

PRESS RELEASE
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July 14, 2018

VITTORIO SELLA
SEVERE REALITY

ANDREW SMITH GALLERY'S FAREWELL EXHIBIT
IN SANTA FE



Western Himalaya and the Karakoram Expedition
to K2, 1909, sponsored by the
Duke of the Abruzzi, Luigi Amedeo di Savoia
Photographs by Vittorio Sella

Exhibit Dates: Friday, July 27, 2018 – September 1, 2018

"I can see fixed on paper the vision of a lost instant, I recognize scenes I had not been able to admire on the spot. And, in such details, I sometimes find the elements of beauty. The toil and accidents of a climb often blind our eyes to the beauty of the highest regions. Our mind cannot retain a true notion of the views we admired. We know we felt up there the strongest emotions, we remember but dimly the truth of the sites which fascinated our senses. Photography helps to choose, to detail, and to idealize such elements as can form a beautiful alpine scene."

~From the essay "Picturing the Sublime: The Photographs of Vittorio Sella" by Wendy M. Watson in Summit: Vittorio Sella Mountaineer and Photographer The Years 1879-1909

“Geological evolution is proceeding with such obvious plainness that the traveler feels as though he were beholding a country in a state of formation and witnessing the modeling of the earth’s crust. The slow work of the waters hollows out gorges and hews their walls into new shapes, almost under one’s eyes, with such activity and on such a scale that nothing elsewhere can be compared with it. . . .”

~Karakoram & Western Himalaya 1909 by Filippi De Filippo, (1912)

A Farewell Exhibit in Santa Fe

Andrew Smith Gallery, upstairs at 122 Grant Ave., Santa Fe, NM 87501, brings to a close 33 years of being Santa Fe’s most distinguished fine art photography gallery, with an exhibit of photographs by Vittorio Sella (1859-1943), the renowned Italian mountaineering photographer. The photographs on exhibit are from Sella’s legendary 1909 trek to the Karakoram in the Himalayas, a journey of unthinkable complexity, endurance and artistic fortitude. They are very likely the finest documents of a mountain range ever made by the greatest mountaineering photographer in the history of photography. Drawing on forty years of experience as a mountain climber, technician and artist, Sella captured K2 and its retinue of massive peaks, along the Baltoro Glacier, from all sides and in all moods. His groundbreaking works of art from the Alps, the Caucasus, Africa, Alaska, and the Himalayas influenced Victorian aesthetics, and furthered scientific studies in the fields of anthropology, cartography, meteorology and botany. As photographic works of art they were highly admired by Ansel Adams. The exhibit opens on July 27, 2018 and runs through September 1, 2018.



HK.2001 – K2-28,250 feet. Karakoram Himalayas at sunrise. K2 as seen from the east from the rocks above Camp VI

“The appearance of K2 is quite changed; it has become a mountain of ice. . . The wall, at a very steep angle of inclination, is live ice for 7,000 feet up, and crowned with séracs. It is absolutely inaccessible.” FDF p. 258

The 42 print Karakoram collection is part of a much large collection of 600 Vittorio Sella's that are owned by the Appalachian Mountain Club, of Boston, America's oldest environmental organization, whose founders were colleagues and friends of Sella in the 1880s. It is the most important collection of Sella's work outside of Italy.



HK.291 - Srinagar, capital of Kashmir. Mohammedan Temple

"During the long period of Mohammedan domination, the capital city was known as Kashmir, but when it fell into the power of the Sikhs it resumed its ancient Hindu name of Srinagar. It has a population of about 130,000 and stands almost in the centre of the plain at a height of 5,303 feet, upon the banks of the Jhelum, which flows through it in a sweeping curve." FDF p. 34

