col, turn east and go along the upper part of the easy northwest glacier slopes, keeping below and parallel to the crest of the northwest ridge. Angle up into the notch on the northwest ridge just below the summit and follow the crest (sometimes ice or windswept snow) to the top.

- ✓ Party size - Rope teams of 3
- ✓ Equipment Required - helmet, ice axe, harness, crampons, prussik slings
- ✓ Length of Trip - likely a lengthy trip from the GMC camp of at least 12-14 hours return
- ✓ Highlights - Mount Wheeler is the highest summit easily attainable from the GMC camp and third highest peak in the Southern Selkirks. Excellent views of the Deville and Illecillewaet glaciers. Goats can often be seen negotiating the upper northwest snow & glacier slopes.
- ✓ Hazards - hazards are those mainly associated with glacier travel but are generally minimal. Could be interesting route finding in cloudy/ foggy weather.

South Ridge PD 4th
 Richard Culbert, Hamish Mutch August 1963

The broad southwest flank of Mount Wheeler rises above the head of Thor Glacier. This flank is split by several buttresses or ridges, the longest of which (the one which descends lowest) bears almost due south. Climb up Thor Glacier to its head and gain the foot of the buttress. Continue up the crest of the buttress until the hanging glacier is reached. Traverse left (west) on the snow and scree slopes of the flank until it is possible to work up onto the northwest ridge near the summit. Follow the ridge to the top. Return by the same route.

- ✓ Party size - Rope teams of 3 for glacier travel
- ✓ Equipment Required - helmet, ice axe, harness, crampons, prussik slings

- ✓ Length of Trip 9-11 hours return to camp
- ✓ Highlights - - Mount Wheeler is the highest summit easily attainable from the GMC camp and third highest peak in the Southern Selkirks.
- ✓ Hazards - exposed snow slopes, and rock scrambling on loose rock, rock fall

Southeast Ridge

PD 4th

Ray Achurch, Wayne Bingham, Lawrence Bruce-Robertson, Allan Michelin, Neil Weinstein

July 30, 1984

Proceed south on the Deville Neve, heading toward Grand Mountain until past the northeast ridge of Wheeler. Go along the east flank of Wheeler to a point midway along the base of the southeast ridge. Cross the bergschrund and climb up toward the ridge crest. Snow and loose rock lead to the crest. It is probably better to start at the very bottom of the ridge and tackle it directly, rather than depart from midway. The two options merge just above the prominent rise in the ridge.

A stretch of snow, and some slab and face climbing on the east side of the ridge then lead to a section of truly wretched and rather dangerous loose rock. At the point where the south and southeast ridges meet, the rock improves. Continue along the upper crest to the summit. Since this aspect catches the early morning sun, snow conditions may be very poor early in the day. Ascent: 7-8 hours from a high camp on the Deville Neve; 9-11 hours from Glacier Circle Hut.

Mount Kilpatrick 3224m

Mount Kilpatrick is a photogenic, snow-capped peak on the southern boundary of Glacier National Park, named for Thomas Kilpatrick, the CPR superintendent at Revelstoke and founder of the Revelstoke Mountaineering Club (early 1900s).

Mount Kilpatrick Jr. [c 2935m], so named by Palmer on August 15, 1908 during his ascent via the straightforward west ridge, is a small, rocky needle-like peak, mainly of pure white quartz, just west of Mount Kilpatrick. Palmer (MES:87) remarks that he was not impressed with the prospect of negotiating the ice slope defending the traverse to Mount Kilpatrick. Maki, Serocki, Slaggie and Taylor traversed the peak in both directions July 25, 1981. The Black Glacier is highly broken up around the base of the short, north ridge of Kilpatrick Jr. (1998).

West Face, West Ridge

PD 4th

Frederic K. Butters, Edward W.D. Holway, Howard Palmer

July 19, 1909

From camp, ascend to the upper Odin Glacier and traverse snow slopes through "old" Purity Pass then contour around the north ridge of Chastity and ascend the west ridge of Pristine. Descend the east ridge of Pristine and continue to Mount Kilpatrick. Return via the same route.

