Volume XV 1949

THE HIMALAYAN JOURNAL

RECORDS OF THE HIMALAYAN CLUB

Edited by H. W. TOBIN

CONTENTS

OXFORD

AT THE CLARENDON PRESS

Price 15*s. net or* 10 *Rupees*

THE HIMALAYAN JOURNAL is published on behalf of the Himalayan Club by the Clarendon Press, Oxford. It may be obtained through any bookseller or by application to Mr. Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford University Press, Amen House, Warwick Square, London, E.C. 4, to whom all communications respecting subscriptions to the Journal or advertising should be addressed. Inquiries in India should be addressed to The Manager, Oxford University Press, Oxford House, Apollo Bunder, Post Box 31, Bombay, 1.

best

IN THE LONG RUN...

GRENFELL

SKI JACKETS

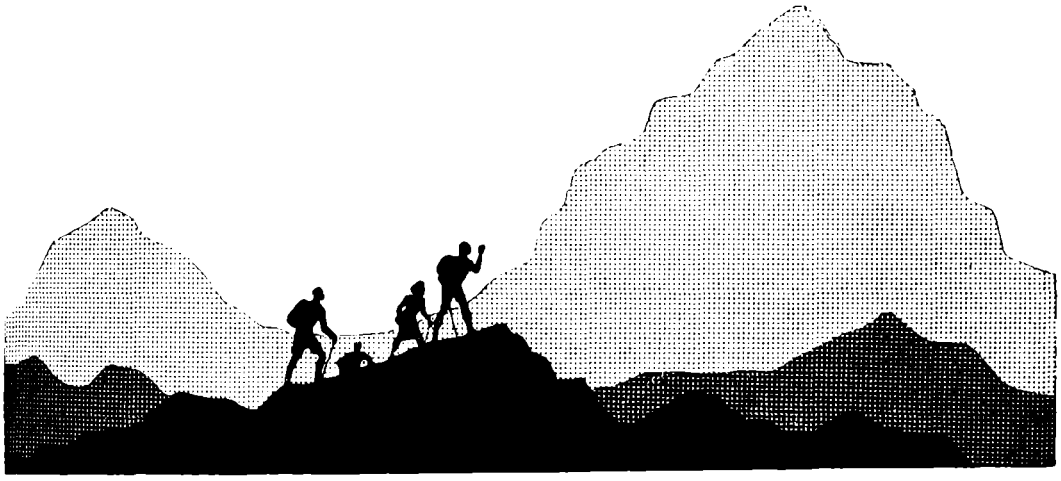
made from the
famous Grenfell Cloth
in a range of
appropriate shades.

From a few good stores
who specialise in
Winter Sports attire.

Should you experience any difficulty, write to:

HAYTHORNTHWAITE & SONS, LIMITED

LODGE MILL · BURNLEY · LANCS.



LIGHT-WEIGHT NOURISHMENT

You don't have to be an explorer or a mountaineer to know about Bovril, but if you are you'll have a special reason for appreciating its savoury tang and sustaining properties. It is as indispensable to climbers as it is to cooks. You will need pemmican too, and Bovril Pemmican has been specially developed to meet the needs of men who must rely for food on what they can carry. It is palatable and nutritive, and keeps indefinitely. Bovril Pemmican supplies the modern mountaineer with a concentrated meat-food of unequalled value.

Bovril has been included amongst the essential stores of most of the great Expeditions of modern times. It helped the Mount Everest climbers to attain altitudes never reached before, and it received the grateful thanks of the British airmen who made the first attempt to fly round the world. It went North with Nansen, and South with Shackleton and Scott. Most of the individual British records have been created by men who used—and depended on—Bovril.

BOVRIL

puts beef into you

THE

Windak

'FAIRWAY'

UTTER FREEDOM — PIVOT SLEEVES —

FULL ZIP — FITTED POCKETS — DOUBLE

TEXTURE WINDAK GABERDINE THROUGHOUT

In Men's Colours

FAWN SHERWOOD GREEN TURF TAN

Please write for name of your nearest stockist

WINDAK LTD., WOODSIDE, POYNTON, CHESHIRE

JN. 780

'OVALTINE' *for* EVEREST!

'OVALTINE' was chosen for the high-climbing ration by the Mount Everest Expeditions of 1933 and 1936. The selection of 'Ovaltine' for this and other outstanding tests of endurance is the result of long experience of its exceptional sustaining properties.

'Ovaltine' has played an important part in many notable mountaineering feats, including those of the Kamet Expedition, the Swiss Caucasus Expedition of 1934, and the international Pamir Expedition which made some wonderful first ascents in the Turkestan range.

Famous explorers, sportsmen, athletes, and record-breaking flyers have acknowledged their indebtedness to 'Ovaltine' in many memorable achievements.

For helping to maintain physical fitness and abundant vitality, even under the most arduous conditions, 'Ovaltine' definitely stands in a class by itself. It is the food beverage most widely recommended by doctors throughout the world, and is regularly used in countless thousands of homes.

Prices in Gt. Britain and N. Ireland
2/4 and 4/-

The World's Most Popular Food Beverage was selected by the Mount Everest Climbing Expeditions of 1933 and 1936

P.233A

On the corniced arête of Satopanth

THE HIMALAYAN JOURNAL

RECORDS OF THE HIMALAYAN CLUB

EDITED BY

H. W. TOBIN

'To encourage and assist Himalayan travel and exploration, and to extend knowledge of the Himalaya and adjoining mountain ranges through science, art, literature, and sport.'

VOLUME XV

1949

OXFORD
AT THE CLARENDON PRESS
LONDON: GEOFFREY CUMBERLEGE
1950

THE HIMALAYAN CLUB

President:

C. E. J. CRAWFORD, ESQ.

Vice-Presidents:

T. A. SCHINZEL, ESQ.
G. B. GOURLAY, ESQ.

Honorary Secretary:

W. E. MURPHY, ESQ.

Honorary Local Secretaries:

DELHI: MAJOR R. E. HOTZ
DARJEELING: T. J. HARDINGHAM, ESQ.
BOMBAY: A. R. LEYDEN, ESQ.
KULU: MAJOR H. M. BANON
UNITED KINGDOM: LT.-COL. H. W. TOBIN

Honorary Editor:

LT.-COL. H. W. TOBIN

Honorary Assistant Editor:

MRS. H. P. V. TOWNEND

Honorary Treasurer:

C. I. TURCAN, ESQ.

Honorary Librarian:

V. S. RISOE, ESQ.

Honorary Equipment Officer:

W. A. BROWN, ESQ.

Committee:

J. B. AUDEN, ESQ.
W. A. BROWN, ESQ.
S. E. GOLLEDGE, ESQ.
H. LALL, ESQ.
J. LATIMER, ESQ.
V. S. RISOE, ESQ.
F. H. V. SCRIMGEOUR, ESQ.
R. A. F. THOMAS, ESQ.
MRS. H. P. V. TOWNEND
T. D. WELBY, ESQ.

Additional Members of Balloting Committee:

L. ARCULUS, ESQ.
CAPT. R. B. BAKEWELL
E. BERNHARDT, ESQ.
DR. K. BISWAS
A. F. CHARLTON THOMAS, ESQ.
A. J. DASH, ESQ.
M. J. HACKNEY, ESQ.
A. H. JUST, ESQ.
DR. S. C. LAW
J. O. SIMS, ESQ.

CONTENTS

LIST OF PLATES

MAPS AND DIAGRAMS

EDITORIAL

IT is devoutly hoped that the issue of this volume of our Journal will help to dispel from the minds of members the unnecessarily dismal apprehensions expressed last year in vol. xiv. That issue was, compared with most of its predecessors, slim and puny; this one, though again belated for lack of material and tardy arrival of copy, has been rather better nourished and is more robust. There have been more expeditions than we expected and, in addition to the welcome contributions from our own members, the Swiss Stiftung and other organizations have been generous with their help. Our special thanks are due to M. Ernst Feuz of Zurich. Nevertheless, but for the persuasion exercised early this year by Tilman, which in truth came near to goading, vol. xv might have been stillborn. Friendly co-operation and assistance has also come from Mr. K. Menon, late of the Indian Political Department and now Minister for External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations at New Delhi, and also from Harish Dayal, Political Officer in Sikkim. Francis Leeson has been indefatigable in making and adapting a number of maps. To the above and to all others who have helped our deep gratitude is extended.

As for vol. xvi: it is true that several expeditions are in the planning and that restrictions on access to Nepal have, in certain cases and on special grounds, been relaxed. Against that, persisting tension between India and Pakistan over the Kashmir question does not tend to facilitate approach to the Western Himalaya, Karakorum, Chitral Sinkiang, &c. We have been promised some copy but material may be hard to come by. However, at the very worst, we feel the issue following this should be dated no later than 1950–1.

MOUNTAINS OF SINKIANG

H. W. TILMAN

To travel about 16,000 miles for the sake of climbing two mountains shows at least a desperate ardour for mountaineering. And since we failed on both it may be thought also to show a desperate lack of skill. My plan was to meet Shipton at the end of June at Urumchi, the capital of Sinkiang, lying about 1,000 miles east of Kashgar where Shipton was H.B.M. Consul-General.

Early in June I went by air to Shanghai. To reach Central Asia from Europe by way of Shanghai may sound a little like Chesterton's 'the night we went to Birmingham, by way of Beachy Head', but it is the quickest way. Too much noise, heat, dirt, and a population badly in need of decimation, were the impressions I had of Shanghai; and even at the rate of three million to the pound Chinese dollars did not go very far. The price of everything except air travel kept well abreast or even ahead of the rapidly falling exchange; but it was odd that one could fly to Nanking for less than the price of a tin of tobacco.

I continued by air to Lanchow in North China on the Hwang-Ho (Yellow River), a hop of about 1,200 miles, and for the remaining 1,100 miles to Urumchi I travelled by Post bus, the journey taking twelve days including four non-running days. Knowing nothing of Chinese I took care to write down phonetically five essential words, that is, words for food, but this forethought availed me nothing, for my version of the words conveyed nothing at all to anyone, so that at times life wore a pretty harsh aspect. The Chinese are commendably serious about food and cooking and it was maddening to think of all the carefully prepared, bizarre, and possibly pleasing dishes I might have sampled had I been able to ask for them.

