IN August 1938 I was sent to Kailana, a small hill-station lying between Mussoorie and Simla, where we were shrouded in mists and drenched with rain, and I began to wonder what any one could see in the hills. Within a month the monsoon had lifted and it was our good fortune to see that magnificent section of the snows which runs from Nanda Devi and Trisul in the east, through holy Badrinath and the Gangotri peaks, to Bandarpunch in the west. The sight of these lovely mountains made a great impression on me which I can never forget.

I was unable to get leave that year, but their attraction was so great that I began to contemplate an expedition the next year. In this I was joined by a great friend, T. R. Glancy, of the 19th K.G.V's.O. Lancers. As neither of us knew anything of Himalayan snow work, exploring was more in our line than climbing, and we determined to get to the other side of the snow mountains that we saw every day.

During the winter at Delhi plans gradually grew, and we did a great deal of reading and work. Eventually our pass was granted for June and July 1939. Meanwhile Glancy had joined his regiment, and it was a bitter disappointment to us both that he was able to get leave only during July. So on 1 June 1939 I left the sweltering heat of Delhi Fort and drove alone to Ranikhet, filled with worries and apprehensions about the future; but the smell of the pines and the cool air of the hills drove them from my mind.

**British Garhwal**

At Ranikhet I had the pleasure of meeting Mrs. A. E. Browne, well known to so many climbers. She had very kindly picked my ponies and sent them out to Garur, thus saving a great deal of time and trouble for me. The next day I was able to drive out to Garur and do my first march. At Ranikhet I also met the Swiss climbing party (Roch, Zogg, Steuri, and Huber), who were proposing to attack Dunagiri via the Rishiganga.
My journey through Garhwal was without any important incident and my route was that used by the Kamet party in 1931. I decided to go by the higher route to Ramni, via Wan and Kanaul (Kanol), as the lower road through Ghat was liable to be dirty owing to the numbers of pilgrims at this time of year. At one place I lost all my transport for a day and a march was wasted, but otherwise everything went according to plan.

At Ramni I met the Swiss party who had come via Ghat, and travelled with them for three more days. On the Kuari pass we were struck by a severe snowstorm before we had put up the tents, and this continued till the late evening, making every one very cold and rather miserable. However it cleared the air and the view of the snows from the pass the next day was wonderful and not marred by cloud at any point. After the clouds had risen and hidden the snows we descended to Tapoban, a bad drop of about 6000 feet down to the Dhauli valley. Here I left the Swiss party and did the four marches up to Niti, the scenery becoming wilder and more precipitous with every mile.

At Niti I had two days’ delay while transport was being procured, which was particularly annoying as before leaving Delhi I had written to the headman, Bhupal Singh, had told him the date of my arrival, and asked him to have transport ready. I spent the days in drying and reorganizing all my stores, and in climbing the hills round the camp. I saw some butterflies at 15,000 feet, some bharal, and some irises with colours varying from the white of the snows to the dark blue of the skies.

Here I obtained an excellent man who stood me in very good stead for the rest of my journey. Kalian Singh had been a high-altitude porter on Kamet, with Oliver on Dunagiri, and with Major Osmaston during the recent surveys of Garhwal. His job was to translate Tibetan for me and obtain all my transport. He stated that the Niti pass was becoming less and less used owing to the rough and stony path and the dangers of landslides. The alternative route lay over the Chor Hoti pass and the Tun Jun La, and as neither pass had its height marked on the Survey of India quarter-inch map and I had no information of the country round them, I decided to go by this route.

*Niti to Gartok*

The rates of transport at Niti were extremely high, but I was forced to take them owing to lack of time. They were asking 2 rupees for each of ten animals and 1 rupee 8 annas per man for the five they insisted were necessary for driving the yaks. It was an absolute racket, but I had to agree to their terms or stay where I was. I told them before we started that I should lose no opportunity of doing them down if one arose, and, as luck would have it, I was able to carry out this threat at a later date. In Tibet I found that I could get yaks for a rupee a day or sometimes even eight annas, and that it was only necessary to have one man to four yaks.

We left Niti on June 18 and climbed steadily for 4 miles from 11,600 to 13,500 feet, along a very rough and barren valley. I had caught a bad cold and did not really enjoy the next few days. We stopped for the night at a small camping-ground called Humiakirk, where there was little grazing or fuel. I did not attach very much importance to the names of these camps as there
View up valley to Wan

View up Niti valley
Chor Hoti pass

Kuari pass
were numerous alternatives in most cases and no buildings of any sort to mark the place.

The next day I felt very ill, but dared not waste any more time, so we pushed on up the valley. There was little to see of any interest except a hen Monal which flew down from the snows above 17,000 feet. The day was sultry and even the local men felt the altitude a great deal. To add to our difficulties the previous night had been fairly warm and only the top crust of snow had frozen. This would bear a man's weight for a few yards and then break, leaving him to flounder through 3 feet of soft snow to a firmer place, where the same thing would happen again. It was exhausting and discouraging, and I felt sorry for the yaks, who could find few places on the snow that would bear them. It took us 5½ hours to do the 4½ miles from the camp to the Chor Hoti pass, and we rose from 13,600 to 18,200 feet. By now the sun had come out and the glare was very bad even through snow goggles. I had to close the aperture of my Leica down to f/18 and give 1/500th of a second before I could take any photographs.