This final exhibit in Santa Fe is in keeping with Andrew Smith Gallery's decades long tradition of being the leading international source for important geological and topographical collections of the highest artistic caliber made in the 19th and 20th century by luminaries like Carleton Watkins, Timothy O'Sullivan, Alexander Gardner, William Henry Jackson and Ansel Adams. **Andrew Smith Gallery's contribution to the arts of Santa Fe cannot be underestimated.** The gallery brought to Santa Fe the most comprehensive collection of Ansel Adams photographs ever amassed. It exhibited work by such legendary artists as Annie Leibovitz, Yousuf Karsh, Henri Cartier-Bresson, Duane Michals, Flor Garduño, Arnold Newman, Elliott Erwitt, Judy Chicago, Christopher Burkett, Herman Leonard, Jerry Uelsmann, Shelly Niro, O. Winston Link, Shelia Metzner, Bill Wittliff, Ray Metzker, Lee Friedlander, Baron Wolman, and Paul Caponigro, many of whom attended openings of their work. It exhibited world-renowned photographers, many of whom made New Mexico and the Southwest their home like Laura Gilpin, Eliot Porter, Beaumont Newhall, Van Deren Coke, Anne Noggle, Walter Chappell, William Christenberry, Patrick Nagatani, Jack Spencer, Tom Barrow, Betty Hahn, Joan Myers, Danny Lyon, Zig Jackson, Anne Noggle, Joel-Peter Witkin, Jody Forster, Rolf Koppel, Alan Ross, July Chicago, Victor Masayesva, Zig Jackson, Hulleah Tsinhnahjinnie, Miguel Gandert, Oscar Lozoya, Elliott McDowell, Duane Monczewski, Lisa Law, Phil Borges, James Balog, Delilah Montoya, Barbara Van Cleve, and David Michael Kennedy. For nearly half a century the gallery has brokered important collections, sold hundreds of thousands of fine art photographs to individuals and collectors, and been an invaluable educational resource

for visitors, artists, teachers, students, and art lovers. The Gallery will be relocating to Tucson, Arizona in the fall/winter.



HK.13 – Dras Valley below Karah. Apricots in blossom in an oasis.

The Dras river was followed by the party on its way to the Karakoram mountains. It empties into the upper Indus and has some settlements along its course. P. 78

Vittoria Sella's 1909 Expedition to the Karakoram

When Vittorio Sella died at age eighty-four in 1943, he had made one last attempt to climb the Matterhorn in 1935 at the age of seventy-six; an endeavor that failed only because one of his guides suffered an injury. By then, the pioneer of alpine photography had climbed and photographed the highest peaks in the European Alps, the Caucasus

(Russia/Georgia), Mt. Saint Elias (Alaska Yukon Border), the Himalayas Sikkim, the African Rwenzori (Uganda), and the Himalayan Karakoram. In a 1946 article for the *Sierra Club Bulletin* Ansel Adams wrote, "... with Sella's sensitive insight and response the magnificence of mountains is distilled into a high order of expression." "The contemporary photographer would do well to study Sella's craft."



HK.1000 - The Indus Valley Below Parkutta. A cultivated alluvial below Tarkutta p.

Vittorio Sella was born in 1859 into a wealthy, politically influential family in the Piedmont town of Biella, Italy. As a boy his classical studies included Greek and Latin along with painting lessons, in which he excelled. He was introduced to the recently invented art of photography by his father, a textile mill owner named Venanzio Giuseppe Sella and his uncle, Quintino Sella, a famous Italian minister of finance, both of whom were enthusiasts of the new art. In 1856, Venanzio published a treatise on photography that was translated into German and French and was included in Roret's Encyclopedic. Quintino Sella not only founded the still active Italian Alpine Club, but also took his young nephew hiking through the Alps as he taught him to love the mountains.



HK.18 – Indus Valley, at confluence with the Dros. P. 113

Sella lived during the Golden Age of European mountain exploration when many peaks were being scaled for the first time. Prior to his era, mountains were mostly regarded as dangerous obstacles to be crossed, haunted by evil spirits. The early 19th century saw a dramatic shift in people's perception of mountains, heralded by the Romantic poets who lauded them as "palaces of nature" that embodied the eternal. "To Wordsworth and others of the Romantic era, alpine pinnacles became symbols of the heights to which the imagination of man could aspire, toward the unattainable goals of understanding infinity, eternity, and the vastness of God. It was no accident that the beginnings of mountaineering as a sport coincided with the recognition that mountains were, in fact, beautiful. And the development of photography coincided with that very moment in the history of natural philosophy which has been called the "era of moralized mountaineering." This ushered in a sudden interest in landscape and natural scenery, along with poetry, painting, photography, and the art of travel as people sought out the heightened emotions brought about by a full experience of Nature.

