

B&C BOOKS

WILLIAM N. BEACH — A Great Love for Mount McKinley



Theodore J. Holsten
EDITOR OF SPECIALTY BOOKS
AND LIMITED EDITIONS
Boone and Crockett Club

William Beach made four long and laborious journeys to the highlands of Alaska during the 1920s, seeking to hunt and photograph big game and to explore a little known area. He observed sheep, caribou, and bear in a wilderness teeming with wildlife, but so remote few sportsmen had ever been willing to endure the hardships necessary to explore it. He found Mount McKinley, most of it covered in ice and snow, rising to 20,300 feet from a base of 3,000

feet, to be a marvelous and overwhelming spectacle.

Beach chronicled his explorations and adventures in his book, *In the Shadow of Mount McKinley*, published by the Derrydale Press in 1931. His travels on the north side of the Alaska Range fell partly within the borders of the great national park created in 1917 largely through the efforts of Charles Sheldon (see pages 16-18), John Burnham, Belmore Browne, and other Boone and Crockett Club Members.

Beach's parties traveled by horse and by boat on rivers in areas so remote even maps of it were still in the process of being made. In the foreword to Beach's book, John Burnham wrote, "He has crossed the white, unmapped places, forded wild rivers, climbed mountains standing on edge and stood the gaff . . . In Alaska he is probably the best known sportsman of any. I can think of no other outsider who has so large an acquaintance in our Arctic empire."

William Beach was an avid photographer and his book is illustrated with his photographs, as well as with many paintings by fellow Boone and Crockett Member, Carl Rungius. In addition to detailing the story of his Alaskan adventures, he tells much about the early history of the area and the creation of Mount McKinley National Park. He hunted throughout North America, and his book includes a section on his experiences with America's big-game animals.

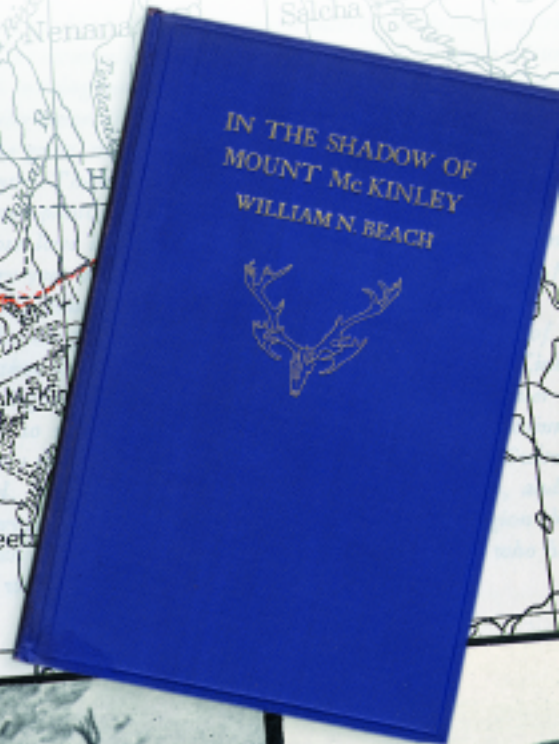
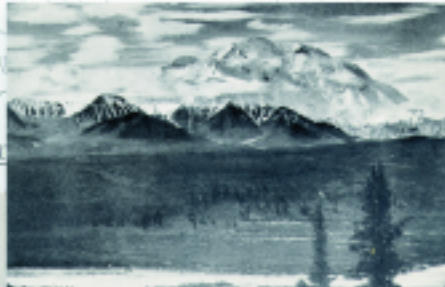
William Beach was born in 1873. A graduate of Yale University, he was a successful businessman heading several companies in the cement industry. He was a past president of the Camp Fire Club and an avid collector of wildlife art including a number of paintings by his close friend, Carl Rungius.

William Beach passed on to the great beyond in 1955 after a life highlighted by his experiences in the shadow of Mount McKinley. ■

BOOK BY WILLIAM BEACH

In the Shadow of Mount McKinley (1931)

Clockwise from the top middle:
Evening view of Mount McKinley
from the Clearwater; book cover;
Osborn caribou; the pack train on the
summit of Portage Creek Pass.



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