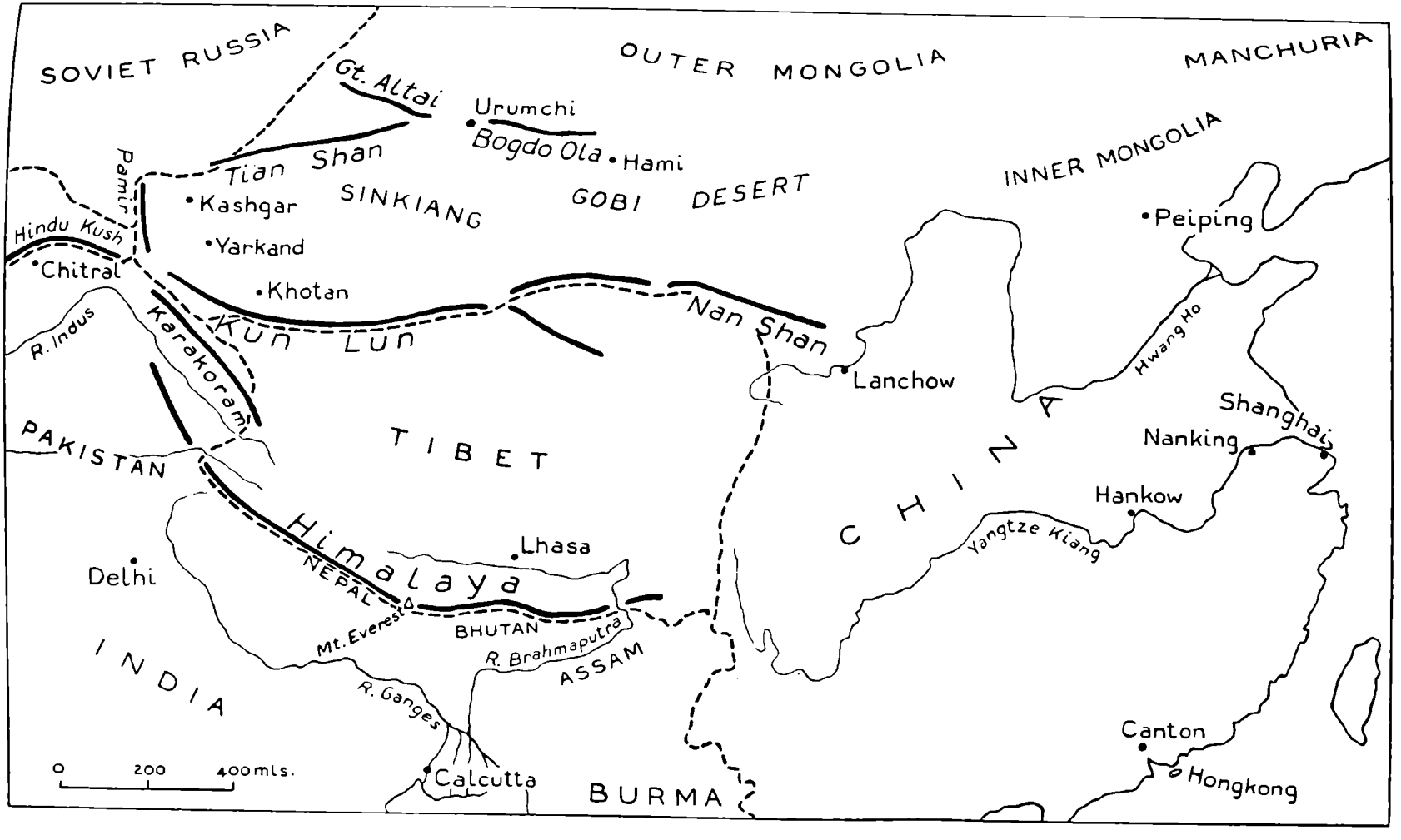
The road runs through what is called the Kansu corridor with the high Richthofen range to the south and desert to the north. Near Suchow it passes through the remains of the Great Wall and shortly after it enters the Gobi Desert. Half-way across the desert is the boundary between Kansu and Sinkiang and on the other side is the oasis of Hami. Hami is known for its melons, which used to be sent to the Imperial Court at Peking, and for the tombs of its princes which, with their domes of green glazed tiles and blue and white tiled walls, are still worth seeing. By driving most of the night as well as the day we reached Urumchi, which the Chinese call Tihwa, in another two days. On the way one passes through the Turfan Depression which is a rich and very hot oasis several hundred feet

below sea-level, remarkable for its system of underground irrigation. Nearing Urumchi I had my first view of Bogdo Olo and thought it looked decidedly hostile.

Shipton and I were the grateful guests of the American Consul and his wife (Mr. and Mrs. Paxton), for the new British Consul had not then arrived. Three days later, 10th July, we left by truck for Toukan, a village on the north side of the mountain, where we collected some ponies. Through pine-clad foothills we climbed to the lovely lake and monastery of Ten Sher (6,000 feet) and there embarked in a crank and leaky boat for our passage across the lake. The ponies went round and having met them we camped with some Kazaks at about 8,300 feet. These Kazaks are pastoral nomads of Moslem religion and Mongolian appearance. There are some half a million of them in the north-east corner of Sinkiang and about three million of them in the Soviet Republic of Kazakstan. As subjects they are disliked by the Chinese on account of their independent ways—a euphemism for a tendency to revolt. To our party they were hospitable and helpful but on the two occasions when I encountered Kazaks alone and unannounced I was threatened, once with a rifle and once with a whip, so in my opinion the Chinese have substantial grounds for their dislike.

Upon crossing the 12,000-foot Gurban pass we found ourselves looking across a wide glacier of smooth dry ice to the north face of Bogdo Ola. The main mountain consists of a ridge some $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 miles long crowned by three upstanding peaks, West, Central, and East, the last being the highest by several hundred feet. The group was surveyed in 1904 by Merzbacher who credited the East peak with 6,512 metres or 21,350 feet. To our weak minds such a height in such a latitude—about that of north Italy—was quite excessive, but we took comfort from the results of a Swedish geological party which had mapped the region in 1939, giving the East peak the more reasonable figure of 18,000 feet. Strangely enough our two altimeters agreed with Merzbacher's heights up to 14,000 feet, nevertheless, we think his heights for the three summits are 1,000 metres too much.

We pitched camp in a snow-storm, the Kazaks and their ponies departed unreluctantly, and four of us remained to contemplate the distasteful scene. Besides Shipton and me there were Lhakpa, his Sherpa factotum, once an Everest porter but now obese, and a reputedly tough Hunza whom we called Hill Billy. As seen in profile an arête, descending from the East peak to a high easily reached snow col, offered a short, steep, and not exactly alluring route to our goal. We felt that we were neither physically nor mentally fit for what looked like serious business so we resolved to devote some days


SOVIET RUSSIA
OUTER MONGOLIA
MANCHURIA
Gt. Altai
Urumchi
Bogdo Ola
Hami
Tian Shan
SINKIANG
GOBI DESERT
INNER MONGOLIA
Pamir
Kashgar
Yarkand
Hindu Kush
Chitral
Khotan
Peiping
Kun Lun
Nan Shan
R. Indus
Karakoram
Lanchow
Hwang Ho
Shanghai
Nanking
PAKISTAN
TIBET
CHINA
Hankow
Yangtze Kiang
Himalaya
Lhasa
Delhi
NEPAL
Mt. Everest
BHUTAN
R. Brahmaputra
ASSAM
INDIA
R. Ganges
Canton
Hongkong
Calcutta
BURMA
0 200 400mls.

to reconnaissance. We were pretty certain that a less exacting way would be found; if not, perhaps after a few days of exercise and acclimatization we should be less daunted by the severity of this arête.

Our first day we spent walking gently to a snow col (13,700 feet) lying below the higher col already noted. We learnt nothing fresh; from that much closer the arête appeared no easier, and we returned in sleet, hail, and thunder to grapple with domestic troubles. Lhakpa was sick, the tent leaked copiously, and our home-made copy of Merzbacher's map had, like the Dutchman's anchor, been left behind. More, and worst of all, the primus refused to work, and very soon the inside of the tent was a murky hell of mud, snow, and soot, fitfully lit by flashes of lurid language.

Two days later, having done what we were too idle to do the first day, that is, to cross the low col and explore to the east, we thought we had found a way to our peak by the long east ridge which connects the East peak with a distant outlier. This ridge was defended on the north side by hanging glaciers so that our narrowing hopes now centred on its south side. Although the mountain is by no means vast—if the east ridge did not intervene one could walk round it in a long day—I felt that if we moved to the south side we should not return and that before going we ought to rub our noses on the north-east arête to convince ourselves that it was as bad as it looked. Shipton's view was that of Moses: 'Ye have encompassed this mountain long enough, turn ye southwards.' In fact he thought we had wasted our time and should have made a wide reconnaissance in the first place. At the inquiry subsequently held to decide whether it was to lack of competence, courage, judgement, or all three, that we owed our failure, I maintained that in the Himalaya an initial strategic reconnaissance is useless since few routes can be safely approved or discarded without actual trial. Only detailed reconnaissance is of value.

While waiting for the ponies to come up I made a quick dash down the Gurban valley to the south where I found an easy pass eastwards to the Chigo glacier and imagined I had found a way up the East peak. I was chased most of the way back by a Kazak with a rifle which he refrained from using. Ammunition, I suppose, was scarce.

We moved camp to below this pass, preparatory to taking a camp to the east ridge, for in clearer weather and from higher up Shipton had found my East peak to be false. From the Chigo glacier an easy snow slope led to the east ridge. This was cheering, but looking at the ridge from this side we began to have doubts about our route. However, we had now no more unexplored but comforting possi-

bilities in hand. Having condemned the north-east arête without a trial this was our last hope.

By the time Lhakpa, who had been left behind sick, had rejoined, Hill Billy had taken to *his* bed. We suspected, probably unjustly, that his illness arose from the revolting aspect of the east ridge upon which we meditated assault, but he need have had no cause for alarm either on his behalf or ours, for at that time the last vice with which we could be charged was temerity. Together with Lhakpa and some help from a yak we carried a camp to the head of the Chigo. As there were about 2,000 feet to climb to the ridge we expected to make only one carry, but at the start we were hindered by several hundred feet of bare ice—rough, but not rough enough to stand on without nicking steps—and Lhakpa was not much help. At 3 p.m. we sent him down and two hours later, by when we were pretty shagged, we dug a platform for the tent.

Next day, in two lifts and on good hard snow, we completed the carry to the ridge. The height was about 15,250 feet. Even on the way up it had become plain that the proposed route was beyond our powers, but we had neither the resolution to persevere nor to cut our losses and go down forthwith. We should have had to carry another camp along the ridge, which was knife-edged, corniced, and ill-suited for a laden party, and the way to the summit bristled with difficulties well above our low standard. Nevertheless, the situation of our camp was very grand and had we toiled up merely for that and the view the effort had been worth while. From our tent door the slender, sinuous ridge stretched away horizontally to an invisible gap, whence it leapt up to merge into the precipitous rock and ice of the main mass. To the north, where our tent hung upon the lip of space, the eye ranged unimpeded to the black and golden wastes of the Gobi; while to the south, beyond the broad white ribbon of the Chigo glacier, the tawny Asian landscape seemed as infinite as the pale sky.

From dusk that night until dawn a very violent wind blew. Our tent had been on Everest in 1938 and considering its age and the fury of the gusts our surprise that it held together equalled our gratitude. Expecting the worst we slept with mittens, Balaclavas, and windproofs on. Next day, which was fine and calm, we devoted to climbing eastwards along the ridge to a small peak of about 16,500 feet. Apart from some heavy cornices, the ridge afforded an easy and enjoyable climb. Is it, by the way, a sign of decadence, old age, or merely sanity to couple enjoyment with ease? I like to think that it is sanity, for though in climbing there are moments of 'fearful joy' I believe that for most of us the enjoyment of difficulty and danger is largely retrospective.

So grand was the site of our camp that we were in no hurry to leave it, but just before sundown a few random gusts heralded the approach of another night of anxiety. With that prompt energy and decision which hitherto, when it was a question of going up, we had lacked, we packed and started down carrying everything. On the icy part we lowered the loads, rope's length by rope's length, until near the end Shipton's impatience got the better of his judgement. We were not so near the bottom as that. Our bulging rucksacks did stop, eventually, badly split, soaked in paraffin and lighter by the loss of several pounds of sugar. We made camp in the dark, the primus would not work, and we supped dryly on bread in frosty silence. The rucksack affair seemed an obvious topic of conversation, but one that only a very determined philosopher could have discussed dispassionately.

Such was the inglorious end of our first round with Bogdo. We climbed another small peak from the Gurban valley, but we had neither time, inclination, nor paraffin for an attempt by the north-east arête, the off-hand rejection of which we now bitterly regretted. As the fish that gets away is always the biggest, so the route one does not try is always the best. We returned to Urumchi by the main road south of the mountain on 28th July, and a week later, by a curious conjunction of circumstances and the American Consul's desire for ice, we were once more in the Gurban valley. The intervening week had been wondrously fine and hot and the north-east arête, which we eyed fondly and self-accusedly from Urumchi, was evidently in perfect condition. Shame, remorse, and self-respect all urged us to go back when the fleeting opportunity occurred.

By means of an American truck we reached the Kazak yurts in the Gurban valley on the second day, by which time the weather broke. Having dutifully hewn out from the Sud glacier five yak loads of ice and dispatched them, we went on. It was raining and blowing, and the mountain was well plastered with snow, so that there was no incentive but curiosity to urge us on. The prize, if it had ever been within reach, had been snatched away. From a camp by a desolate tarn near the foot of the West peak we spent a day of storm and sunshine climbing the rock ridge which leads to the col at the foot of the arête. We did not reach the col, but from high up the ridge we looked directly across a narrow ice-fall to the north side of the East peak. Since what I have so far written has shown our judgement to be unusually fallible it is perhaps gratuitous to record our opinion that given good conditions the East peak could be climbed from this side. And it is, I think, a less hazardous guess to say that it is not likely to be climbed from any other.