Sella helped run the family textile, wine and banking businesses and would take his time off exploring the Alps or other mountain ranges. Although small in stature (only 5 foot 6 inches, today he would be considered an elite athlete) Sella possessed tremendous strength and endurance. He carried heavy, large-format cameras and glass plates, scaled treacherous slopes, worked in challenging weather conditions, and endured storage conditions that sometimes ruined his negatives. He made photographs with both stereoscopic and handheld Kodak

cameras, afterward enlarging his prints by various means. His masterful compositions of sublime peaks captured crisp details and the vast array of tonal ranges enhanced by high-altitude light and shadow. His most celebrated works are large, multi-plate panoramas.



HK.1007 – Himalayan peaks in Kashmir, from near Sildi. Shigar Valley from Nest Dilfi

“Shigar valley runs from north-west to south-east for about 25 miles, maintaining a width of about three miles and with a drop of some 350 feet. The sand has obliterated nearly every trace of glacial action. Only in sheltered corners and on the lee side of lateral spurs are to be found moraine remnants, which bear witness to the past occupation of the valley up to a great height by a gigantic glacier . . .” FDF p. 139

The public was enthralled by the pictures Sella brought back from his daring expeditions. According to one reviewer, his annual exhibit of mountain photographs at the Alpine Club in London was “inconveniently crowded.” Sella sold his prints to people from Italy, France, Germany and England, and was represented by a London dealer named Spooner. His photographs satisfied a growing public hunger to know more about distant places on the earth that few would ever see first-hand, while providing a satisfying blend of artistic, scientific, intellectual, and even spiritual elements. Sella’s primary goal was to provide the empirical evidence of what he and his party had seen on their expeditions, and to convey reality as it was perceived by the human eye. His approach was governed by rigorous technical and aesthetic standards that he called “la realtà severa – severe reality.

1909 Expedition to the Karakoram

In 1909, as Sella was approaching his fiftieth birthday, he and his long time climbing friend the Duke of the Abruzzi, Luigi Amedeo di Savoia, embarked on their most ambitious journey yet, to climb K2 in the Western Himalaya Karakoram range, and to satisfy the Duke’s primary intention to set a new high-altitude record for a man to have climbed to. In Tibetan, the name Karakoram mean “black gravel,” and to reach it meant crossing the vast mountainous region between Kashmir and Chinese Turkestan, a complex system of ranges, immense tablelands, intricate valleys and mighty rivers. The Duke wanted to

determine how high human beings could climb and survive, a question that could only be solved by direct experience. The expedition ultimately spent over two months on the Karakoram glaciers and returned with a trove of scientific data that included a large number of photographs, a topographical survey of a portion of the high glacier basins, new altimetric measurements and meteorological data, new glaciological and geological observations, as well as the experience of long duration at low atmospheric pressure by both Europeans and natives.



HK.74 - Mt. Pajui from Baltoro Glacier taken by telephotograph from lower Baltoro Glacier *"To the west of these we saw Paiju Peak, a pile of triangular rock pyramids*

rising one above another, clearly outlined by their ice ridges and lifting up a symmetrical pointed summit completely covered with snow. FDF p. 181

Sella had already accompanied the Duke on expeditions to Alaska and Uganda, and once again the Duke wanted no one but Sella on the Karakoram expedition, knowing that his photographic record would be unsurpassed. Seven Italian guides and porters were chosen from Courmayeur, in the valley of Aosta, Italy. Sella brought with him Erminio Botta, who acted as assistant photographer, guide and porter, and was familiar with camp life and foreign mountaineering.



