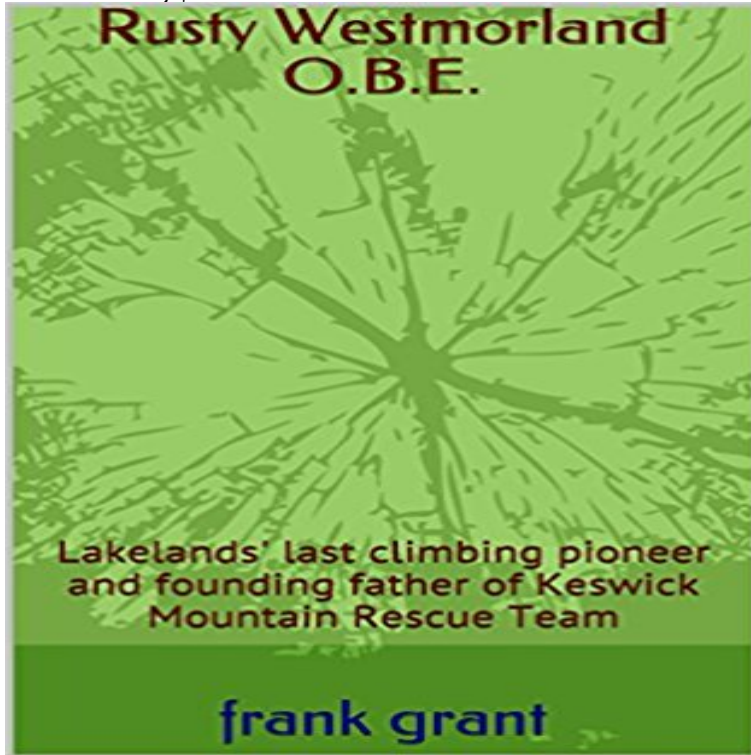


Rusty Westmorland O.B.E.: Lakelands last climbing pioneer and founding father of Keswick Mountain Rescue Team



Horace Rusty Westmorland OBE - born Penrith, Cumbria 1886. His family were early explorers and climbers of Lake District Fells. His own introduction to adventure was aged 1 with an open air bivvy on Norfolk Island on Ullswater with his parents and sister. On his 15th birthday he climbed Pillar, unroped, a daring feat for that era and in his late teens, climbed extensively with two cousins making first ascents of some hard climbs. He climbed with Abraham brothers accompanied them to Swiss Alps in 1910 many first ascents recorded in George Abrahams On Alpine Heights and British Crags. In 1911, went to Canada. Worked as a chainman on a mountain survey party with Arthur Wheeler - founder of the Alpine Club of Canada. He climbed many peaks in the Rockies with Swiss guides such as Konrad Cain, the two Fuez brothers and others. His list of ascents is impressive. He got a commission in the Territorial Army - during WWI, served in the Canadian Royal Transport Corp with distinction. Continued his military career raising to Lieut-Colonel. He climbed and skied continually, discovering climbing crags in Nova Scotia, skiing venues in Quebec, made significant climbing routes on Vancouver Island, made first winter ascent of The Lions - Vancouver. He is in essence, one of the unsung heroes of early mountaineering in both the UK and Canada. WWII - engaged on Mountain Warfare Training with Canadian and American troops and the Lovat Scouts. Suffered a major illness, medical discharged, returned home to Keswick. 1946, went to the aid of Wilfrid Noyce (Everest veteran) who had fractured his femur whilst out climbing. This led to him forming the Borrowdale MRT later Keswick MRT. He was their first President and Honorary Patron. He received an OBE for his services to mountain rescue, received the Silver Rope Award from the Alpine Club of Canada, the only climber to

do so that year. Throughout his lifetime, he rock climbed or hiked mountains with many notable climbers, such as: Haskett Smith, George Seatree, Norman Collie, Noel Odell; Bentley Beetham; Harry Griffin; Godfrey Solly; John Disley and many others. In the 1960s he suffered with stomach cancer underwent 15 major operations given few weeks to live in 1964 - still climbing and walking in 1976 aged 90 without helmet, harness or other modern day climbing aides, and, wearing a full time catheter. He published Adventures in Climbing (1964) and did the worlds first ever live radio outside broadcast whilst rock climbing with Stanley Williamson in Borrowdale, the broadcaster who was responsible for clearing Captain Thain of blame for the Manchester United Munich airport football disaster. Rusty Westmorland died aged 98, on 24th November 1984. A particular view from Great Gable, thought to be the finest in all Lakeland, was marked by his father and uncle building a cairn in the 1830s, now known as the Westmorland Cairn which is where Rustys ashes were placed.

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