We rested for a short while on the pass and then descended a very steep shale slope to a large snow-field where the snow was hard as it was on the north side of the mountains. After a few miles we came to a bad drop and the animals had to go a long way round while we clambered down the cliff. Rim Kin, which is marked on the map, is a small pass of about 15,000 feet, but was hardly worthy of notice as we came down to it and only had a short rise of 500 feet to cross it. Just north of Rim Kin is Bara Hoti, where there is a large basin, and here we camped for the night, having done twelve of the hardest miles I have ever known. Four miles north of Bara Hoti, on the northern lip of the basin, is the Tun Jun La, 16,650 feet, which is apparently the political boundary. The geographical divide is obviously the Chor Hoti pass as it is here that the country changes rapidly, the precipitous gorges of Garhwal giving place to the rolling golden hills and green turf of Tibet.

On the climb to the Tun Jun La I picked up several fossils which I believe are ammonites, badly broken or scratched by ice action.\(^1\) I also saw a pair of Brahminy ducks on their way to their Tibetan breeding grounds; there were a few marmots about. From the top of the pass we could see the Ladakh range beyond which lay Gartok, our goal. After a few miles we travelled along the Sakya Nala and camped at a point where it meets the Jindu Chu and Tun Jun Chu, 13 miles from Bara Hoti.

The Survey of India quarter-inch map is very inaccurate between the Chor Hoti pass and Daba (Dapa), and I had great difficulty in identifying local features. The yak drivers from Niti again gave trouble, much to the distress of Kalian Singh, who felt partly responsible for them. They were the only really bad hill men with whom I have ever had to deal, and I resolved to be rid of them at the earliest opportunity.

We crossed the Jindu Chu, a fast-running stream about 3 feet deep, which seemed to rise somewhere near the Niti pass, and then climbed to a small pass on the north side called Nershan. This was not so much a pass as the edge of the flat Tibetan plain which stretches away to Nabra, Daba, and Toling. After this it was easy walking, over a plateau covered with pebbles and a kind of

\(^1\) Jurassic fossils are found all along here.
flat thistle against which chaplis were useless and boots had to be worn. The villages of Lungi and Changlus, which are marked on the quarter-inch map, do not appear to exist, and are certainly not in the places shown. I asked all the Niti men about this, but they denied knowledge of any village nearer than Daba. After a short march of about 6 miles we camped in a deep nullah called the Changlus Nala. The next morning was magnificent and as we climbed up on to the plain again we could see the white dome of Kailas far away to the east and the Ladakh range to the north, while behind us the dawn had touched the Zaskar range and made the peaks very beautiful.

During the day we saw several Kiang (Tibetan wild ass) and some Tibetan shepherds who ran to meet us and seemed astonished to see our strange caravan. The distances were very deceptive and features which appeared to be about 10 miles away I later found to be more like 30 miles. The very clear air has no dust or moisture in it. I believe it was Mr. Wakefield who saw the Kuen Lun mountains from the Ladakh range, a distance of more than 400 miles. I myself saw from near Tolach mountains north of the Indus valley in the area of Hanle, and they can hardly have been less than 200 or 300 miles away.

Daba lies in the valley of the Daba Chu, which is about 1000 yards across and 1000 feet deep, with very steep golden cliffs worn into fantastic shapes. Unfortunately my photographs of this area were destroyed and I have only one, in colour, of Daba. From Changlus to Daba is 13 miles and it is four marches from Niti by my route. The village is perched precariously up on the cliff sides and there are numerous caves, some inhabited, and others which are used as store houses. There is a Dzongpön of Daba but he was away at Kailas when I arrived. I had heard that harsh treatment and exacting bargains with the Indian traders had diminished trade here and diverted it farther east to Nabra and Taklakot; but the difficulties of the Niti pass may have had something to do with it.

The local lama visited me and brought with him a travelling lama from Lhasa. Kalian Singh and I secretly arranged a bargain with the lama about new yaks, and when this had been safely settled I paid off the Niti men and told them to go. The surprised indignation on their faces as they heard this news did much to console me for their bad conduct during the past few days.

I rested here for a day and on June 24 yaks appeared in the care of two merry Tibetans. They were pretty wild yaks, and we had endless trouble loading and reloading them as they threw off their loads, but by holding each one down at all four corners we managed at last to get the loads secured and set out for Manglam (Mangnang). Between Daba and Manglam are two small villages where the lama’s crops are grown. In a sandy nullah I found a large outcrop of a green and polished stone which I was not able to identify. There was no sign of the ruined village of Segge Dzong on the Rankun Nala, but as it was ruined in the days of the Pundit Surveys it may well have disappeared by now.

Manglam lies on the west side of the Manglam Tsangpo and consists only of a tiny monastery and a few willow trees. There are one or two good turf camping grounds in the middle of the Tsangpo, which is about 500 yards wide and has two fast streams about 2 feet deep in it. There were ‘many red-
Head Lama’s house, Toling monastery

Toling bridge

View down the Sutlej
shanks and four bar-headed geese, the latter so tame that they allowed me to photograph them from about 20 paces. Transport was very cheap here, only 8 annas per animal, but very small donkeys and diminutive cows were among them.