There were one or two very stiff engagements on the Chinese

Food Front to be fought before we were able to disengage in tolerably good order, our heads aching but unbowed, to begin the 1,000-mile trek to Kashgar. The truck in which we travelled deserves an honourable mention, being the survivor of two 30-cwt. Fords which Sir Eric Teichman drove from Peking to Kashgar in 1935. The trip took six days, long hard days, devoid of incident except for a display of the Pathan driver's luck or markmanship in killing, with two shots, two gazelle who unwisely loitered within 200 yards of the road.

In the first week of September I made a quick excursion to reconnoitre the north side of Chakragil. This 22,000-foot mountain is part of what Burrard and Hayden call the Muztagh Ata range which includes the mountain of that name (24,380 feet) and Kungur (25,150 feet). In 1947 we had seen Chakragil from the west whence an ascent looked easy, but that side was awkward to get at from Kashgar and Shipton did not wish to be away for more than a week. (It is a pity that this otherwise ideal post should be in touch with the outer world by wireless.) The north-east ridge of the mountain had been seen on another occasion by Shipton, and by that too, if one could get on to it, the mountain seemed climbable.

I therefore went to see this ridge and having got to a height of 14,000 feet on its north side I was puzzled by what I saw, or rather failed to see. That very considerable protuberance, Chakragil, was nowhere in sight. The long snow slope on which I stood appeared to run up unbroken to the main ridge, and half-right was a fine rock and ice cirque carrying a mean, squat snow bump. This queer impression I got was, I think, the result of a fresh and heavy fall of snow, for when we camped at the same spot a week later when the snow had gone we saw that my snow slope was in fact broken by a considerable glacier and that the squat bump was the summit and a very worthy one.

We had with us Gyalgen, a brother of Lhakpa, without his great belly and without his intelligence and drive; also a long, cadaverous Kirghiz whose recent prowess on a hill when after Ovis Poli had impressed Shipton not a little. We decided to take up one tent only, and therefore only one victim was required. Unluckily the lot fell on the Kirghiz. Having reached and crossed the upper glacier and surmounted a broken ice wall beyond it we found ourselves on easy snow leading to the ridge. Here we took over Gyalgen's load, sent him home and pushed on. The Kirghiz had been flying distress signals for some time and we had to carry his load for the last few hundred feet to our camp in a snow hollow at 17,000 feet.

None of us, I think, had a good night. The wind blew disturbingly, I had a bad headache, and when my companion greeted the unwelcome dawn with a pithy aphorism about the respective worth

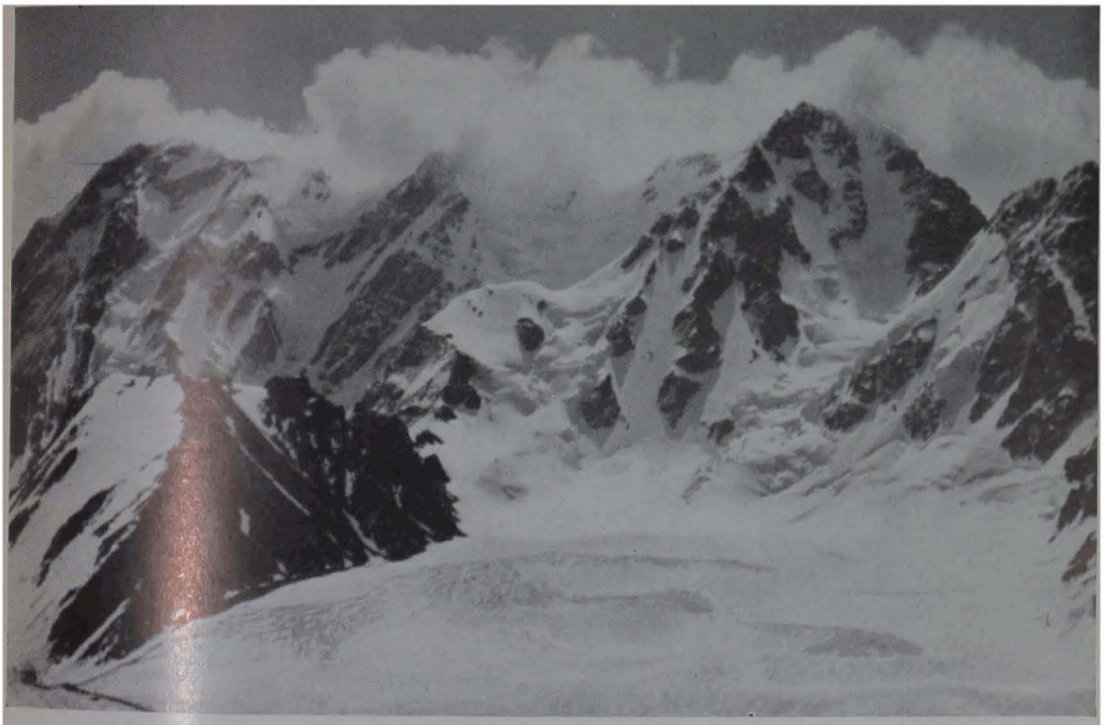
of the game and the candle, I concluded that in the night watches he, too, 'had been acquainted with sad misery'. As for the cadaverous Kirghiz, he was in a bad way. Having eaten nothing he had spent the night semi-recumbent, groaning, moaning, spitting. By morning he was helpless, but since there was only one tent we could not leave him behind. The tent at the 14,000-foot camp had been taken down by Gyalgen, so that if we took the Kirghiz down, as we must, the tent had to go too. In short it was all UP.

The sun shone, the snow was hard, so we climbed the remaining few hundred feet to the ridge for photography. The ridge stretched away alluringly to the distant summit: only one more camp would be needed, and there was no lack of camp sites. Personally, I should have liked another day to acclimatize, but another day would not have cured the troubles of the Kirghiz, except perhaps by killing him. He was spitting blood now and could barely stand, so that he accomplished most of the descent in a sitting position on the rope. At the 14,000-foot camp we put up the tent and left him there for a recovery squad to bring in while we, too readily I fear, responded to the call of the fleshpots at the yurts below. Next day much snow fell; perhaps we should not have got up after all.

The case of this Kirghiz was so strange that we had him medically examined. There seemed to be nothing abnormal about him, from which we learn that even a man who spends most of his life above 10,000 feet is not to be depended upon to go high.

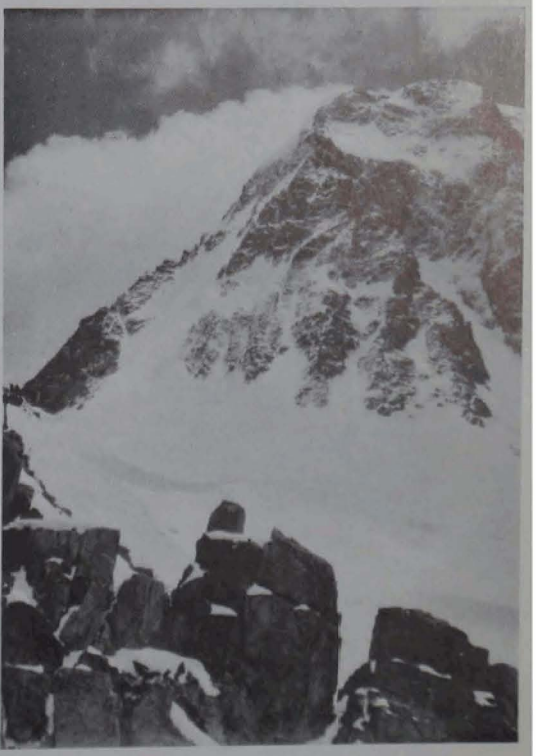
I encountered a less serious instance of the same thing on the way back to India. Having reached Misgar on the Hunza side of the Sinkiang frontier I thought I had followed the beaten track far enough. The previous year the same thought had occurred to me and had led me into trouble, but this year I determined to keep on the right side of the Hindu Kush, that is the Indian side, and make direct for Chitral without touching Gilgit. Carrying sugar, tea, flour, and nothing else, not even a tent, I went up the Chapursan nallah where I picked up two Wakhis as coolies or guides. (This nallah belongs to Hunza but is settled by Wakhis.) Our first obstacle was the 17,000-foot Chillinji pass. My two Wakhis, whose village was over 10,000 feet up, suffered severely from headache and lagged far behind whereas this time I was quite free of it, and consequently had all the work to do. Although it was mid-October and very cold, and no snow had fallen for weeks, the snow near the top of the pass would not support one.

Beyond the Chillinji nothing went right. I had assumed that my two guides knew the way, but this was a mistake which, like most of the big mistakes of life, was discovered too late. Then the weather broke and two days later when we were near the Karumbar water-