HK.84 – Paiju Peak and the lower Baltoro taken from Rdokass Baltoro Glacier and Paiju mountains from Rdokass *“The calculations based on these dates give Rdokass an altitude of 13,205 feet. It thus became a station of reference for the calculation of the Duke’s observations in the high mountains during this period. We had now reached more than 13,000 feet above sea level, without experiencing any symptom of suffering from altitude. We all slept soundly, and our appetites were excellent. Some of us,*

however, noted even at the early period that when we stooped down to tie our shoes or wind our puttees, for instance, we would be caught by a slight sense of oppression on standing up again, and obliged to take four or five deep breaths.” FDF p. 194

The Duke had all their equipment transported from Europe – camp materials, personal effects and supplies for the glacier regions like ropes, ice-axes, crampons, nails and cobbler’s tools, as well as meteorological instruments and fragile Fortin mercury barometers that were a perpetual source of anxiety. The Duke wanted to use Paganini’s photogrammetric system (a way of making measurements from photographs) for the topographical work, so a photogrammetric camera with a stock of plates was added to Sella’s equipment. Medical supplies were also included to minister to the needs of the natives who seldom saw a European doctor. Only two guns were brought, on chance of getting some specimens of zoological interest.



HK.1003 – Abruzzi's Camp at Tolti

As it would take two months to get from Europe to the Karakoram, where the Duke wanted to be by early June, the team departed from Marseilles on March 26, 1909, sailing via Sicily, the Suez Canal, the Red Sea, and the Indian Ocean to Bombay. They then traveled two days by railroad to the north of the Punjab where they and their luggage were deposited in Rawal Pindi on April 11th. From there the expedition and equipment were transported by horse-drawn carts for 200 miles to Srinagar on a carriage road (finished 20 years earlier) that went from Rawal Pindi (1,700 ft.) to the Kashmir plateau (5,200 ft.). After some well earned rest in Kashmir, the party headed for the Karakoram on April 24th.



HK.78 -Southern wall of K2 from Southwest - p. 230

In Europe the Duke had arranged for all the baggage to be divided into packages of the right weight for 250 bearers (whom they called coolies) and 95 ponies. All told, 262 loads of about 50 lbs. each had to be transported into the high mountains. The coolies were paid the “extraordinary” wages of a whole rupee a day (rather than 4 to 6 annals a day – without food), a fee determined by the Kashmir government to compensate them for crossing the Zoji La in winter or spring, when the danger of avalanches and fatigue of walking through the deep snow was much worse than in the summer. (An annal being equal to 1/16 rupee, the coolies were being paid four times more than usual).



HK.270 – Paiju Mt. from Mashurbrum

The expedition engaged fresh coolies and ponies at every stage of the journey, since the bearers could not leave their village fields for more than two or three days. Thanks to the Duke's meticulous organization, they reached Skardu in 11 days having traveled through 225 miles of extraordinarily harsh terrain. Scattered throughout this forbidding landscape were small villages where they obtained fresh coolies and ponies.



HK.35 – Game of Polo from Indus Valley – Polo at Parkutta *“At four o’clock in the afternoon a game of polo was organized in honor of the Duke. Twelve players took part . . . The origin of the game is certainly remote. It seems to have been common at the court of the Mogols. Then the tradition was lost in India, and only kept up at Manipur . . . The English of Calcutta learned the game in Manipur, and were so attracted by its fine and manly qualities that they made it their own and have diffused it throughout the world.” FDF p. 122*

The trip’s chronicler, Filippi De Fillippo, described the region as “ . . . one vast labyrinth of high, barren, desolate mountain chains, of cliffs split and shattered in every direction, usually precipitous; overhanging valleys full of rocks and stones, pebbles and sand; detritus of all shapes and sizes hurled down in avalanches and mingled with vast

accumulations of alluvial deposits . . .” “Traces of avalanches are everywhere visible, signs of ancient or recent cataclysms . . .”



HK.UNK - Empty Basin of Glacial Lake Ice Pyramids in Back – p. 210 *“The ice pyramids poised on the margin of these little lakes are dazzlingly reflected in the translucent water . . .”* FDF p. 211

Sella photographed every stage of their journey, generally leaving camp before breakfast with his assistant Botta and the coolies who carried the photographic and cinematographic apparatus, so that he could photograph the scenery, or catch the expedition on the march at picturesque places on the road. Often, he lingered behind to photograph

some especially beautiful landscape feature, or he wandered around the outskirts of the camp searching for subjects to photograph.