I showed some of the Tibetans a few photographs that I had with me. They seemed to realize what they were, but looked at each one through a half-closed hand, as though through a telescope: perhaps because by doing this and shutting out the local countryside they were better able to concentrate on the picture and get an idea of the real size of the objects in it.

The next day (June 25) we set out to reach Toling, a dull march over completely waterless country. There are several streams marked on the map, but there was no sign of them either dry or running. I met a pilgrim to Kailas who had already been to Ling, as Toling is often called, and was then going on to the Mansarowar lakes. There is a small pass called the Tseri La (14,600 feet) half-way to Toling, and from here we could see the snow-covered mountains of Spiti, particularly Leo Pargial, quite easily. Then our road lay along the most awful labyrinth of eroded paths which descended the cliffs to Toling, on the south bank of the Sutlej. The cliffs here are fantastic in shape and sometimes resemble the roofs of an old abbey, so symmetrical are they. The old fort of Toling was built in the cliffs above the present monastery but was without water and therefore was unable to stand the siege of the Kashmir troops.

Toling consists of a monastery and the head lama's house. About a hundred monks gathered to watch us pitch our camp. There are about two hundred to three hundred monks here, I believe, and there are several women who till the small fields and draw water. It is the best-known monastery in Western Tibet, though the closely guarded Rudok and Kailas monasteries are perhaps as important. There is a head lama who deals with the teaching and religious side of the life there and also an administrative lama called the Shangjud who was very young and spoke good Urdu; he interpreted for me. The head lama was extremely courteous, and after an exchange of gifts and compliments and a certain amount of talk which was carried out in reverent whispers, he ordered the Shangjud to show me round the monastery and its library, with many old books that I was not allowed to touch.

Round the central hall of the monastery are small locked rooms, I think twelve in number. These are set aside for different gods and spirits, and there were a few that I was not allowed to enter. There was a vast figure of Badrinath, another depicting Kali or some such deity, others showing the Goddess of Flowers and Crops and Children; and in some rooms were cases full of small figures in brass or gold of the respective god. Some of the figures in the hall were about 16–18 feet high, but it was very gloomy and I was unable to get close enough to see if they were made of plaster, stone, or wood. Outside were enormous prayer wheels and gongs, and also those long horns which rest on the ground and are used for all purposes from giving a warning to the sounding of the calls to a service. The roof of the head lama's house had on it a small pent-house of Chinese design which was roofed with what looked very much like Thok Jalung gold.

My route from Toling to Gartok lay over the Bogo La, a pass of 19,220
feet. All the passes over the Ladakh range in this area are about 19,000 feet and very steep and rough on the southern sides. The normal route from Niti to Gartok goes to Daba or perhaps Nabra, then over the Choko La, a low and easy pass to the north-east of Nabra, and then follows the Gartang valley to Gartok. This route takes longer than the Toling route, but, except when the Gartang valley is full of water, is more practicable, as the other passes are quite often impassable in very severe weather. In no place is there much snow, as Tibet is cold but dry, with a snow-level of between 19,000 and 20,000 feet. The Tibetan snow is frozen as hard as ice by the extreme cold of the wind and altitude.

There were not many animals at Toling, but Kalian Singh at last managed to procure enough to carry my stores. There was the usual dice-throwing for choice of loads, although it was really quite unnecessary as the smallest animal always ends by carrying the heaviest load.

Shortly after leaving Toling on June 26 we crossed an old bridge which was suspended over the Sutlej by enormous wrought-iron chains. Then we travelled again in a narrow labyrinth, ever-ascending, until we descended at last to a stream where there was a small ruined village called Biey. The quarter-inch map between Toling and Gartok leaves so much to the imagination and is so inaccurate in the features which it does show, that it is here misleading. Two miles north along this stream is another small village where I saw a few people and some small fields of crops. It is called Biey-tung-pu. A little farther on is the village of Dongpo, which is larger and boasts several inhabitants and two enormous black poplars. It is 10 miles from Toling.

Here again transport was difficult to obtain, and the next day I was only able to march 7 miles before dark to a small camping-ground pronounced Poor, lying on the southern approach to the Bogo La at 16,000 feet. There were many birds here and I saw some Lammergeiers, redstarts, rosefinches, and what I believe to have been orange-fronted Serin finches. Marmots were particularly plentiful, and we continually heard their shrill cries as our caravan approached them. A beautiful sand-coloured hunting dog had attached itself to us at Dongpo and remained with us for many weeks. At Poor all the stones were bright green with occasional blue shades in them and a recent storm had freshened their colour. I believe that they were some kind of Serpentine but am awaiting a report from the Geological Survey of India.