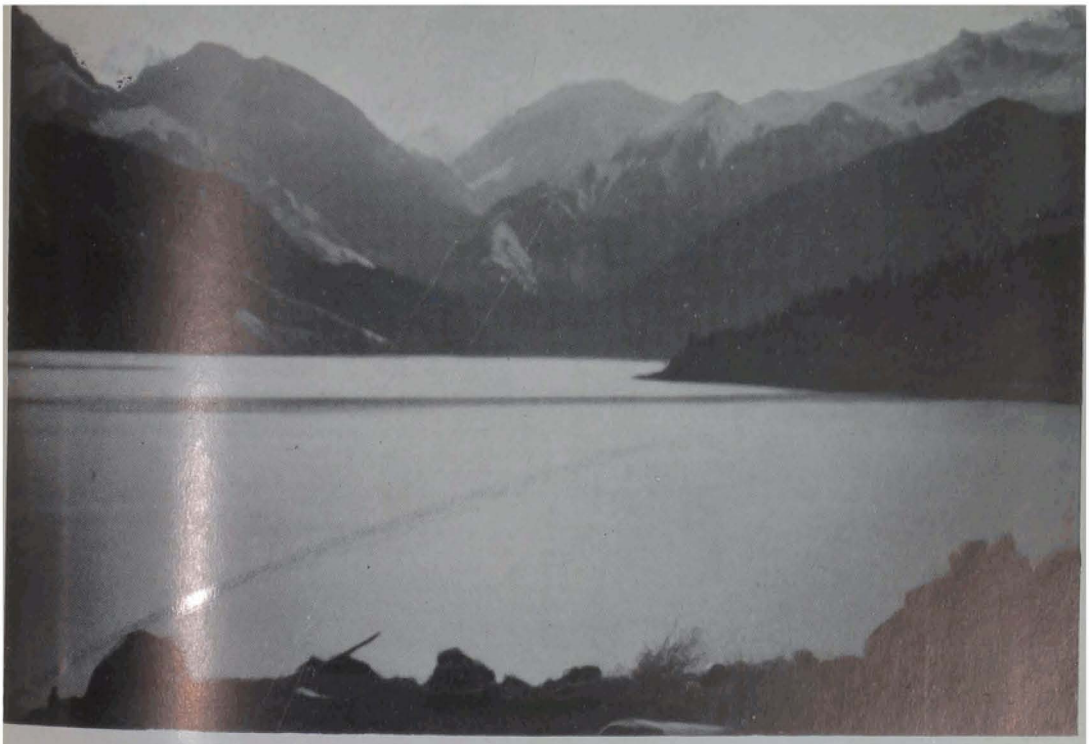
Bogdo Ola

Camp on east ridge and main summit



North arête and face of main peak from broken rock ridge. About 15,500 feet

Bogdo Ola from north-west



Lake near Urumchi (Tihwa). Bogdo Ola in the distance

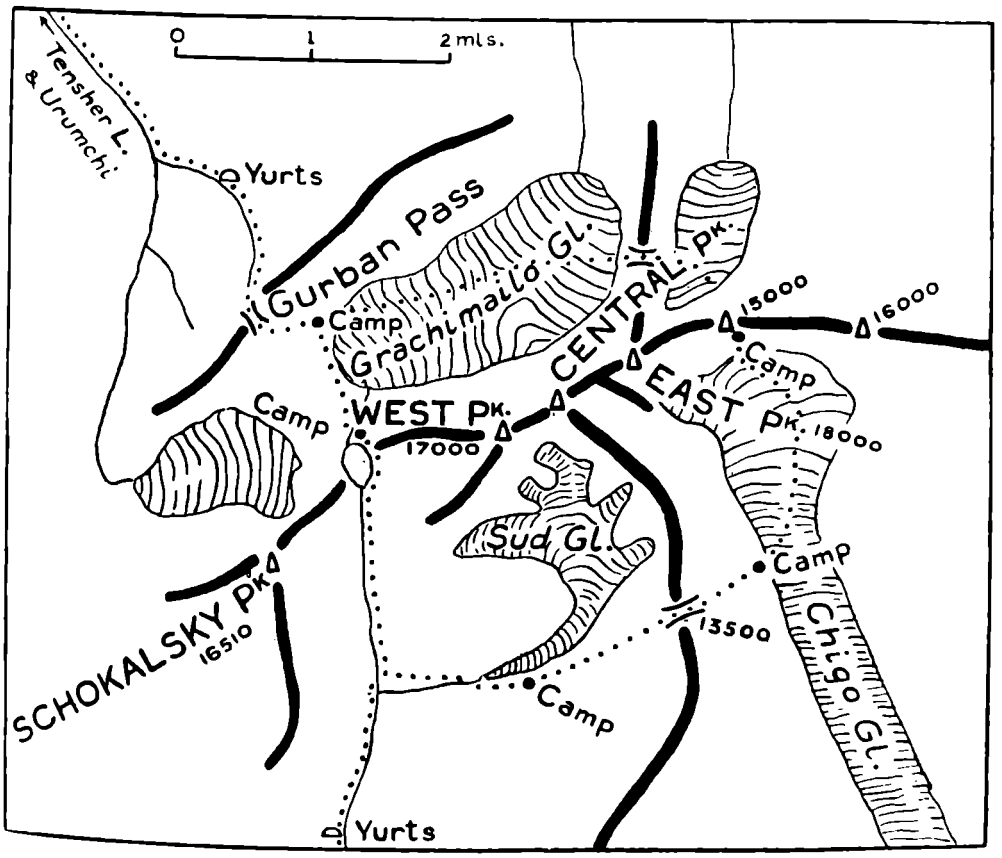
Bogdo Ola from Urumchi

Bogdo Ola across lake

shed and at about 13,000 feet a pall of snow hid the track and a pall of cloud extinguished all landmarks. It had been a tenuous track at best, made apparently by only one man (mounted) and his dog, on their way possibly to mow some distant upland meadow. In a trackless waste of soft deep snow, where visibility was poor and a shrewd wind blew, my two Wakhis sat down and wept. 'We shall all die' was the burthen of their song. Bowing to a malign fate, an act of homage to which I was now getting accustomed, I gave the word for retreat.

We plodded back down the rough Karumbar nallah to Imit where I was royally fed by the Rajah. Whatever we may have done or left undone in the past the fact remains that in those parts an Englishman is sure of a warm welcome. I had thoughts of rejoining my original route by doubling back over the Darkot pass, but on the Ishkuman pass (14,000 feet) there was much fresh snow, so I went down to Gupis and to the beaten track which I could no longer shun.

I reached Chitral on 4th November, thirty-five days out from Kashgar.



BOGDO OLA GROUP

THE SWISS GARHWAL EXPEDITION OF 1947

MME A. LOHNER, MM. A. ROCH, A. SUTTER, ERNST FEUZ

The Schweizerische Stiftung für Alpine Forschüngen have, most generously, permitted to us use the story of the Swiss Garhwal Expedition of 1947, and to make certain abridgements. The translation and adaptation of both French and German versions and of the maps and panorama were done by Barbara Tobin.—ED.

THE ORIGIN OF THE EXPEDITION

ERNST FEUZ

IT is to young Mme Annelies Lohner, a mountaineer of remarkable experience and stamina and a pupil of Gustave Hasler, that we owe the idea of this first Swiss post-war expedition to the Himalaya.

It was one day in March, at St. Moritz, during the last winter of the war; after several glorious days of mountaineering Mme Lohner was discussing plans for the summer with her guide, Alexandre Graven. She suggested: 'Well what about going to the Himalaya one day?' Graven jumped at the idea; usually so silent, he became eloquent; with shining eyes he surrendered to his enthusiasm. They immediately contacted André Roch and Alfred Sutter, and won over the Genevan mountaineer René Dittert. Each day brought the realization of their plans nearer.

It was agreed that the expedition's goal should be the south-west part of the Garhwal Himalaya, that is the Gangotri Region, in which are the sources of the Alaknanda, Mandakini, and Bhagirathi rivers that unite to form the sacred Ganges. The project was considerably strengthened by observations made by Marcel Kurz in his writings on the Himalaya. Thanks to Marco Pallis's Expedition in 1933, and the Austrian Expedition led by Professor Schwarzgruber in 1938, we found other valuable information as to the possibilities offered by most of the peaks. Besides these there were Roch's own experiences in 1939, when he led an expedition to the neighbourhood.

By strictly limiting the aims of our expedition we avoided falling under the spell of trying the twenty-six thousanders which, up till now, has brought disillusionment to many great climbers. We were content to try twenty thousanders, and liked to think we were disciplining ourselves by renouncing all excessive ambitions.

And now, may I introduce to you the men, who with Mme Lohner, the inspiration of the expedition, formed the team.

André Roch, engineer-attaché to the Institute of Research on Snow and Avalanches at Weissfluhjoch, is also a guide, editor of this journal[1] and author. He is one of our greatest Alpinists and was chosen to lead the expedition. Although he discussed all important decisions with his friends he could be relied on to make his own decisions if need be.

Alfred Sutter is among those mountaineers who distinguish themselves less by famous and romantic first ascents than by the importance with which they regard the essential value of mountaineering and its development. Like Alexandre Graven he has climbed every mountain in the Alps over 13,000 feet, amongst others the north face of the Matterhorn and the Lauper route of the Eiger. The attractions of the Himalaya were greatly enhanced for him by the prospect of hunting wild game.

René Dittert, who started his alpine career climbing trees, is among the small number of mountaineers who, even in 1939, were considered capable of taking part in an expedition in the Himalaya. This cheerful, congenial Genevan distinguished himself and contributed greatly to the success of the whole expedition, his first to the Himalayas.

There can be no mountain lover who has not heard of Alexandre Graven. Famous guide at Zermatt, and father of eight children, he passed through the school of the greatest of our mountain climbers. Tall and hardy as a mountain pine, his entire life is dedicated to mountaineering, indeed his profession is his vocation. I once asked him for a résumé of his life; his reply was: 'The ice-axe is not a pen.'

I must admit that the Fondation Suisse pour l'Exploration Alpine when accepting the patronage of the expedition was not exactly eager that a woman should be included. We hesitated to take the responsibility of exposing her to danger and fatigue which would require great stamina for months on end. However, having conscientiously studied the problem from every angle we concluded that in the main there was little risk. We are indeed happy that the success of the expedition proved us right.

The day before leaving, the Council of the Fondation Suisse, together with the members of the expedition and their families, met for a farewell party at Zurich. On the 7th May the Swissair plane took off from Dubendorf, and at Amsterdam the travellers chartered a K.L.M. plane which landed them in India two days later. According to plan they went to Mussoorie, at the foot of the Himalayas, where they joined André Roch who had gone on in advance to choose the Sherpas at Darjeeling, and make the final arrangements.

[1] *Montagnes du Monde* in which this article was first published.

TOWARDS THE HIMALAYA

MME LOHNER

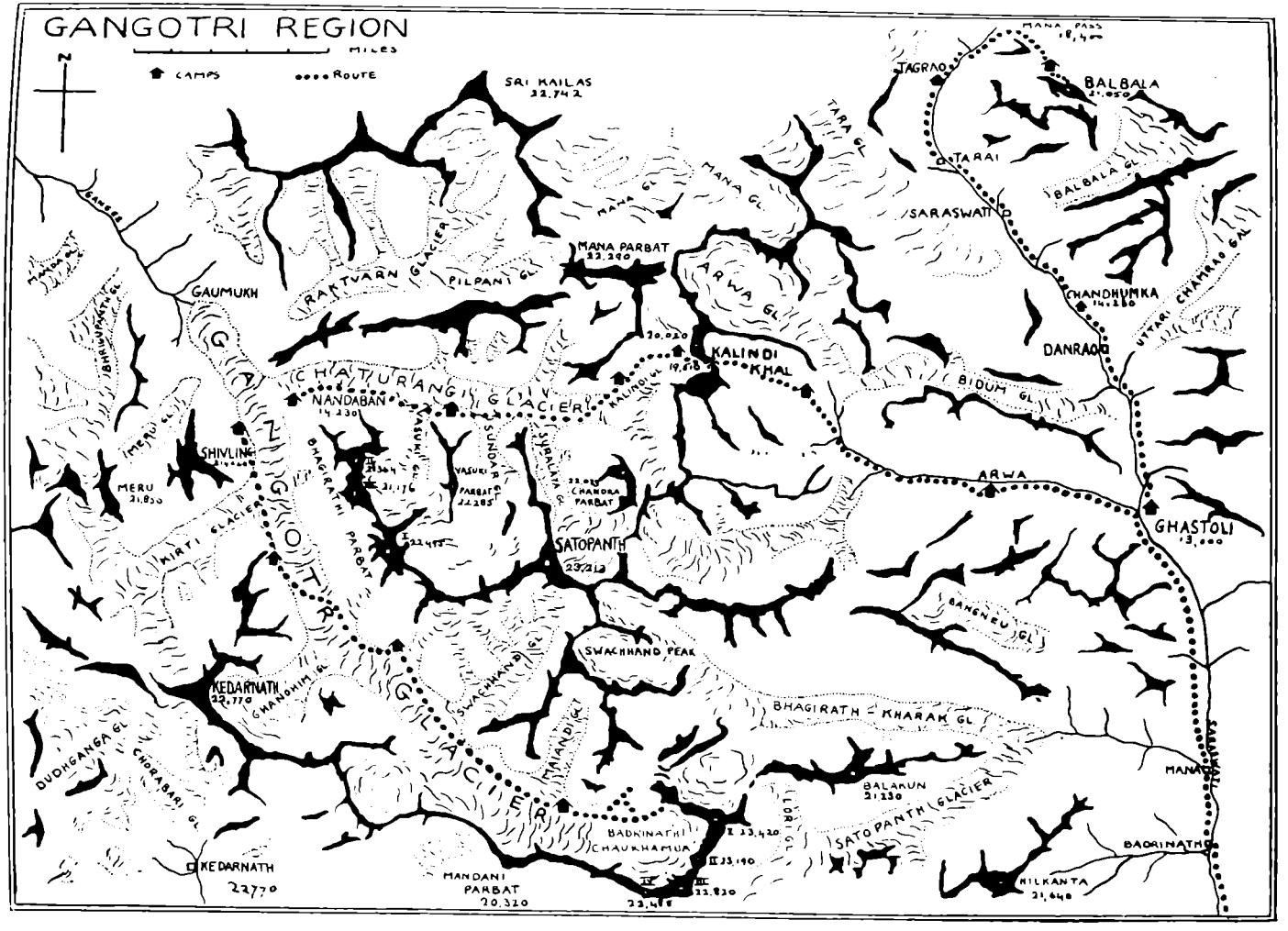
We left Mussoorie on Whit Monday, 26th May, to start the 165-mile-long trek to our proposed Base Camp on the Gangotri glacier. I was in the first group with Sutter, Graven, twenty coolies and four Sherpas, while Dittert, Rahul the Indian liaison officer, eighty-four coolies, and four Sherpas were to follow next day. We intended to join up at Uttarkashi. Our route seemed to me to have come straight out of a dream. Far from civilization, dependent only upon ourselves, we had to accept every whim of the broken terrain, where forests of birch, dried up river-beds bordered with cactus, small villages, and rice-fields followed each other in quick succession; at times we followed narrow paths along ravines; often small rivers forced us to make long detours; we learnt patience in a country which has absolutely no idea of time.