Note: In 1998, the west ridge was almost devoid of snow, while the severely broken and crevassed Black Glacier made access to the Kilpatrick-Pristine col very difficult.

- ✓ Party size - rope teams of 3
- ✓ Equipment Required - helmet, ice axe, harness, crampons
- ✓ Length of Trip - 10-12 hours
- ✓ Highlights -Excellent opportunity for cross country travel at a relatively high elevation al the while with magnificent views of the Bishops Range to the north and the Battle Range to the south
- ✓ Hazards - The usual hazards of glacier travel and possible exposed scrambling and rock climbing on the upper west ridge with attendant rock fall.

Variation: Northwest Face F 4th

David P. Jones, Andrew J. Kauffman, Andrew M. Tuthill

July 15, 1973

From the GMC camp ascend moraine, snow and ice of the Odin Glacier to gain old Purity Pass. Make a descending traverse northeast across the upper Purity Glacier and cross the lower slopes of the north ridge of Chastity. Continue a mid-level traverse eastwards across the successive glacier bowels and over the lower north ridge of Pristine to gain the Black Glacier. Descend below the foot of the northwest ridge of Mt Kilpatrick Jr before ascending to Black Pass.

From Black Pass, angle up onto the northwest face and follow it to the summit. The face can be climbed almost anywhere.

- ✓ Party size - rope teams of 3
- ✓ Equipment Required - helmet, ice axe, harness, crampons
- ✓ Length of Trip -10-12 hours
- ✓ Highlights -Excellent high level traverse
- ✓ Hazards - Minimal hazards except for those associated with glacier travel

North Ridge F 4th

Sterling B. Hendricks, Polly Prescott, Marguerite Schnellbacher, John Southard
August 7, 1935

From the GMC, camp ascend moraine, snow and ice of the Odin Glacier to gain old Purity Pass. Make a descending traverse northeast across the upper Purity Glacier and cross the lower slopes of the north ridge of Chastity. Continue a mid-level traverse eastwards across the successive glacier bowels and over the lower north ridge of Pristine to gain the Black Glacier. Descend below the foot of the northwest ridge of Mt Kilpatrick Jr before ascending to Black Pass.

Cross the bergschrund and ascend steep snow to the crest of the elegant north ridge at its lower, north end. Follow the ridge over easier snow directly to the summit. This is a nice snow and ice route of moderate difficulty.

- ✓ Party size - rope teams of 3
- ✓ Equipment Required - helmet, ice axe, harness, crampons, prussik slings
- ✓ Length of Trip -10-12 hours

- ✓ Highlights -Excellent high level traverse with good views of the Bishops range en route. The summit of Kilpatrick affords excellent views north to the Hermit Range, south to the Battle range and southwest to the southern Monashees (Thor, Odin Burnham & Grady)
- ✓ Hazards - Minimal hazards except for those associated with glacier travel.

South Ridge III, F, 5.5
Graham Matthews, Roger Laurilla

July 29th 2009

Ascend moraine and meadow slope to a small pocket Glacier on SW side of S Ridge. Climb glacier and snow coulior 1/2 way up, (this couloir leads to a point of entry onto glacier that leads to Kilpatrick-Wheeler Col) traverse left onto broken ground. Keep moving up and right and around to a shallow couloir which crests at ridge above SE glacier. From here climb quartzite to left of snow/ice of E Glacier to ridge where angle lessens, follow easier ground to summit. Decent via downclimbing and snow slopes to Kilpatrick-Pristine Col traverse up and around N ridge of Pristine, down and around to Chastity N ridge, to Old Purity Pass down glacier to Valley bottom.

Party size - rope teams of 3

Equipment Required - helmet, ice axe, harness, crampons, prussik slings

Length of Trip -10-12 hours

Highlights -Excellent high level traverse with good views of the Bishops range en route. The summit of Kilpatrick affords excellent views north to the Hermit Range, south to the Battle range and southwest to the southern Monashees (Thor, Odin Burnham & Grady)

- ✓ Hazards - Minimal hazards except for those associated with glacier travel.