From Poor there is a steep climb of about 4 miles to the Bogo La, and it was bitterly cold in the early morning. I had by now become acclimatized to the altitude, so the Bogo La did not worry me nearly so much as the Chor Hoti had done. From the summit we could see clearly all the country across which we had come and the Zaskar range from about the Untadhura pass in the east to Leo Pargial and the Shipki pass in the west. Northwards the Kailas range rose steeply and obscured our view beyond the Gartang valley. I climbed the hill at the side of the pass and found it to be 19,820 feet. The height given on the map for the Bogo La (19,220 feet) agreed with that shown by my aneroid, and this leads me to hope that my heights for the past few days were perhaps more correct than those given on the map, although often disagreeing with the latter by as much as 1000 feet. It took me some time to take my observations and photographs on the pass, and I was rewarded for
my foolishness in leaving off my gloves by a touch of frost-bite in one hand which troubled me for many weeks afterwards and finally left a scar.

The ground slopes gradually down for 5 miles to some fine pasture land, but after that the path lies along the Kinchung Nala. There are no bridges, and, owing to the steep sides of the ravine, progress can only be made by crossing and re-crossing the rapid stream. This is a slow, wetting, and extremely tiring process. There was a good deal of wild rhubarb growing here, and I found it excellent when stewed. That night (June 27) I camped at a small camp called Bogol, as it was nearly dark and Gartok was still 8 miles farther on. We had covered 14 miles during the day and had risen from 16,000 to nearly 20,000 feet and descended again to 15,900 feet. The next morning we continued along the nala until we came to the Gartang valley, a marshy plain about 5 miles broad at this point and bounded by the Kailas range on the north and the Ladakh range on the south. There are three or four deep streams running across the marsh and the local men state that these are impassable when the snow starts to melt. Gartok lies on the far side of the plain and we pitched our tents on the camping-ground a few hundred yards from the houses.

At Gartok there are two Garpöns (Viceroyes from Lhasa) called Urgu Gong and Urgu Hog respectively. They are supposed to rank in that order of seniority, but I believe that in actual fact they have equal powers of government. They rule the whole of Western Tibet, and their main work seems to consist of squeezing as many taxes as possible out of the people. The money collected is certainly not spent in making any bridges or shelters for travellers and traders or even removing the stones from the main routes so that at least a passable road might in time be made. They live at Gartok (Gar Yersa) in the summer and move to Gargunsa in the winter as it is warmer there. There are about thirty permanent inhabitants at Gartok, but in September a great trading fair is held there and the plain is covered with hundreds of the traders’ tents. Gartok and the rule of the Garpöns has been described in great detail by C. A. Sherring in his book ‘Western Tibet.’

Both Garpöns were away at Kailas when I arrived, but they had recently had letters from the Government of India notifying them of my arrival, and they therefore sent their Chief Steward or Adjutant to Gartok at once to receive me. Soon after we had pitched camp some tea and a very smelly dried sheep’s carcase was sent to me from the Garpön’s house. I sent back some presents and asked if I could call that evening. After a while the answer came and Kalian Singh and I went to the house bearing some more gifts. He welcomed me in the courtyard, presented me with a silk scarf (a token of esteem in Tibet), and led me into the house, where we talked and consumed large quantities of rice, tea, and dried *humanis* (hill apricots). The tea is made by stewing the cheapest China tea for hours and then adding salt, flour, and ghi in the required quantities. It resembles and tastes like the water of an oriental harbour, whatever others may say to recommend it. You have no control over the amount that you drink as it is rude to refuse more or to drink too slowly and your cup is refilled the instant that it is empty.

Like all Tibetans that I met, the Garpön was highly intrigued with my old gramophone which proved a passport to social success in Tibet, especially
with talking and singing records. Carriage on yaks and donkeys does not improve the instrument, and mine was held together with rubber bands and string and played only by a miracle by the time I reached Simla. He was astonished to find that I was only twenty-one, especially as Kalian Singh had told him before my arrival that I was a very important prince, that I drew 30,000 rupees each month, and commanded the Red Fort of Delhi (of which even the Tibetan had heard). All this was because I had casually mentioned to Kalian Singh one day that I had started my journey from the Red Fort where I was living at the time, and he had, Kim like, woven fantastic tales about it.

When he came to visit my camp he expressed a desire for hard-boiled eggs and jam, but when this extraordinary dish had been prepared, with the loss of two of my precious eggs, he vaguely declined it and asked for a biscuit with some jam on it. He was delighted with coloured pictures and photographs, but could not see "why a rich man like myself should forsake the comforts of India and come to Tibet and live in such hardship": here he pointed derisively at my small Meade tent. I tried to tell him that I was on a pilgrimage and only following The Way, like Kipling's Lama in *Kim*, but I do not think he believed or even understood.

**Gartok to Shipki**

On July 1 I left the capital of Western Tibet and set out for Simla. I had decided to go and look for bar-headed geese on a small lake called the *Tsanda Gon Tso*, 16 miles along the route to Leh from Gartok. My search was rewarded, as I found about four hundred on the Tso and some goslings which I caught and photographed in the Kiumba Chu early the next morning. Then, turning south-west, we joined the Amjung–Iming route from Gartok to Shangtse by crossing four passes which I believe have not been crossed before. They were the *Dakhum La*, 16,450 feet, the *Lalungkircha La*, 18,000 feet, the *Pialonglong La*, 17,550 feet, and the *Durcha Lapcha La*, 17,425 feet. The streams shown on the quarter-inch map in this district are not accurate and not all of them exist. We camped at a small place called *Nursum*, about 2 miles east of the Laoche La. The camp was bitterly cold, as it was 17,150 feet, and in the morning we found even the running streams frozen hard.