Our Sherpas were all excellent. Tenzing, my man, was an absolute gem. Neat and full of initiative, he spoilt me dreadfully. Hardly had we arrived than I found my bedding roll and washing water laid out ready, and my box transformed into an elegant wash-stand. He was the only Sherpa who could speak English and he had a wife and two daughters whose photos he always carried on him in a small frame. He had already been to Camp III on Mount Everest that year in company with an English officer and some porters, and even up to Camp VI with previous expeditions.

On 30th May, about an hour from Dharasu in the Bhagirathi valley, we could see snow peaks for the first time, and on the 31st we arrived at Uttarkashi where we rushed to the Post Office, the first since Mussoorie, and the last one on our route.

Of all the places through which we passed Uttarkashi is the only one of any importance and is composed almost entirely of temples. Our route up the valley was the age-old pilgrim track, for the Bhagirathi is one of the sources of the sacred river Ganges, and therefore many pious Hindus congregate at Uttarkashi. We met strange and interesting people, rich and poor, alone and in parties, mostly over forty years old, and all with the same desire to bathe in the Ganges, drink the water, and perhaps—the supreme privilege—to die on its banks, for according to their religion, those who die on the banks of the Bhagirathi are certain to be admitted to paradise.

Upstream the nights became fresher, but the heat of the days always disturbed us. The innumerable flies that buzzed around us during meals were particularly annoying. At times the swarms were so thick that you could no longer see the crockery, and the cups


GANGOTRI REGION
MILES
CAMPS
ROUTE
N
SRI KAILAS 22,742
MANA PASS 18,400
TAGRAO
BALBALA 21,050
TARAI
BALBALA GL
SARASWATI
TARA GL
MANA GL
MANA PARBAT 23,360
ARWA GL
CHANDHUMKA 14,250
UTTARI CHAMRAO GL
DANRAO
KALINDI KHAL 20,020
KALINDI GL 19,510
BIDUH GL
GAUMUKH
BHRIGUPANTH GL
BHRIGUPANTH 21,772
RANTVARN GLACIER
PILPANI GL
CHATURANGI GLACIER
NANDABAN 14,230
SHIVLING 21,466
MERU 21,850
KIRTI GLACIER
BHAGIRATHI PARBAT
VASUKI PARBAT 22,285
SATOPANTH 23,213
CHANDA PARBAT
ARWA
GHASTOLI 13,000
BANGNEU GL
SWACHHAND PEAK
KEDARNATH 22,770
GHANOHIM GL
SWACHHAND GL
BHAGIRATH KHARAK GL
DUDHGANGA GL
CHORABARI GL
KEDARNATH 22770
MANDANI GLACIER
MANDANI PARBAT 20,320
BADRINATH CHAUKHAMBA
BALARUN 21,230
SATOPANTH GLACIER
BADRINATH
NILKANTA 21,640

were a black writhing mass. Luckily they disappeared at night; the fleas and bugs that tormented us in our sleeping-bags were definitely preferable.

On 4th June we reached Harsil, to my mind the most interesting place we visited. It is surrounded by magnificent mountains and inhabited only in summer. The Tibetans bring salt here with their flocks of sheep and return home laden with rice and peas. We rested a day in an ideal camp on a broad meadow beneath apple-trees. The men were completely hypnotized by the marvellous peaks, similar to those of Bregaglia or the Aiguilles de Chamonix, but so much higher.

We had to stay on a second day at Harsil as we were changing coolies and this is always a very slow business, so we had time to go and buy flour and sugar, walk in the village, and take photos. We reached Gangotri, the goal of the pilgrims, on the 8th June. Here again there were numerous temples, and the inhabitants were practically all pilgrims. Only the most pious spend the winter there. There it was that we met a yogi who never speaks and lives naked in a small wooden hut without even a bed. Graven, Sutter, and I went to see him. He was extremely courteous and gestured to us to sit down, offering us dates and seating himself in the yogis' own particular position. We asked him if he lived naked during the winter too, and he nodded 'yes'. It is incredible what strength of will can do: beside him we felt humble and weak. We left him a little later and thanked him for his hospitality, but he merely pointed to the sky whither we should direct our gratitude. Unfortunately we were not allowed to photograph him.

At Gangotri, too, we were surprised how many Hindus came to see us, having learnt of our visit from the papers. They are indeed a likeable and congenial people and we were most interested in their culture.

The road ended at Gangotri, and a narrow path, cut by streams and landslips, followed the valley. It was a region inhabited by bears, and one day we found fresh tracks hardly 20 paces from our camp. Sutter, the ardent hunter, was most excited. During the march he had shot many pigeon and deer, to provide our fresh meat.

On 10th June we arrived at Gaumukh, where the infant Bhagirathi emerges from the snout of the glacier, and although the Ganges has no sacred meaning for me I was very impressed at finding myself at the spot considered most sacred by the Hindu.

On the 11th we reached the site chosen by Roch for our Base Camp, on the right bank of the Gangotri glacier at about 14,000 feet, near a moraine in a grassy meadow with a little stream. We installed ourselves as comfortably as possible and settled down to acclimatize.

THE FIRST ASSAULTS ON KEDARNATH

ANDRÉ ROCH

The highest peaks round the Gangotri glacier are Chaukhamba, 23,420 feet, Satopanth, 23,213 feet, Kedarnath, 22,770 feet, and Sri Kailas, 22,740 feet. Of these, the only one that had been climbed was Sri Kailas, conquered by the Austrian Expedition of 1938 led by Professor Schwarzgruber.

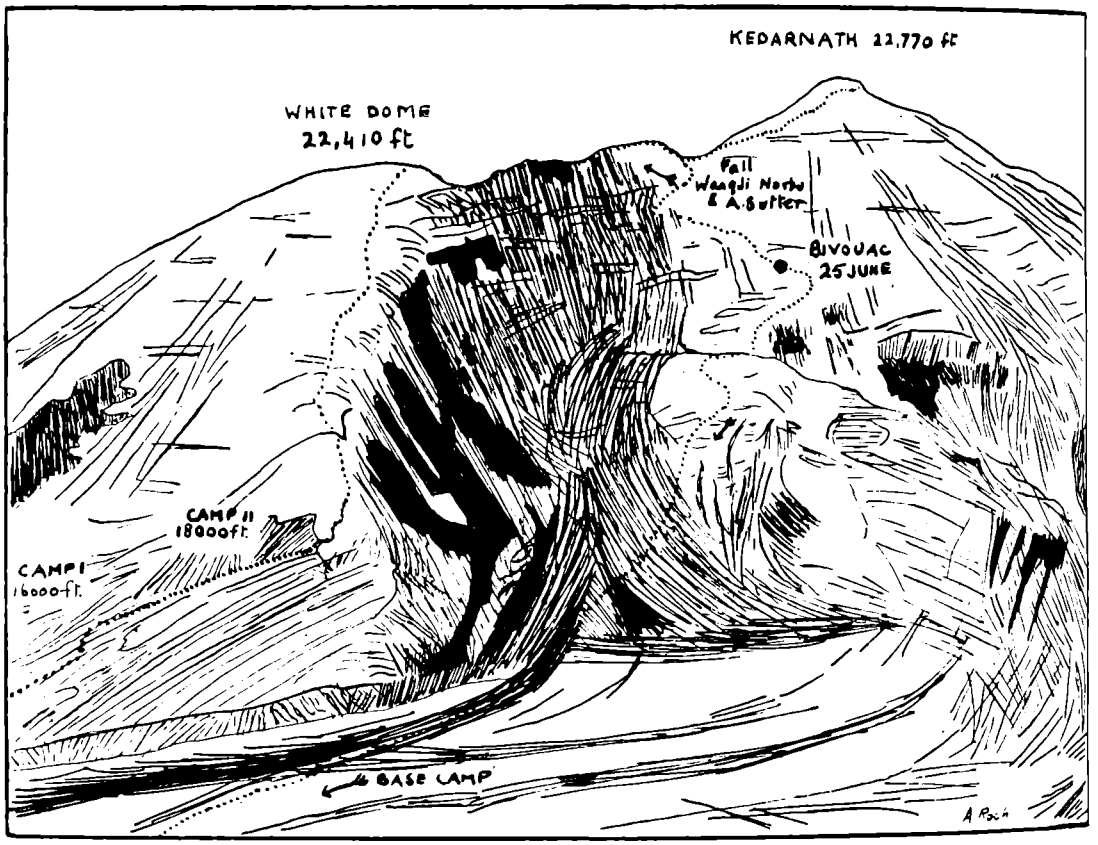
Kedarnath, our first objective, is a large peak which appears to be easily accessible. It lay about 10 miles south of our Base Camp from where it could be reached without difficulty across moraines.

After three glorious days at the Base Camp, painting, taking photographs, and idling, we decided to install a camp at the foot of Kedarnath. I had already climbed the flanks of Shivling to inspect the mountain we hoped to conquer, and had planned our best route, and the sites for our camps.

We left on 14th June with ten Sherpas, and after four hours' walk over moraines we pitched our tents on a broad meadow at the foot of the enormous mountain which, from there, looked like a gigantic white dome. We had the impression that it was a mere three or four hours' climb to the summit; a false impression indeed, for the mountains are double the height of our Alps, and the lack of oxygen in the air renders one incapable of such rapid progress. Besides, the first peak is only an outlier and Kedarnath itself is a mile farther on and some 360 feet higher. A ridge, at first rocky, but soon snow-covered, connects its two peaks. The north-west slopes are seamed by immense glaciers for the first 7,000 feet.

The following day the weather was unpleasant, so we rested. During the night it snowed, and the tents had to be shaken continually to prevent them from collapsing. Our first camp was too low, so on the 16th we packed up and climbed a further 600 feet to establish ourselves on the last of the rocks at the foot of the névé.

Early on 17th June, though the weather was still uncertain, we left to establish Camp II as high as possible on the slopes of the great white dome. At first the going was easy, but deep snow soon made progress more difficult until finally, at 2 o'clock, we stopped exhausted near an overhanging rock at about 20,000 feet, beneath which we decided to pitch the tents. We had to cut steps to the site which was an excellent one, being well sheltered from avalanches and warmed by the afternoon sun. For three hours the Sherpas worked to clear away the blocks of granite that covered the platform. As I was anxious to get a really good camp here I helped them and caught a chill for I had perspired a good deal during the ascent.


KEDARNATH 22,770 ft
WHITE DOME
22,410 ft
Fall
Wangji Norbu
& A. Sutter
BIVOUAC
25 JUNE
CAMP II
18000 ft.
CAMP I
16000 ft.
BASE CAMP

All night I was delirious and kept my friends awake, so the following day, although the weather was glorious, we decided to beat a retreat and descend to a lower altitude.

A week later, on 23rd June, after a good rest, we again took the path across the moraines and this time climbed directly to Camp I. That evening I made tracks in the melting névé to facilitate our climb the following morning in frozen snow. At dawn we climbed rapidly, and by midday we reached the overhanging rock which we christened the 'Sentinel Rouge' after the large rock on the east face of Mont Blanc.

We determined to try the ascent to the summit, starting at 4 o'clock on the 25th, but actually left camp an hour behind schedule. We started up the steep slope leading to the great dome, but the cold was so intense that we congratulated ourselves on the lost hour. The snow, crusted on the surface, became ever deeper as we climbed, the crust breaking continually and making progress extremely slow. To increase our chances I arranged three ropes, so that some slight difficulty should not hold up the rest of the party. Sutter roped up with Sirdar Wangdi Norbu, Head Sherpa; Alexandre Graven with Ang Dawa, an excellent climber; Dittert and I with Ang Norbu, a young man, but strong and agile as a bear. We gained height very slowly and the slope seemed to grow longer as we climbed, but we made good progress and by 10 o'clock had reached the top of the large snow dome (22,410 feet). We were cheerful and optimistic, for the summit of Kedarnath rose, sparkling, quite near at hand and only 360 feet above us. We took films and photographs and then started off along the ridge, the triumphal road to the summit. To the left snow-fluted precipices dropped a sheer 7,000 feet. To the right slopes looked over the enormous glacier which, had it been in the Alps, would have made a unique ski run.