NOTE: In 1955, the Harvard Mountaineering Club climbed and named two peaks between Kilpatrick and Purity, called Pristine and Vestal. This party also noted a then unclimbed rocky peak immediately east of "old" Purity Pass. It is difficult to unequivocally determine which peak was named Pristine and which Vestal. Putnam places Vestal immediately east of "new" Purity Pass, and Pristine at the east head of Odin Glacier, immediately west of Kilpatrick. Fox et al. claim the opposite and locate Vestal west of Kilpatrick, and Pristine east of "new" Purity Pass. The most recent edition of the Mount Wheeler topographic map sheet offers no solution since Pristine is shown as the rocky peak immediately east of 'old' Purity Pass. A careful reading of accounts in the AAJ and HMJ seem to support Pristine as the major summit west of Kilpatrick, with Vestal as the major summit forming the west buttress of "old" Purity Pass. Between Vestal and Pristine is the rocky peak (not climbed by the Harvard party) immediately east of "old" Purity Pass, which has been referred to as Chastity.

Pristine Mountain 3037m

Pristine is the next significant summit west of Mount Kilpatrick, map coordinates 698-615. Its long north cleaver bounds on the west, the upper basin of Black Glacier. The rock on the north-south axis is generally better than on the east-west flanks.

- ✓ Party size - Rope teams of 3
- ✓ Equipment Required - harness, helmet, ice axe, prussik slings, crampons
- ✓ Length of Trip - 7-10 hours
- ✓ Highlights - excellent views of the Bishops Range to the north as well as views across the Black Glacier to Mount Kilpatrick
- ✓ Hazards - usual hazards associated with glacier travel, minor rock fall hazard

Pristine South Ridge III, F, some moves of 5.4 but mostly easy 5th class.
 Graham Matthews, Roger Laurilla July 25th 2009

From moraine above Thor Glacier, head up towards Pristine-Kilpatrick Col. Ascend lateral moraine on left side of valley, gain bench area below S ridge proper, traverse around west side of ridge to bypass gendarmed ridge. Gain ridge from west via a small gully of 15m to ridge crest. Climb blocky quartzite ridge to summit. Nice ridge with some loose blocks, descent via N Glacier and around Chastity on N and traverse back to Old Purity Pass and down onto Purity Glacier then to Valley bottom.

- Party size - Rope teams of 3
- ✓ Equipment Required - harness, helmet, ice axe, prussik slings, crampons
- ✓ Length of Trip - 7-10 hours
- ✓ Highlights - excellent views of the Bishops Range to the north as well as views across the Black Glacier to Mount Kilpatrick
- ✓ Hazards - usual hazards associated with glacier travel, minor rock fall hazard

Chastity Mountain 2921m

A rock peak between Pristine and "old" Purity Pass, map coordinates 691-615. Chastity has a long north trending cleaver, which divides Pristine Glacier, from the eastern lobe of Purity Glacier. The rock on the north-south axis where it is tightly folded, appears to be better than on the east-west flanks. The east ridge is steep with particularly loose, broken rock. The latest NTS map refers to this peak as Pristine.

North Ridge PD+ 5.5
 David P. Jones, Graham Rowbotham, Tim Styles, Warren Wright July 21, 1998

From Camp ascend snow and ice of the Odin Glacier to gain the 'old' Purity Pass between Vestal and Chastity. Descend the glacier on the northern flanks until it is possible to make a rising traverse across the west slopes of the lower north ridge to gain the ridge crest.

Ascend the north ridge: the left (east) side offers mid-class 5 climbing while the right (west) side is generally easier. Near the summit is a short cleft and squeeze chimney (5.5), after which access to the easier ridge above is gained. Ascent: 1 hour; descent ½ hour.