We climbed slowly to the Laoche La, 18,400 feet, the wind blowing very hard against us and chilling all to the bone. A very steep drop on the other side of the pass put us into the shelter again, but we had to cross several snow-bridges before coming down to a stream. After about 2 miles there is a camping-ground called *Palong Raru* (Phalang ralrol on the map), and farther on again was a larger one called Debling, just east of the Debling La, 16,500 feet.

From here we could see Kamet very plainly as it dominates the Zaskar range, although we must have been fully 70 miles north of it. Just west of the Debling La is a huge mani-wall called *Kusho Mantang*, about 300 yards long, 5 yards broad, and 5 feet high: the largest that I have seen in Tibet. By now we had come to the edge of a vast stony plain which slopes gradually down to Shang Fort, rather similar to the plain that we crossed after leaving the
Jindu Chu, on our way to Daba. There is a small camp here called Dara, 9 miles from Nursum.

The following day we marched for 4 miles across the plain to Shang Fort. Ahead of us we could see the rough desert country over which we should have to go, and beyond that Leo Pargial stood up very clearly. Shang Fort, although very dilapidated, was still inhabited, and there were also several caves in the cliffs bordering the nullah. After this the route lay along a wide nullah for 3½ miles until a small cliff village called Chai was reached. Shangtse lies another 3 miles farther to the west and is the summer home of the Chuprang Dzongpön.

Here I went through more or less the same ceremonies as at Gartok. The Dzongpöns were just changing as the old one was going to Lhasa. There was a monastery with several houses round it, and the village reminded me much more of Toling than of Daba or Gartok. The Dzongpön was an amusing character and showed me two Revelation suitcases, a Mauser repeater, an automatic pistol, and a Winchester “under and over,” which he said he always carried on journeys for protection from the many bandits that lived in his country. He insisted that I should take a photograph of him and his family.

He then discussed the route with me. He said that the normal route to Nuk (pronounced Nūk), was not possible owing to the unfordable state of the Op Chu at this season, and insisted on sending us round by the north, which he said took the same number of marches, although they were rather longer. The normal route lay via Kyinipuk, Op, Luk, Nuk. I told him that I was hoping to reach Simla in twenty-two days, as I was several days behind my schedule; but he said that it was not possible in that time. In actual fact I reached Simla in nineteen marches.

We started off from Shangtse on July 5 and climbed to Shangtse Lapcha, 14,950 ft, and then on to another pass called Tanglang Lapcha, 15,300 ft. The country was very sandy and hard to walk on, and there was no vegetation except for some grass similar to Marrams, and a low-lying pea or vetch, the flowers of which the Tibetans ate greedily. A sharp descent brought us to the village of Jokche (Joktse), a fairy-like cluster of cliff dwellings culminating in a pinnacle, at 14,150 ft on the Rabgyeling Chu, where we changed animals. Then another climb followed to the Depchi Lapcha, 14,950 ft, and after that a level march across a sandy plain to Rabgyeling Gompa, 14,300 ft, a pleasant camp lying in the Sargung Chu and overlooked by the monastery. Here transport had to be changed again and the next morning we climbed to the Piridung Lapcha, 14,950 ft, and the Tunjin Lapcha, 14,900 ft, before dropping to the village of Jangtang, which consisted of a few caves in a bleak and sandy nullah at 14,000 ft. Here I had to change animals again, and, as there were not enough to start with, I and An Singh went on with some of the baggage, leaving Kalian Singh to bring on the rest later. Jangtang is shown as being on a ridge, but this is not correct, and in any case no village in this area could exist on a hill owing to the shortage of water.

We climbed again to a small pass called Kheri Lapcha and across a plain to a small camping-ground called Kheri, where there was a very small water supply. We then turned almost due south, crossed the Kheri La, and dropped
down into a maze of deep nullahs. There was no water here, nor any sign of birds, animals, or plants. At last we climbed to the Anari La, 15,300 feet, and came down to Sūmar Gōmpa (Somar G.) at 15,000 feet, which I estimated is about 3 miles south of the position that it is given on the quarter-inch map. There was a stream and a very small monastery here. Kalian Singh arrived with the baggage just before dark.

From Sūmar we climbed to Tanga, 15,800 feet, and Dadu, 16,000 feet. Then followed a very difficult drop of 3000 feet to the Op Chu. The stream was deep and very fast and was crossed by an almost natural bridge as the river here was practically subterranean. While climbing the other side of the gorge I saw two bandits with rifles who, I later learned, had robbed Kalian Singh of his money when I had seen him ahead in the morning to get more transport, but they did not attack us although they fired a shot at someone or something.