A short icy drop where we had to put on our crampons took us to the semi-rocky, semi-corniced ridge along which we advanced with great difficulty. Graven led calmly and unhesitatingly, the rest of us spread out behind him. Hours passed, and progress was slow. The summit seemed to be receding. At last the rocky part was behind us and there remained only the sharp, corniced arête. To avoid the cornices we had to cut into the right of the ridge. Graven was still leading, Dittert, Ang Norbu, and I followed, while Sutter and Wangdi Norbu brought up the rear. It was about 1.30 and I had great hopes of success. But then the mountain gods struck. We heard Wangdi cry 'Sahib' and what we then saw actually took place in a fraction of a second. Wangdi had become entangled with his crampons; he had fallen forward, and was slipping faster and faster down the icy slope of 50°. Hearing his cry Sutter thrust the shaft of his

ice-axe hard into the snow and belayed. The rope tautened and Wangdi swung like a pendulum across the ice. For a moment we thought that Sutter had checked his fall, but the snow gave way and both men hurtled downwards at an ever increasing speed. We were terrified. The steep icy slope was 700 or 800 feet long and terminated in a high wall overlooking a considerably less steep slope of soft snow into which the two men somersaulted and stopped after a final ricochet of 30 feet or so. Graven had turned his head away to avoid seeing the catastrophe, but I had followed the fall in the minutest detail and realized the magnitude of the disaster. We could hardly believe it when Sutter stood up, evidently only slightly hurt, and made signs to us with his arms. But Wangdi did not rise, a broken leg, a fractured skull—we could not bear to think of what might have happened.

Before we could get down to our unfortunate companions we had to finish the traverse which took us over an hour and a half, and we estimated that from here we could have reached the summit in little more than an hour. Of course climbing farther could not be thought of and we rejoined our comrades. Sutter had only scraped his hands and face, but Wangdi had broken his left ankle, the point of a crampon had dug deep into his right knee, and his skull was bleeding. We would have to drag him down; but the question was how to plan the descent. We could not possibly climb to the ridge again; the only possible hope was to come down by the big ice-fall to the north-west. We gave the poor man a morphia injection to lessen the pain and reorganized. I took one of the Sherpas' loads and, with Sutter and Ang Norbu, descended the slope obliquely to the left so as to join a large couloir running down the centre of the ice-fall. The snow was deep, the descent difficult, and it was already 4 o'clock in the afternoon. Ang Dawa, Graven, and Dittert harnessed themselves to Wangdi and dragged him as they descended—a most exhausting procedure. They would advance perhaps 20 yards and then collapse in the snow to get their breath. After more than an hour we reached the couloir where the direct descent was much less tiring. We soon had to leave the centre of the couloir for the sides were sheer ice, and went off to the left in new fields of deep, crusted snow. Night approached, our strength was failing, and we were still well over 20,000 feet. After crossing a crevasse we decided to bivouac, but that particular crevasse offered no shelter whatsoever and we were forced to go on. We could just enter the next one, but it was dangerous to go too far in for the roof was made of enormous blocks of ice which threatened to collapse.

We had to leave Wangdi on the snow bridge over the crevasse. We ourselves had no strength left to build an igloo, dig a cave, or

even find a better crevasse. It was most important to be able to find shelter of some sort, for while outside it was between 15 and 20 degrees below zero centigrade, several yards inside the ice the temperature stayed near zero, which made an appreciable difference. We cut a seat in the ice and prepared to spend the long hours of the night side by side, rubbing our knees and feet, fighting against the cold. The night was indeed long and the cold seemed to get more and more bitter. At midnight the moon illuminated our shelter, then all was dark again until 3 o'clock when the light of day began feebly to illuminate the lips of the crevasse.

We left at 4 o'clock. We had to leave Wangdi telling him that we would return when we had found a way down. He was dreadfully thirsty, as indeed we all were. We turned right towards the centre of the couloir, but here it was still too icy and would have taken too long, to say nothing of the danger. We tried to the left again, descending to an icy promontory from where we could see how to proceed. The descent became easier, the snow improved, and towards 7 o'clock we approached the side moraines. The Sherpas came to meet us and we equipped three of them—Thundu, Pasang Urgen, and Arjeeba—to rescue Wangdi. They had our tracks to follow and we hoped they would be able to reach the wounded man, give him something to drink and carry him down.

Utterly exhausted we reached Camp I and went to bed. It was 9 o'clock, and we slept the whole morning. At 1.30 we had bad news. The Sherpas had returned, without being able to reach Wangdi, for the snow had melted with the sun, and they had been frightened by the crevasses. Wangdi, with a wounded skull and a broken leg lay at 20,000 feet alone, without provisions and without drink. It would have been useless to start so late in the afternoon, so we sent the Sherpas to the Base Camp to ask for reinforcements and medicines. At 7 o'clock Tenzing, our best man, arrived and we prepared for an early start.

At 5 o'clock next morning we started off on three ropes to go to Wangdi's rescue. The night had been warmer and it had snowed a bit. We hoped and believed that Wangdi was still alive. Dittert and I had each taken two tablets of Orthodrine, a drug similar to the Pervitine that German airmen took to keep going for twenty-four hours or more at a time.

Dittert, Tenzing, and Ang Norbu led like men possessed; in three hours they reached Wangdi. The meeting was tragic. Wangdi had cut his throat with his knife which, covered with blood, was stuck in the snow at his side. He told us later that he had seen three men coming to fetch him, but that, seeing them turn back, he had thought himself abandoned. He also heard his wife's voice and

thought he was dying of thirst. He decided to end his life as quickly as possible so tried to pierce his heart. Being unsuccessful he tried to cut his throat. His neck and chest were covered with dried blood when we found him, but fortunately he had missed the artery and had only succeeded in making a large gash like a second gaping mouth in the middle of his throat.

The second rope consisted of Braham, our liaison officer, Ang Dawa, and Angtensing, while Arjeeba, Thundu, Ghatuk (a porter from Harsil), and I formed the third rope. My idea was to avoid the traverse by clearing a slide in the ice, and to lower Wangdi down the 80 yards. We cut for several hours and I made a belay at the tope with ice-axes, then we went on to meet the first party. They had taken a long time preparing the wounded man and fastening him in such a way as to be able to drag him fairly easily along the snow. At last all was ready and we started off. When we came to the slope I tied the ropes end to end and Wangdi slid, like a package, down to Dittert who was waiting to receive him. The Sherpas were then shepherded down and the rest of the descent brought no difficulties. We harnessed ourselves to the wounded man like dogs to an Eskimo sledge, three of us in front, two at the side for traversing, and four behind to hold him back. The Sherpas decided to carry the wounded man down to the Base Camp and arrived at 7.30—a really magnificent effort. Dittert and I were so exhausted that we decided to stay at Camp I which had been moved down to its original site.

The following morning we arrived at the Base Camp about 10 o'clock and found our poor Wangdi in a pitiful state. We dressed his wounds, put his leg in plaster, cut his hair to disinfect his skull and sewed up his throat.

Next day we found that the plaster was not holding so we cut it and put on another which seemed better. The wound made in his right knee by the crampon started a bad infection; we put on compresses of acetate, alumina, and Cibazol, but the swelling did not subside and we were at a loss as to whether we should lance the knee or leave it as it was. The swelling was enormous and the pain by this time unbearable. One of the Sherpas grew bold and squeezed the joint with both hands, despite the patient's screams, until the knee was empty when we applied more compresses. Every morning we spent at least a couple of hours with the wounded man, washing, disinfecting, and dressing his wounds with great care. How I envy those doctors who can put their patients to sleep and have everything they want to hand. We did our best and hoped that we would soon be able to have Wangdi transported to the hospital, at Dehra Dun, nearly 500 miles away. He had already made considerable progress

and was eventually restored to his wife and two children. We had but narrowly escaped the wrath of the mountain gods, and we were indeed fortunate to be able to wrest Wangdi from the icy grasp of Kedarnath.[1]

KEDARNATH—THE FINAL ASSAULT

ALFRED SUTTER

Everything was ready for our start next day. The fate of Kedarnath hung in the balance. Rucksacks were already full to bursting. We wrote postcards . . . perhaps the last. Graven extemporized as a hairdresser and cut our bushy hair with the skill of a professional. Dittert acted as waiter and competently served us a rich hors d'œuvre. Roch had quite recovered his spirits. Only Mme Lohner was disappointed because she could not come with us, but Kedarnath demands great stamina and we could not praise her enough for her wise decision. Mr. Braham, our English companion, decided to accompany us part of the way.

We started off on 9th July at exactly 8 o'clock, heavily laden. The weather was far from encouraging; a gentle breeze was blowing and the landscape was veiled by the drizzling rain. The tracks of our first ascent were clearly visible, and we reached Camp II at 1.45 where Tenzing proudly brandished a bottle of cognac which he had brought for us. By then the wind had dropped and it was so hot that I could saunter round the camp in my bare feet. We had our supper outside, and stayed chatting until darkness chased us into the tents.

In spite of the altitude it was fairly warm at dawn on the 10th. We again started off along the ridge and then crossed a crusted snow-field which was perfect going. During the last part of the route to Camp III, however, we had to cut steps. As I could barely use one of my hands I had a certain amount of difficulty crossing the crevasses. At 12.30 we reached Camp III. Roch and Dittert, thinking they had not done enough, started to cut steps in preparation

[1] Sherpa Wangdi Norbu has suffered severely at the hands of the Himalayas, for his indomitable spirit has brought him back to the mountains again and again. He has been on at least ten major expeditions, and accompanied the late Frank Smythe in his wanderings in the Bhyundar valley. In his book *The Valley of Flowers*, Smythe wrote most highly of him, both as a Sherpa and as a mountaineer. The incident related above is his third major misfortune. On Kangchenjunga (under the name of Ondi) he fell into a crevasse and was not found for over three hours. Later, on Everest in 1933, he fell ill with pneumonia and was taken down to a lower altitude without hope of recovery. But within a month he was back at Base Camp begging for a load to take up to a higher camp.—ED.

for the next day. It was still warm and the water was trickling down the ice. During the afternoon the weather worsened. Thick dark clouds hung over the flanks and the air seemed to get heavier and heavier. Angtenzing and the shikari returned to Camp II. We slept in the tent; Graven alone preferred sleeping in the open air.

What of to-morrow? The interminable waiting set our nerves on edge. Ang Dawa and Ang Norbu were rather anxious about making the final assault with us, for superstitious fear made them hesitate to return to the scene of the accident, but there was a gleam of determination in Tenzing's eyes.

During the night we left the flap of the tent open so that we could breathe the rarefied air more easily. I made myself as comfortable as possible and a mild drug soon sent me to the world of dreams.

The following morning, on opening my eyes, I saw a light snow scurry. Flakes were falling in Graven's dark hair as he lay sleeping at my side. The weather was hardly encouraging. Blankets of mist covered the valleys and on the heights dark clouds were gathering, but nothing could blunt our determination and we left at 6 o'clock, starting off on firm snow. A bitter south-east wind was chasing the mist over the snow-fields and the temperature fell sharply. Our feet got steadily colder but our hands remained quite warm in their fur gloves. At times a really violent gust of wind would uncover the sun. We panted like plough horses and left deep tracks behind us in the soft snow. At 10.10 we reached the top of the dome and the ridge leading to the summit. Mr. Braham, who had decided not to attempt the long traverse, started back with all the Sherpas except Tenzing. They soon disappeared into the mists.

We could see very little, but from time to time a peak would be unveiled only to disappear again behind the floating clouds.