HK.91 – Masherbrum, from the Baltoro

“It seemed as if the whole southern chain of the Baltoro had no other office than to form a base for the marvelous Masherbrum, which towered up in its midst, showing a little dimly through the mist.” FDF p. 212

They reached the heart of the Karakoram only six weeks after leaving Italy, a journey that included 350 miles on foot. More than 150 coolies had carried their equipment and supplies to the foot of K2: ice-axes, mountaineering rope, crampons, show-shoes and iron spikes for the rocks, topographical instruments, photogrammetric camera and plates,

compasses, meteorological instruments, mercury barometers, aneroids, hypsometers, thermometers. The luggage included all of Sella's photographic equipment, except the cinematograph, which remained in Rdokass.



HK.198 - Gasherbrum IV *"In front of us, apparently quite close at hand, the transversal chain of the Gasherbrum seems to shut in the valley. It is a file of peaks and snow crests, stretching on both sides of the precipitous rock wall of Gasherbrum itself, all ridges and ice gullies, and nearly 10,500 feet. FDF p. 213*



HK.1005 – K2, Mt. Godwin-Austin Glacier from south

“On every side the eye meets a spreading vista of wide valleys filled with almost level glaciers, which go up at a gentle slope among the lofty chains. The Godwin Austin is composed of parallel stripes of black and white, formed by the alternation of bare ice and moraine detritus. It runs northward for six miles to the base of K2, which rise, a pyramid of rock, 12,000 feet high from base to summit, between two ridges that outline themselves to west and east against the sky.” FDF p. 221

As they observed K2 from its base to its summit, the mountain exerted such a strong fascination on them that Filippo described: “the compelling and irresistible ambition toward a closer acquaintance and more intimate knowledge of the lonely giant, which so few men before us had ever beheld all the landscape around K2 has the richest variety of design, the greatest majesty of form and an infinite diversity

of plane and perspective. The scale is far too vast for one to receive an impression of the whole at once. The eye can only take in single portions . . . the wall appeared to grow less steep, but, on the other hand, the obstacles became more evident – the live ice of the gullies, dominated by overhanging séracs; the gleam of verglas on the rocks; the sheer precipices showing everywhere on the face of the wall.”



HK 163 – Staircase Peak and end of N.E. Ridge of K2 and the opening of the Staircase Basin p. 263

With the guides and most of the luggage, the Duke went up the Godwin Austen glacier to the foot of K2 to look for a suitable spot for a base camp, from where he would conduct operations on all the slopes of the mountain. The first day he made a cursory examination of two-thirds of

the circumference of the mountain, but could not find an easy, obvious, safe route to the summit. Having set up base camp at 16,493 ft., they determined which of the strongest and youngest coolies would accompany them into the highest mountains. These men were given substantial tunics, trousers, blankets, puttees, heavy wool socks, nailed boots, snow spectacles, sheepskin sleeping bags, and three tents per ten men.



HK.SC.1010 – The Duke leaving Base Camp *“On the morning of May 30th all was ready. The weather had not changed and the mountains looked sinister. We bade adieu to our leader with good wishes, which did not succeed in disguising from ourselves the insecurity we felt as to the outcome of his bold undertaking. The simple fact is that these are not mountains like other mountains, and one cannot look at them without disquiet and foreboding. The Duke was accompanied by the three guides, the four porters and the coolies, carrying their own tents and supply of chupattis. He crossed the front of the glacier that comes down from the southern wall of K2, and went up the*

Godwin Austen to the foot of the southern ridge, some 500 feet higher than the base camp . . . He kept close to the right side of the ridge, and reached a sheltered sunny nook (18,245 feet high) at the base of a rocky tooth, where the guides deposited the equipment. " FDF p. 235

They were situated at a huge glacial crossroads of Godwin Austen Glacier, surrounded by Broad Peak (26,414 ft.), K2 (28,251 ft.), the Golden Throne (23,990 ft.), Bride Peak (25,148 ft), and Mitre Peak (19,718 ft.). K2 rose like a pyramid of rock 12,000 feet high from the base of the glacier to the summit. The impression made by the extraordinary landscape, wrote Filippo, "was so strong, so moving, that no words can convey it to the reader. It was like no other experience, it provoked no recollections or comparisons. So inconceivably vast are the structural lines of the landscape, that the idea comes into one's mind of being in the workshop of nature, and of standing before the primeval chaos and cosmos of a world as yet unvisited by the phenomenon of life."