- ✓ Party size - Rope teams of 3 for glacier travel

- ✓ Equipment Required - helmet. Harness, ice axe, crampons, long slings, small selection of nuts & cams
- ✓ Length of Trip - 8-10 hours return to camp
- ✓ Highlights - pleasant rock climbing on generally good rock (much preferred to the west ridge)
- ✓ Hazards - rockfall and exposed scrambling on the ridge

West Ridge PD 5.6
 Paul Allen, Bert Port, Andrew Port
 [p.c.]

July 29, 2009

In general the west ridge is not recommend over the north ridge due to poorer quality rock.

From 'old' Purity Pass, ascend the ridge directly to the summit. Follow the ridge with occasional forays on the north (left) side of the ridge. Approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way along the ridge a short, vertical block of solid, clean rock about 15m high is encountered. Surmount this obstacle by a very exposed climbing on the south (right) side - climb a short vertical step, then follow a short, steep ramp back left up to the ridge crest (5.6). Continue on loose rock to the main summit block where another short step leads to the crest of the north ridge which is followed to the true summit. Descend via the north ridge, which has better quality rock. Ascent: 9 hours return to a high camp below the southern aspect of the objective.

Vestal Mountain 2928m

Vestal Mountain forms the west buttress of "old" Purity Pass, map coordinates 682-615. The quartzite rock on the north-south axis is generally better with a pronounced fold showing on the very steep south face, which might offer good climbing.

North Ridge PD 4th

August 28,

1955

Edward A. Ames, Douglas Anger, George Hill, Thayer Scudder, Earle R. Whipple, Richard Wylie

From Camp ascend snow and ice of the Odin Glacier to gain the 'old' Purity Pass between Vestal and Chastity. From the pass, follow a descending traverse across the glacier to the north ridge. Follow the crest of the snow ridge to the summit.

- ✓ Party size - Rope teams of 3 for glacier travel
- ✓ Equipment Required - helmet, harness, ice axe, crampons, long slings, small selection of nuts & cams
- ✓ Length of Trip - 6- 8 hours return to camp
- ✓ Highlights - pleasant mixed climb with snow, ice & rock and good views north to Cairn Pass and SW to Purity
- ✓ Hazards - rockfall and exposed scrambling on the ridge

East Ridge F 4th
Scott Duncan, Phil Smith, Steve Smith

August 1979

From "old" Purity Pass, climb mixed rock and snow directly to the summit.

North Peak, Purity 3019m

This is the north summit of Purity Mountain, 0.7km to the north of Purity at map coordinates 672-610. The north ridge offers a fine mixed route on the way to the summit of Purity (which see).

Purity Mountain 3149m

Purity Mountain is a snow-capped pyramidal summit in the central Southern Selkirks. Its distinctive shape and glistening flanks acted as a magnet to early explorers and mountaineers. Despite its remoteness, it was one of the first major summits attained in the early exploration of the Selkirks. Due to its remoteness, even today Purity Mountain sees few ascents.

Northwest Face F 3rd
Harold E. Forster, Emil Huber, Harold W. Topham

August 29, 1890

This was in the past an easy snow route, which in good conditions, provided a rapid and spectacular 600m glissade down the northwest face. In 1998 however, the northwest face was mostly rock and scree with small patches of snow. The beautiful meadows below the North Peak of Purity make an ideal site for a high bivouac.

Via the North Summit PD 4th
Douglas Anger, George Hill, Thayer Scudder, Earle R. Whipple, Richard Wylie August 30, 1955

The integral north ridge over North Purity Peak offers a fine route on easy snow and broken but firm quartzite, with excellent views to the north and east.

Variation: Via East Ridge of North Purity Peak F 3rd
David P. Jones, Graham Rowbotham, Joie Seagram, Tim Styles, Warren Wright July 19, 1998

From a camp on the upper Odin Glacier, ascend the broken rock of the east ridge of North Purity Peak to the summit. Descend easy quartzite ledges and steps on the south ridge to the North Purity-Purity saddle. Continue up the north ridge of Purity, mostly snow with occasional outcrops of rock, to the summit. On the descent, the party gained the col between the two summits and then descended the east slopes (150m) to the Odin Glacier.