After an hour's rest we went on. This time Graven took the lead on the rocky part of the ridge. I was on his rope, and Roch, Dittert, and Tenzing formed the second rope. The rocks were covered with fresh snow. My sore fingers made every difficult passage, where it was a case of clinging to handholds, extremely arduous.

Graven and I crossed the last rock to join the snowy part of the ridge an hour later; there Roch took the lead. We had not as yet come to the point reached on the previous assault. To the right a steep snow- and ice-covered slope disappeared into the mists below; to the left a granite wall fell perpendicularly into space. The whole length of the arête was patterned with overhanging cornices which demanded somewhat acrobatic feats from us, roped together as we were.

At last we reached the exact place where, on 25th June, the accident had occurred. There was no particular difficulty, but some internal impulse threatened to shake me off my balance, and I had to force my trembling legs to tread firmly in the steps. I reassured myself further by thrusting in my ice-axe which, it is true, hardly found a hold in the soft snow. And we went on. Graven had sensed my uncertainty and, with fatherly solicitude, he reassured me by keeping very close. Without exchanging a single word I knew that not one of my movements escaped him, and I entrusted myself entirely to his safe keeping.

He and I stayed near the cornices while Roch continued along the face. For each length of the rope Graven cut about fourteen steps, and then I followed him. The snow froze the ropes and every time that we had to pull on them our fingers became more numbed by the cold. The bandages started to come undone under my gloves and my wounds started to throb again.

Despite his difficult stance Graven went on cutting. From time to time the solemn stillness was broken by the thunder of falling rocks and the rumbling of the glacier. We came to a short drop where Roch and Graven prepared a rappel. Tenzing and Roch went down first. They had barely undone the rope when they sunk waist-deep into the snow. They got out again quickly and looked back in surprise at the black hole which had tried to engulf them.

At last we joined up on the col. It was still quite a way to the last slope that leads to the summit. The sun kept peeping through the mist, and the snow-flakes melted as soon as they fell, damping our clothes. The summit itself kept appearing from behind the wandering clouds and seemed so near that we felt we could reach out and touch it. It was a long time since we had seen the other giants of Gangotri. My white cap and dark glasses had been lost during the accident, and my green hunting-hat did not protect me properly from the hard light which shone pitilessly and seemed to stab right through me.

About a hundred yards ahead of us our companions were crouched in the snow, pulling provisions from their rucksacks. They were still resting when we succeeded in dragging ourselves to them. We arrived with throats as dry and as hard as leather, but Graven prepared a mouthful of coffee for each of us and Dittert still had a little tea left in his thermos.

Then Tenzing, sinking in deeply at every step, attacked the slope to the summit. I took nothing with me in my rucksack except my crampons. Even the cinematographic apparatus was given a rest for nothing could have been filmed in the thick mist. Luckily a refreshing wind arose. According to the map we had a further 500 feet

to climb, Tenzing still in the lead. I wondered where the man drew his strength from and tried to catch up with him, but he still kept well ahead. Finally, Dittert's voice, which even here had not lost its strength, announced that we had only 150 feet to go.

Just below the summit yawned a last large crevasse; Tenzing went round it to the right. In front of us rose the 'Arc de Triomphe' —a snow bridge several metres high—but we all avoided it respectfully. Several yards below the summit of Kedarnath those on the first rope stopped. Our good friends wanted to take the last steps to the top in our company.

We were there. At 5 o'clock we reached the highest point of Kedarnath. I felt the hairy beards of my friends on my face; we exchanged congratulations, and our enthusiastic shouts echoed in the air. We were overwhelmed with joy and felt that we were standing on the roof of the world.

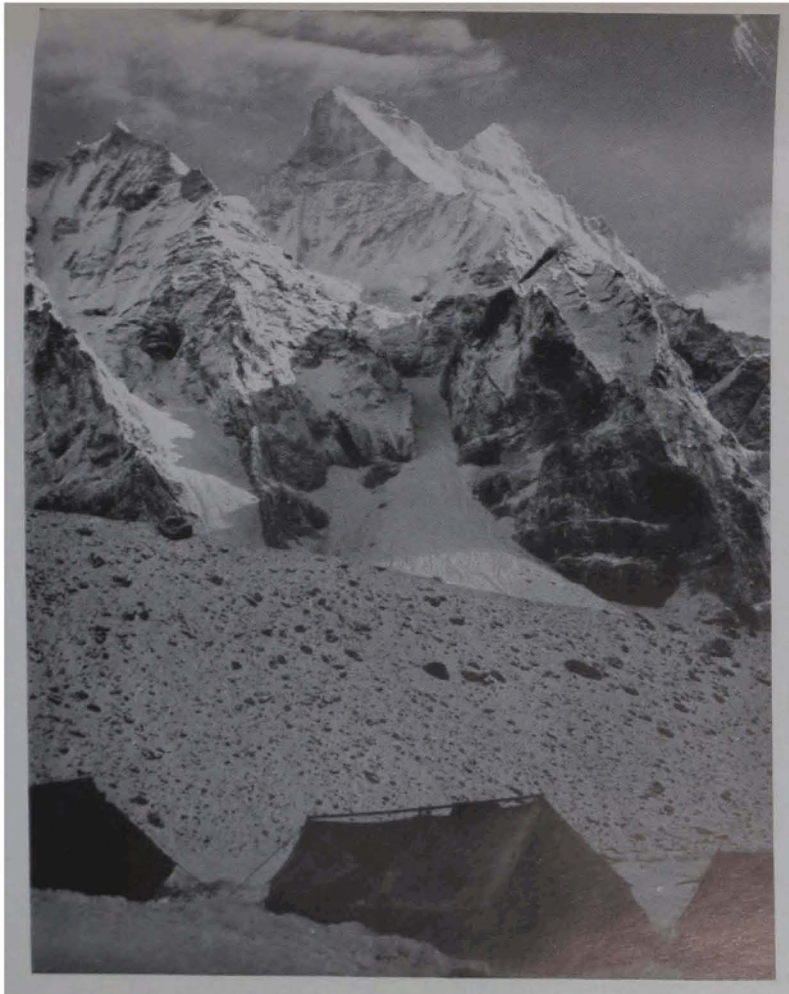
In no time all the difficulties and dangers of the ascent were forgotten. Only the present counted, and we felt like crying out with the poet: 'Verweile doch, du bist so schön!' The 11th July was the day we conquered Kedarnath. Henceforth it will shine in letters of gold in the diary of our ascents.

The wonderful panorama we had hoped for was denied us, but from time to time phantom-like peaks would pierce the wisps of mist, bow to us and then disappear, while on the horizon an archway of clouds was most beautifully illuminated by the glory of the setting sun. The centre was quite dark, but as the clouds thinned towards the edges, the sun's rays shone through in all the shades of turtle-dove grey, pink, and silver—and below was the yellow mist of rain.

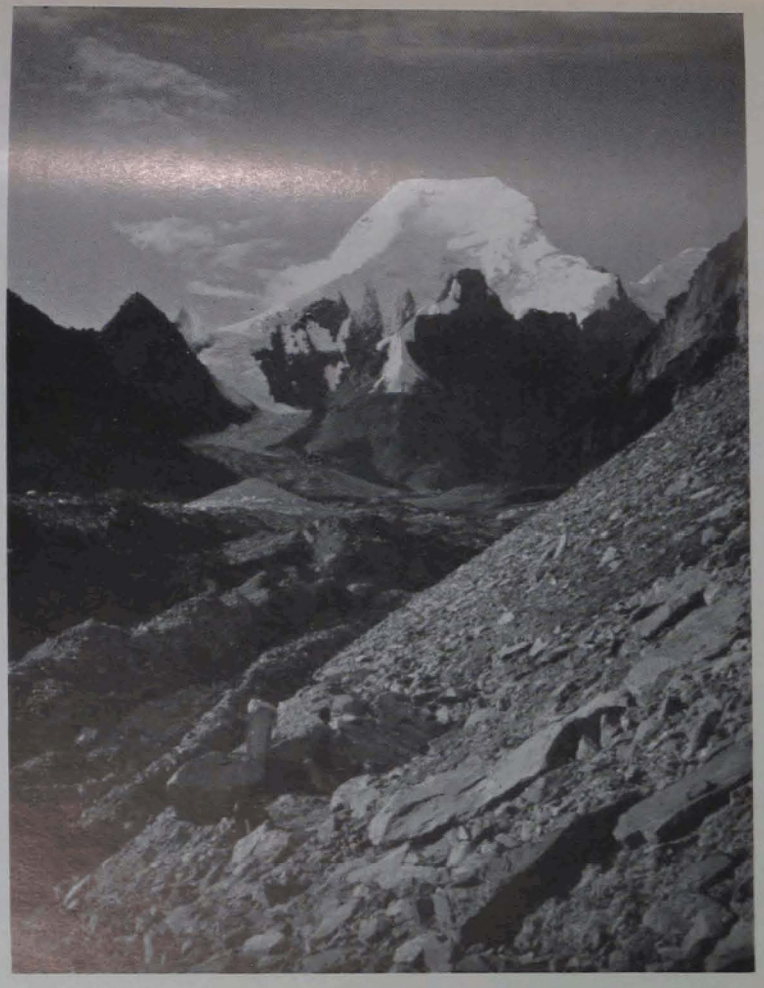
Night was falling and soon forced us to descend. We followed our tracks to the col and collected our rucksacks. As quickly as we could we came down the north face by the shortest route. We passed the place where a torn pair of trousers alone bore witness to dangers overcome—where we had bivouacked in the crevasse on the night of the 25th.

We descended farther and farther into the mist, and soon saw the lamps of our Sherpas advancing to meet us. Twice I fell heavily into crevasses, but finally we arrived without further mishap and joined Mme Lohner at 9.15. We were all brimming over with enthusiasm and went on eating, smoking, drinking, and talking until we finally yielded to the joys of well-earned sleep.

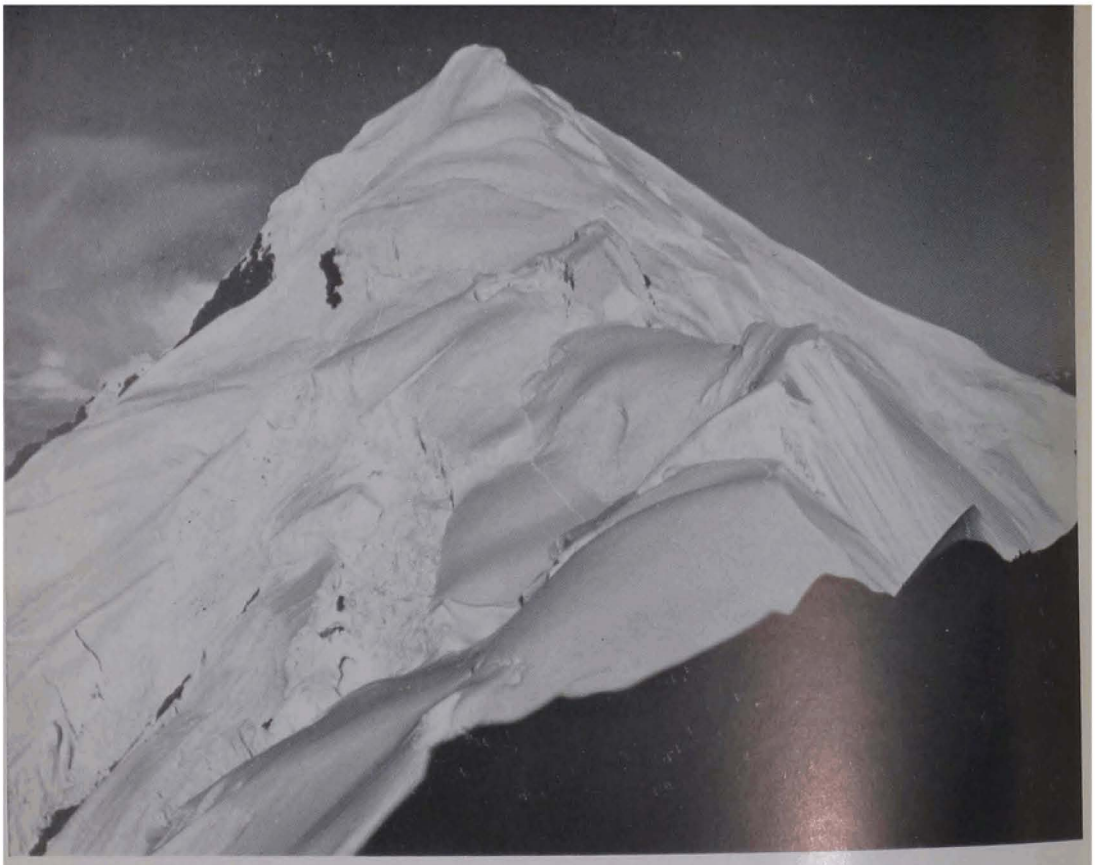
The following day we awoke in excellent spirits. No trace of stiffness whatsoever—indeed, we felt reborn. Kedarnath had cured all our wounds! Graven literally seemed to swim with happiness and overflowed with strength and vitality. Nothing can ever surpass the joys of conquering a peak in that part of the world.