Both sides of the Op Chu presented great difficulties to the animals, who took over nine hours to cover the first 5 miles from Sūmar. The pass on the other side of the Chu is called Dangi Lapcha, 15,900 feet, and a little farther on is Rutapagong, 15,850 feet. Although we had only covered 11 miles we had taken thirteen hours to do this, and I decided to stop for the night of July 7 at a small camping-ground in a deep nullah called Sangtong, 14,400 feet.

South-west from here the country became slightly less rugged and we crossed three small passes called Dupgarh La, 15,400 feet, Puksum Lapcha, 15,800 feet, and Lajungma, 15,900 feet. Soon after the last pass we came to a very large camping-ground called Dongpara (perhaps Dong paro, i.e. yak camp), where there were many tents. It is a trade post between India and Tibet, and I talked to many Indians there, some hailing from Dehra Dun, Mussoorie, and Simla. Kalian Singh met me here with new animals. After a small delay we went on to Nuk, which lay on the northern slopes of the Sutlej gorge, about 3 miles distant. I was now back on the normal trade route from Shangtse. I do not know what the normal route is like in comparison with mine, but it could hardly be worse than the arid desert over which I had travelled for the last four days, always on the look out for water and transport.

Nuk is a large village, far larger than Gartok, although from the imposing manner in which the latter is marked on all maps one is led to believe the opposite. There are several camps down by the village, but it is better to stay in the higher camps about 1000 feet above the houses as the next march starts with a long climb to the Rangmik La, 15,400 feet. There is an old fort perched on an incredible eyrie several thousand feet above the north bank over the Sutlej; it appeared to be so inaccessible that I felt that the defenders would have nearly as much trouble in reaching it as the attackers.

After the Rangmik La has been crossed the route lies over fairly open heath land to the foot of the Shiring La. Then it enters a rocky ravine where there was a lot of wild rhubarb growing, and ends with a steep climb of about 1000 feet to the pass, which is 16,800 feet. From here a good view can be obtained of Leo Pargial and the wild, rugged gorge of the Sutlej, roaring through the mountains to Shipki. The descent from the pass on the west side is very bad, as the track is never wider than 2 feet and often as narrow as 9 inches, and runs across an exceedingly steep shale slope. I feared for the
Rabgyeling Gömpa

Jokche village

Shang Fort
safety of the animals, but they managed the journey extremely well, picking
their way gingerly along the very edge of the path.

After a mile or two there is another slight rise and then a difficult drop
of nearly 3000 feet down the end of a steep spur. Miyang (Ma Dzong) can
be seen below. This is a pleasant village and has a few trees and masses of
wild roses. The men were all away with sheep and goats, and all the yaks
were up on the tops grazing and would have taken a day or two to collect, but
the local women volunteered to take my baggage as far as Tyak, the next stage,
6 miles farther on. The next morning, after a great deal of talk, we started
off, Kalian Singh obviously enjoying his new charges much more than mere
yaks, and keeping up a flow of repartee with them all. They were very inde-
dendent and rested when and where they wished, but the cheerful atmosphere
was very amusing. The road is very rocky and rough and crosses and re-
crosses a fast stream. Above, the golden cliffs towered up for several thousand
feet into the deep-blue sky.

At Tyak I had to get more porters, as I had decided to do a double march
and go on to Shipki. It was a pretty village with a few fields and apricot trees
and lay at the junction of our stream and the Sutlej. The road from Tyak to
Shipki is very dangerous and precipitous, sometimes consisting of a rather
insecure scaffolding on the face of the cliff, hundreds of feet above the roaring
torrent, and is suitable only for porters or goats as the path is often cut into
the cliff and one has to bend double to proceed. After 4 miles there is a small
village called Korang, and the Sutlej is crossed by bridge, the first since
Toling. A mile farther on is Kiuk and, 3 miles past that, Shipki. We did not
arrive here till dark and camped on a very small terraced field as we did not
know where the camp lay. The next day we found that it was the other side
of the village, and we passed it on our way to the Shipki La. This is the
border village and there is a lumbardar (headman) here who speaks Urdu and
can be very helpful. The Shipki La is 13,420 feet and is the border between
Tibet and Bashahr State. As far as I know it is the lowest pass through the
Himalaya and is open for a large part of the year. On the pass I rested and
looked back to Tibet, just turning golden-brown in the morning sun. Above
me towered the Leo Pargial, below me roared the Sutlej, and ahead of us was
domestic and civilization. But, tired though I was after the trials and rush of
the past ten days, I felt very sad at leaving Tibet and wondered if I should ever
again stand on the Shipki La.

Shipki to Simla

The path down to Namgia is good, as it is maintained by the P.W.D., but
there is a terrifying drop of several thousand feet over the edge. I had
bruised my foot badly the day before and, as no pony was available, was
riding a large black yak. As my bridle would not fit it a small girl was ordered
to lead the animal while I sat on its back. A black yak with an old hunting
saddle, ridden by a bearded white man and led by a small Tibetan girl along
the edge of a precipice must have been a strange sight even in this strange
country. As I had no control over either the small girl or the yak, I folded my
arms and resigned my fate to them.