HK.185 – South Wall of Baltoro Glacier

After assessing various possible routes up K2, the Duke decided to try its southern ridge, which had certain advantages. It was steeper and longer than the northwestern crest, but he would not have to climb an ice-wall to reach the col (the lowest point of a ridge or saddle between two peaks.) Furthermore, the slope faced south and got full sun from early in the morning, extremely important in ascents above 24,000 ft., where intense cold can be a serious danger to the climber.



230(1) Mitre Peak and Mustagh Tower. Telephotographic Sella's telephotos were made with a long focal-length lens to encompass all that could be seen from a lofty vantage point, and to gather in the physical facts of a great range, as well as to portray the visual spectacle. This was taken from the base of their camp at the Golden Throne

"This mountain, of course, is the Mustagh Tower. It is about 24,000 feet high, and stands isolated from other peaks on a somewhat narrow base marked by sharp ridges. It appears, and is, a true monolith, a rocky mass of a single formation, without traces of breaks or divisional planes – no other, of any comparable size, is known to exist in the world." FDF p. 299

Although they had paired down their tents, sleeping bags, food for a week, cooking apparatus, and paraffin, their supplies still had so much weight that the Duke determined to go up alone, with all the resources of the expedition set up in advance by the coolies who would pitch camps as high as possible before coming back down. The Duke would then attempt to reach the highest possible point at a dash, and if his powers failed he would return, leaving the tents on the ridge, and handing over the undertaking to another team member, who would have the advantage of fresh strength and the equipment being already on the spot.



HK.233 – Glacial Torrent on Upper Baltoro (enlargement) at the Confluence of the Vigne, p. 292-293

But as they soon learned, the terrain was too treacherous for the camps to be set up, and at 20,000 ft. the guides were forced to return to camp with the supplies. All describe having incredible optical illusions in the thin air and vast distances. Slabs of rock that looked like gentle inclines turned out to be nearly perpendicular, and it was impossible to estimate the grade of slopes or the distances between points of the ascent.



HK.133 – Western wall of K2 from Savoia Glacier *“Now began the attack on the wall . . . From the camp, to which we had returned after our work, we watched with the telescope the slow ascent of the climbing party.” FDF p. 248*

Filippo wrote: "We had no standards of comparison, and the glaciers and valleys are so well adjusted in their proportions to the surrounding mountains that it was hard to realize the absolute size of any object. All this was revealed to us gradually, by dint of daily contemplation and detailed observation, most of all by repeated failures in estimating heights and distances. Thus it happened that our amazement, instead of diminishing with familiarity, grew greater every day, and this extraordinary region never made a more profound impression upon us than on the day when we bade it farewell."



HK.2003 – K2. Broad Peak

Sella worked constantly, though the weather was a continual challenge. Sometimes he spent whole days patiently waiting on a ledge above camp, crouched beside his equipment, hoping for a break in the clouds. The cold penetrating wind pierced his thick woolens; his teeth chattered as he stamped his feet and slapped his hands together, waiting for the sky to clear in temperatures hovering around 20 degrees. The forced inactivity made his suffering acute, and when the storms worsened he retreated into his tent to prepare a simple meal and wait for morning as

the savage winds blew fine grains of ice through every cranny of the tent.



HK152 Broad Peak from Camp VI. *“This was Camp VI of our map, 18,602 feet above sea level.” FDF - p. 256*

While the Duke was exploring K2’s glaciers and surrounding ranges on the south, west and east, Sella and his team, despite the mists and fogs that repeatedly covered the peaks and walls, succeeded in getting views of the valleys and mountains about K2 and making a network of photogrammetric panoramas and angles read on the tacheometer. Sella made a series of spectacular panoramas of the Baltoro glacier and surrounding peaks, capturing 25 miles of the glacier’s 36 miles from the foot of the Gasherbrum down to a point close to the snout.