- ✓ Party size - Rope teams of 3
- ✓ Equipment Required - helmet, ice axe, harness, crampons, a few long slings
- ✓ Length of Trip - 7-9 hours
- ✓ Highlights - Set slightly apart from neighbouring peaks, the summit of Purity offers an excellent vantage point to view a great swathe of the Southern Selkirks, particularly the Battle Range to the south. Due to generally long approaches, the peak sees few ascents
- ✓ Hazards - some rockfall potential around the North Purity peak

Variation of North Face. III, F 4th
 Roger Laurilla and Graham Matthews July 28th 2009

Ascend moraines from Odin Glacier, onto Purity SE Glacier, go past North Purity Peak then ascend 45-50deg snow slope for 100m to col, climb up N ridge, traverse across snow free N face to NW ridge and up summit. Easy unroped climbing to top from col. Descent is same route.

- ✓ Party size - Rope teams of 4
- ✓ Equipment Required - harness, helmet, ice axe, prussic slings, crampons
- ✓ Length of Trip - 6-8 hours return
- ✓ Highlights - same as for an ascent of the north ridge
- ✓ Hazards - generally those associated with glacier travel, possible cornice collapses early in the season, challenges crossing the bergschrund in late season.

Southeast Ridge F 4th
 Allison Andrews, Jim Bay, Rob Orvig, Randy Stevens April 1991 [p.c.]

Not sure of best approach from the east side - via the upper Odin Glacier or via snow and ice slopes directly above camp to the col between Mt Purity and the 2800m sub-summit to the south. From the col ascend the crest of the ridge, which steepens noticeably near the summit.

- ✓ Party size - Rope teams of 3
- ✓ Equipment Required - harness, helmet, ice axe, prussic slings, crampons
- ✓ Length of Trip - 6-8 hours return
- ✓ Highlights - as for an ascent of the north ridge
- ✓ Hazards - generally those associated with glacier travel, possible cornice collapses early in the season, challenges crossing the bergschrund in late season.

Northeast Ice Face AD+ 50⁰
 Carl Diedrich, Julie Calhoun Diedrich, Mark Landreville July 24, 1994 [p.c.]

From the upper Odin Glacier, the summit may be reached via the 50° snow and ice of the northeast face.

- ✓ Party size - Rope teams of 3
- ✓ Equipment Required - helmet, ice axe, ice tools, harness, crampons, ice screws.
- ✓ Length of Trip - 6-8 hours.
- ✓ Highlights - potential for a snow and ice climb in a spectacular position with views of Kilpatrick, Wheeler and Grand.
- ✓ Hazards - any ascent of this route will require a particularly early start for optimum snow conditions. Difficulty likely to be experienced crossing the bergschrund on the upper Odin Glacier below the face.

Unnamed 2862m

Peak located 2.2km south-southeast of Mount Purity, map coordinates 682-582. This peak has a long east ridge formed mostly of granitic stock. The flanks of the ridge however, are very slabby making access to the ridge crest problematic.

North Ridge F 3rd
Richard Culbert, Hamish Mutch

August 1963 [p.c.]

Not sure of best approach from the east side - via the upper Odin Glacier or via snow and ice slopes directly above camp to the col between Mt Purity and the 2800m sub-summit to the south. From the col between Mt Purity and Unnamed 2800m, traverse along the ridge crest to the further summit.

- ✓ Party size - Rope teams of 3
- ✓ Equipment Required - - harness, helmet, ice axe, prussic slings, crampons
- ✓ Length of Trip - 5-7 hours
- ✓ Highlights - Probably the easiest route in the area to a summit that affords excellent views of the Sugarloaf Group
- ✓ Hazards - usual hazards associated with glacier travel, some potential for rockfall and exposed scrambling along the ridge crest