At Namgia there is a new P.W.D. bungalow although it is still 194 miles
from Simla. The *chowkidar* (caretaker) was delighted to see me and brought apricots and hot water; I had had no bath since leaving Gartok. The next day I walked 8 miles to Poo, which is a large village and has vegetables and fruit, and there rested for a day. From Gartok to Namgia it is officially thirteen stages, and I had done it in eleven days and by a longer and strange route. During this time I had covered 129 miles, crossed twenty-seven passes of which twenty-two are not named on the map and, as far as I know, have not been crossed before by a European, and put 55 miles of new route on to the map fairly accurately.

For the rest there is little to tell. I did three marches from Poo to Kanum (16 miles), Jangi (11 miles), and Pangi (15 miles). Here I met T. R. Glancy, who had obtained one month's leave and come to meet me. From Pangi we did seven marches to Narkanda, a distance of 116 miles, and finished the last 42 miles to Simla in one day on bicycles, as time was short. All this along the Sutlej valley with a good track and plenty of forest and P.W.D. bungalows. It was a rest after Tibet, but I often thought wistfully of the happy days I had spent in my windswept and cramped tent in that wonderful land.

This last part of my journey lay through the country where Kim and the Babu confounded the Russian travellers and stole their maps and notes before going into hiding with the Woman of Shamlegh. And many other stories such as 'Lispeth of the Kotgarh mission' and 'Namgay Doola' owe their origin to the inspiration of this wild and mountainous land. Kipling understood the Hills when he wrote "The last puff of the day-wind brought from the unseen villages the scent of damp wood-smoke, hot cakes, dripping under-growth, and rotting pine-cones. That is the true smell of the Himalayas and if once it creeps into the blood of a man that man will at the last, forgetting all else, return to the hills to die."

Those who know and love the hills will remember this feeling, and for myself I also add the musty smell of Toling monastery, the cries of the men urging the yaks up to the pass, and the silence of the eternal snows. The beauty of such a memory outweights all the discomforts and hardships that had to be undergone in its cause.

*In a note at the end of his manuscript, Captain Hamond says: "Any place-name underlined in ink means that either it is not marked on the map or that the spelling on the map is, in my opinion, wrong. In both cases I have endeavoured to obtain the correct phonetical spelling." There are however indications that he has not in all respects followed the R.G.S.II system of spelling. Soon after his manuscript was received he was ordered overseas and there was no opportunity to discuss this matter with him. We have therefore in the text printed his underlined names in italic, and on the map have shown the Survey of India spelling where it differs from his, but his own spelling for places not on the quarter-inch sheets.—Ed. G. J.*

**DISCUSSION**

Before the paper the President (Sir George Clerk) said: Captain Robert Hamond is an officer of the Royal Norfolk Regiment, whose battalion was in 1939 stationed at Delhi, and he very wisely resolved to devote two months' leave to a journey into Tibet.
In the autumn of 1904, on his return from the mission to Lhasa, Sir Francis Younghusband detached four British officers to travel westward on the north of the Himalayan ranges, among their objects being to settle the question whether there was or was not any mountain in those ranges approaching or even surpassing Mount Everest in height. A second object was to establish a British trade agent at Gartok. They made the journey from Gartok westward to the Shipki pass and Simla in mid-winter.

Captain Hamond resolved to reach Gartok from Garhwal and to make the journey in the middle of summer by a different route, for few travellers had been that way since 1904 and there was little on record of the summer route. For this journey Captain Hamond received the MacGregor Medal. He has recently been ordered overseas and cannot read his paper himself as he had hoped, so Colonel Mason has very kindly undertaken to read the paper for Captain Hamond.

_Lieut.-Colonel Mason then read the paper printed above, and a discussion followed._

_The President_: We are very fortunate to have with us Colonel Ryder who, I believe, will have something to add on the paper; but before I ask him to address us I should like Professor Mason to say, in Parliamentary language, those things which, I gather, he has to say in regard to certain observations by the writer of the paper.

_Lieut.-Colonel Mason_: It may be of some interest to recall that the first European explorers of these parts were those intrepid Jesuit missionaries, Father Antonio de Andrade and Brother Manuel Marques, who on 30 March 1624 set out from Agra to search for the Christians reported to be living in Western Tibet.

After considerable hardship they crossed the Mana pass, 17,890 feet, and reached Tsaparang on the Sutlej, some miles downstream of Daba, then the capital of Guge, a prosperous little kingdom in this part of Tibet. On 12 April 1626 a church was founded and for four years the mission flourished; but a revolution broke out in 1630 and the king and the two Jesuits in charge were carried off captive to Leh. The church and mission were sacked and the four hundred converts reduced to slavery.

When Francisco de Azevedo, the Visitor, reached Tsaparang in August 1631, he met considerable hostility from the new governor, and with John de Oliviera, crossed the plateau northwards, passing through Shantse, Hanle, and Gya on their way to Leh—_i.e._ they crossed both Ryder’s and Hamond’s routes at right-angles. At Leh they obtained permission to preach Christianity in Western Tibet, but the mission seems to have eventually come to an end about 1640, Manuel Marques being last heard of as a prisoner in Tsaparang in 1641.