HK.152 – Broad Peak from Camp VI – Group of mountains between Gasherbrum and Hidden Peak. P. 254-255

For weeks the Duke circumambulated K2, trying various routes to the summit, but after extensive examination and hours of contemplation in search for the secret of the mountain, he was forced to conclude that K2 could not be climbed. Height was not so much a factor, as were the obstacles peculiar to mountain climbing and familiar to mountaineers such as the treacherous grade and frequent storms. Finally, he decided to abandon the struggle, knowing that he had done everything within his power to succeed. Nonetheless, before leaving that region the Duke made history by reaching an elevation of around 20,510 feet on the

South East Spur, (now known as the Abruzzi Spur or Abruzzi Ridge), that has since become part of the standard climbing route, though the Duke had to abandon it because of its steepness and difficulty. Today K2 is called the Savage Mountain because of the extreme difficulty of ascent, and the fact that it has the second-highest fatality rate, with Annapurna being the highest. To date there have been around 300 successful summits and 77 fatalities on K2.

Their work around K2 was finished, but the Duke had no intention of ending the campaign. Nor did he give up the hope of climbing another peak in the region and reaching a higher altitude than any yet attained, thus satisfying the chief purpose of his expedition. As they left K2, the team was encouraged that the season was not yet far advanced, that their native guides had done splendidly on the high slopes, and that aside from a slight reduction of strength and powers of resistance, no one was really the worse for their life above 16,500 ft.

The Duke turned his attention to Bride Peak, one of the high Chogolisa peaks, where he set an altitude world record by climbing to 24,600 ft. Indeed, he was within 490 ft. of the summit when a storm forced him to retreat.



Point Reached by H.R.H. (24,600 ft.)

“Sella’s photography was accomplished using orthochromatic plates which are sensitive to all colors of light except those of the red regions of the specter. Skies were rendered light gray, and foliage medium gray; atmospheric space was well recorded, and as there was little red in the general subject matter, “panchromatic” materials would have offered slight advantage. Color filters were undoubtedly used to reduce the values of the sky and to bring snow and clouds into vigorous relief.”

~Ansel Adams



HK.2 – Broad Peak at Sunset

“We had still to explore the upper basin of the Godwin Austen and the eastern slopes of K2 – a work which occupied the next fifteen days of the campaign. According to the survey made by the expedition, the Godwin Austen from the Concordia to Windy Gap is twelve and a half miles long . . . From this point on the glacier runs north-east, in a deep gorge between K2 and Broad Peak.” FDF p. 254



HK.179-184 – Panorama from ridge forming angle between the Baltoro and Godwin-Austin Glaciers. 17,332 feet.

“Sella had profited by the two exceptional fine days to make highly successful photographic excursions. On the 26th he climbed the rocky corner between Baltoro and the Godwin Austen, reaching a shoulder 17,239 feet high on the black and broken schist’s from which rises the marble peak. Thence he took panorama C. The next day he crossed the glacier to the foot of the great western ridge of the Gasherbrums, and made a difficult way up the rocks and icy gullies to a ledge 17,917 feet high, just about opposite to his position of the day before. Here he took panorama D. These two panoramas are all that could be desired in the way of showing the whole amphitheatre and its surrounding mountain chains. Sella also collected and photographed some Alpine plants growing in sheltered places on the heights up to nearly 18,000 ft.” FDF p. 287



HK.109-113 – Panorama from northern spur of Gasherbrum: 2005: Bride Peak (point reached by H.R.H.); 2006: Vigne Glacier; 2007: Mitre Peak, Gasherbrum, Baltoro; 2009: K2, Godwin-Austen glacier – variant of 109-110 - right two panels to the Vigne Glacier and its tributaries of the left bank. *“There was a lightening of the atmosphere in the west, and we could tell that we had reached the level of the mouth of the Vigne glacier. A little farther on, where the end of its right-hand spur abuts on the valley, we made our camp . . .” FDF p. 293*



HK.230(2) "Mitre Peak and Mustagh Tower from Camp X1. Telephotographic"

Title on back: Karakoram Mountains, Himalayan peaks in Cashmere



HK.174 – “Bride Peak and Godwin-Austen Glacier from Camp III

“On June 25th Sella left us at the base camp and went down to the mouth of the Godwin Austen, taking with him Botta and fifteen loaded coolies. He sent back the latter directly, and on the day following the made the journey down and back a second time, a march of nearly nine hours. We rewarded this extra work and their docility in performing it by some presents of biscuits, a little tea and sugar, chocolate or butter, all of which we had gradually persuaded them to accept. We were astonished to have some of them ask for soap and wash themselves, nearly nude for the purpose, in the icy rivulet between the camp and the moraine.” FDF p. 284



HK.1008-1009 – 2-part panorama Mitre Peak & Muztagh Tower, Himalayas,
Karakoram Mts.



HK.206-207 – 2 part Panorama of the Karakoram Himalayas from Baltoro Glacier



HK.1006 – Towers on the right side of Baltoro glacier.



HK.1004 – Bride Peak from Godwin-Austin Glacier near the Concordia p. 223



HK.145-147 – K2 and Staircase Peak from Windy Gap (3 part panorama of enlargements)



HK.253 – West Spur of Gasherbrum, from Upper Baltoro Glacier (in our gallery list identified as HK.210)

“To the north of the Gasherbrum, on the continuation of the same range, the great rounded domes of Broad Peak rise above the last spurs of the right wall of the Baltoro, which still project in front of us.” FDF p. 213



HK.132 - Broad Peak – Western wall of the Broad Peak from the top of the Terminal Cascade of the Savoia p. 245



HK.266 – Rope Bridge on Punmah River

“The bridge was in fair condition, though rather long and swaying. After crossing it, we stopped for nearly an hour to enjoy the sight of the passage of the caravan, Jemadars and chuprassis shouted deafening orders, and the men got from one bank to the other, moving with great caution but not awkwardly. After the loads were over, the little flock had to be transported, each goat riding on the shoulders of a coolie, carried in a short of sling.” FDF p. 330



HK.2002 – Mount Baltoro. Glacier Lake in the Lower Baltoro – p. 188-189



HK.2004 – Golden Throne

Sella received numerous prizes and honorary diplomas from international expositions, geographical societies, and alpine clubs around the world. After winning a Grand Gold Medal at the 1893 Geographical Congress in Turin, more than four hundred of his prints were sent to Boston where they were shown in an exhibition sponsored by the Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC) and the Boston Art Club. The collection was then exhibited in Bridgeport, Connecticut and viewed by over twenty thousand people. In 1922, acquired nearly a thousand of his photographs.



HK.1001 – First Camp on Baltoro Glacier between Leligo and Rhobutse

Sella's archives are housed in the Fondazione Sella, Biella, Italy. In 2010, the Panopticon Gallery of Boston held a solo exhibition of his work titled *"Heights of Observation: The Photographs of Vittorio Sella."*

Retrospectives were held in 2008 at the Estorick Collection of Modern Italian Art, London, UK, under the title *"Frozen in Time: The Mountain Photography of Vittorio Sella"*, and in 2006 at the Galleria Civica d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, Turin, Italy. In 1999, a major traveling retrospective was organized at the Mount Holyoke College Art Museum, South Hadley, MA, accompanied by the publication *Summit: Vittorio Sella, Mountaineer and Photographer, the Years 1879-1909*, released in association with the Aperture Foundation, New York. Yet another

collection of his work is housed in the Georgian Museum of Photography in the Caucasus.

Sella Pass (named by the Duke in honor of the photographer) is located where the Godwin Austen glacier flows southward into a wide valley. The Sella Pass in the South Tyrol, Italy was also named for Vittorio Sella.



HK.1002 – Mustagh Tower, Mitre Peak etc. at sunset from Camp XII over Baltoro Peaks –p. 302-303

For more information please call Andrew Smith Gallery at (505) 984-1234. Visit us online at <http://www.andrewsmithgallery.com>. Our e-mail address is info@AndrewSmithGallery.com.

Liz Kay

Notes in italics are from *Karakoram and Western Himalaya 1909: an account of the expedition of H.R.H. Prince Luigi Amedeo of Savoy, Duke of the Abruzzi* by Filippo de Filippi. New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., 1912

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