When Mackworth Young visited Tsaparang in 1912 he found a number of houses well preserved, but the only trace of church or mission, and that rather doubtful, was a weather-beaten wooden cross on the top of a _chorten_. The population then only consisted of four families.

In these bleak parts settlements rise, flourish, and fall very quickly; and it is not unusual for travellers to find very little trace of a place put on the map by their predecessors only a few years before. Daba, which Hamond passed through, had only a population of twenty when visited by Hugh Rose in 1931. The rest had cleared off owing to the cruelty and extortion of the Dzongpön, an ex-muleteer of Lhasa, who ruled as a tyrant.

I would have liked to ask Hamond whether his excellent companion, Kalian Singh, who met him at Niti, and who had been with Smythe, and Oliver, and...
Osmaston on various expeditions, was a descendant of that "Third Pundit" explorer, Kalian Singh, a Bhotia of the same district, who is known in Survey of India Records as GK. I like to think that he is a grandson or great-grandson. For that old GK, with his famous brother Nain Singh, "The Pundit," and with his cousin Mani Singh, G.M. of our records, were the first three "Pundit explorers." It was these three who were sent out by Montgomerie in 1867, disguised as Bashahri traders to clear up the geography of the upper Sutlej. They visited the goldfields of Thok Jalung, mapped the main upper branches of the Indus, and traced for the first time the Sutlej course from Toling to Shipki. Their map had to be made rather surreptitiously and was based on route survey controlled by sextant latitudes at seventy-five points.

You will remember that Hamond met the Swiss climbing party under André Roch on his way up by Ramni. Some people would say that this party had a successful season. On July 5 they climbed Dunagiri, 23,184 feet. On August 8 they climbed Rataban, 20,100 feet, and on August 18 Gauri Parbat, 22,027 feet.

These were all fine climbs; but, like so many newcomers to the Himalaya, the Swiss were not satisfied, and began to take the sort of liberties that the Himalaya is always greedy to avenge. When attempting Chaukamba, 23,420 feet, on September 8, they pitched camp on one of the ice-terraces of its dangerous eastern slopes. As might have been expected after the previous few days of bad weather an avalanche broke away from the shoulder above and the whole surface on which they were camped started to slide. All three tents and their occupants were carried down between 1500 and 2000 feet, and two porters, Gombu Sherpa and Ajitia Dotial, were killed and others injured. The rest of the party escaped by a miracle, and through no skill of their own.

Colonel C. H. D. Ryder: As you will have gathered from some of the photographs, my journey was made thirty-seven years ago, and of the four of us on that journey, only two now survive. But I like to feel that the spirit of exploration is still strong, and I have listened to the description by Captain Hamond with the greatest interest. I suppose I am the only person in the room who has been in the part of the world he has described, and I can say his descriptions are very accurate.

It is curious that in a country of that type there should be a wealth of wild flowers at certain seasons of the year. At certain periods of the year you pass over howling and bare desert, and then, suddenly, in the spring you will find that transformed into a place carpeted with flowers of every description.

Then there are the animals. The marmot is a wonderful companion and an interesting little creature to watch. Marmots are nervous, but they have one most obvious etiquette. A marmot, when frightened, may run to another marmot's hole as hard as he can go, but immediately he gets there he must come up to the top of the hole and look round to see whether the danger is really urgent; if not, he must immediately go on to his own hole. You will see twenty, thirty, or fifty of them all running to holes, and at once they come up, look over the top, and about three-quarters of them run off to their own holes, leaving the rest as they were.

My journey over the area we have had mapped was made at the end of a long and arduous journey to Lhasa under Sir Francis Younghusband. The four of us were all rather tired. We collected what stores we could for our journey, while the rest returned to India and reached there in plenty of time. We had to face the problem of being caught by the weather and having to winter in Tibet. Our supplies were very meagre; the cold very intense. I can now look back with a certain amount of amusement on what was far from amusing at the time.

For instance, our journey was practically due west up to Rampur and, as you
all know, being geographers, when you are travelling due west and riding a pony your left leg is in the sun on the sunny side of the pony, your right is in the shade of the pony. The cold was so intense that it was necessary after ten minutes on the pony to either get off and walk or sit with your back towards the way the pony was travelling so as to get the right leg warmed up in the sun.

Our expedition actually went up to Gartok to establish a trade agent there. That we did, and then we had only one idea, to get back to civilization as fast as we could, over that ghastly country we have seen in the photographs, country cut up by ravines running in every direction. There was one advantage we gained from the extreme cold. Many of the streams which in summer when the snow has melted are roaring torrents were frozen hard, and we could cross them with ease. To that extent we had an easier time than Captain Hamond had when there in the middle of the summer.

One of the items that interested me most in the paper was the statement that Captain Hamond is only twenty-one. I like to think that the men of the younger generation are also explorers. I did not know until I came here this afternoon that he was in the Royal Norfolk Regiment, the regiment one of my sons was in. I like to feel that the spirit of exploration that took my son away to the Antarctic also made Hamond a good explorer.

The President: Our thanks are due to both the writer and the reader of the paper for a most interesting afternoon. We also thank Colonel Ryder for his contribution. We have spent a very profitable afternoon, and I am sure we are grateful to all three for what they have told us.