Camp I with the White Dome and double peak of Shivling



Satopanth



The summit of Nanda Ghunti, 20,700 feet

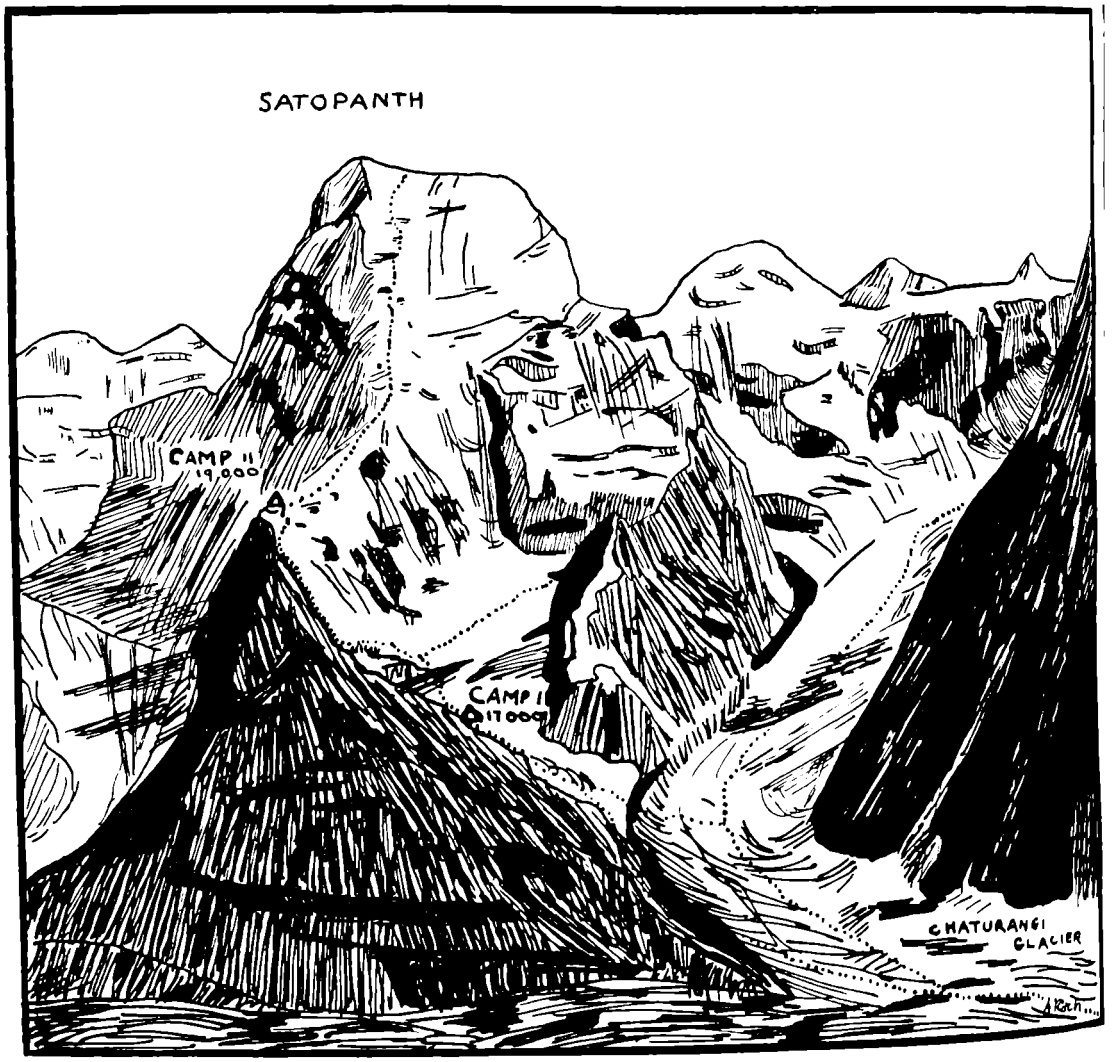
SATOPANTH—AN UNEXPECTED CONQUEST

ANDRÉ ROCH

We then went eastwards and ascended the Chaturangi glacier, a tributary of the Gangotri. This appears to be a glacier of stone, for an incredible quantity of granite and gneiss covers the ice. We decided to reconnoitre Bhagirathi I, a superb peak of 22,495 feet as yet unclimbed. From what we had seen, the best route appeared to be to climb to the north-east of Sundar Bamak, a glacier which flows past the foot of Satopanth. We established a camp at about 16,000 feet at Chaturangi and on 29th July we started off up the Sundar glacier.

It turned to the right and we could not quite see to the head, but such as was visible was hardly encouraging. The valley was closed by a granite wall topped with blue ice which broke off continually, starting avalanches that swept right over the glacier. I hesitated, for if the entire approach was threatened by falling seracs Bhagirathi would be out of the question. My friends thought the approach to Satopanth seemed better, so we changed our plans, and, not wishing to waste the rest of the day, we decided to establish a camp at its foot. It was pouring with rain, but we climbed to about 18,000 feet and pitched our tents on the moraine of the side glacier which flows from Satopanth itself.

The following day Dittert, Graven, and I left camp at 6 o'clock to reconnoitre. Two ridges looked practicable, one to the north, the other, less steep and more attractive, to the north-west. The weather was fine although a storm was raging beneath us in the valley. We approached the foot of the north-westerly ridge, but our path was blocked by impassable walls of red and green gneiss. In 1938 the Austrians had reached the crest of the ridge by a difficult rocky couloir, but they had been stopped by a deep crack in the crest where a rappel was necessary. This seemed all too complicated, so we turned our attention to the other ridge, to the right of which the long northerly arête rises to Satopanth while to the left a snowy ridge led us in twenty minutes to a little peak and a magnificent view. Chandra Parbat, 22,073 feet, an enormous white mass to the east, had been climbed by the Austrians in 1938. We found traces of the Austrian camp among the rocks on the col and decided to pitch Camp II there the following day. When we descended we dared not follow the steps we had cut that morning for the slope was being swept by falling stones, loosened by the heat of the sun, so followed the rocks right to the bottom of the slope where there was only 6 or 7 yards of ice to cross. We had to put on our crampons, raising our


SATOPANTH
CAMP II
19,000
CAMP I
17,000
CHATURANGI
GLACIER

heads every few seconds to try to avoid the murderous stones. Several just missed us; one crashed down without warning close to my foot. At last we were ready and I started off across the ice, cutting as quickly as I could. I reached the rocks on the other side, started to run and arrived on the glacier safe and sound. My friends rejoined me, quite out of breath, and we followed the glacier down to the camp.

On 31st July we climbed to establish Camp II with five Sherpas—Tenzing, Ang Dawa, Ang Norbu, Arjeeba, and Penooree. The icy slope was crossed without danger or difficulty, for so early in the morning the stones were still frozen in. We reached the site by 10.30, pitched our tents in unusually early squalls of rain and snow, and went to bed. Towards 4 o'clock the skies cleared and Dittert, Tenzing, and I decided to reconnoitre the ridge we planned to follow next day and prepare steps. We crossed a treacherous snowy slope and in forty minutes reached the beginning of a long sharp ridge. We were extremely lucky to be able to avoid the actual arête by following the rocks just below and to the left of the crest, for the heat of May and June had caused the snow to melt and recede leaving a passable ledge. If we had had to follow the corniced crest we would have made very slow progress. This rocky ledge looked over, and in places overhung, a precipice of some 4,000 feet which dominated the Suralaya glacier. We reached a place where progress was blocked by a very steep snow slope that ended in an overhanging drop, but having no choice other than to cross it I started off, cutting the ice beneath a layer of wet snow. It was most exacting work, but in half an hour I had crossed the slope and could see that the rocky ledge began again beyond this point. By then it was 6.30, so we returned to camp. The clouds cleared leaving a golden moon shining in a clear sky. Luck was with us; to-morrow was to be the day.

Next morning Tenzing started the primus at 2.30 and an hour and a half later we left the camp on two ropes, Sutter and Graven, followed by Dittert and me. It was still dark, but the sun rose as we climbed the first slope.

Beyond the point we had reached the evening before the rocky ledge ended, and we were forced to follow the actual crest. Graven was cutting and moved to the other side of the ridge over a giddy slope which ended in a corridor that dropped 4,000 feet to the long glacier. We were full of admiration for Graven's confidence as he crossed this slope, though Sutter scared us by seeming too confident.

We crossed to the left of the arête and skirted the crest under the cornices; then, to the right again, we climbed straight up on to a dome, Graven having done all the work of step-cutting. Our luck

was in, for on the western slopes the snow which had fallen the previous day had already frozen. From the point where we sat the mountain sloped up over a rounded hump to the summit with an average gradient of 45°, and the frozen snow enabled us to climb without sinking in more than a couple of inches at each step. At times the gradient increased, and in some places rocks protruded. Hours passed as we slowly made our way up towards the summit. At 11 o'clock we reached the foot of the last slope. The weather was marvellous; we were chilled by a bitter north wind but were able to breathe quite easily. In places there was wind slab and we feared avalanches, but we heard no ominous noises and saw no tracks.

On the last rocks, 500 feet below the summit ridge, we paused. Here the slope became much steeper, the top was overhung with cornices, and the avalanche danger seemed greater than ever. We hesitated, wondering what to do. My friends tied themselves to a rock and I climbed 70 yards, the length of the two ropes knotted end to end. Then I dug a hole in the snow from where I could make a decision. A slightly crusted layer of snow about 2 feet thick rested on the ice without sticking to it, and a small granulous layer separated the snow from the ice. This was perfect for avalanches, but I thought that, had the situation really been as dangerous as it appeared, an avalanche would already have swept down, or at least there would be signs of cracks on the north face. There were neither, and I estimated that the weight of four men on the layer of snow should not be enough to start an avalanche. Besides, it would have been a shame to have given up so near the summit. Unroped I climbed the slope alone to see if it would go. The snow held, and I reached the ridge in about twenty minutes, crossed it and sat down on my sack to rest and look at the incomparable view. My friends soon joined me.

The summit was at the eastward end of the ridge, that is, to the left. The arête itself was partially corniced and the snow to the south was wet. It took us an hour and a half to cover that short distance. Graven led and at times had to cut steps. At 2 o'clock we reached the summit, a very sharp arête where we had no wish to tarry. But the view was breath-taking with all the wild Garhwal mountains visible, from Kamet to Nanda Devi, Dunagiri and Trisul, the strangely formed Gangotri peaks, and finally the immense Chaukhamba group that dominates the region. Our joy at this unexpected conquest was unbounded and Sutter and Graven spent some time taking photographs.

It took us only a quarter of an hour to return to the place where we had joined the summit ridge, and we climbed down to the long ridge in just over an hour. By now the west face was full in the sun

and the snow threatened to slip on the ice, so I descended to the full length of the rope and notched the cornice to make a belay capable of holding the others. They joined me and Graven went on ahead to cut steps. He passed to the east side of the ridge, which was now freezing again. Our difficulties were over. We descended into mist, hailed the Sherpas, and by 6.30 we were back in our tents where we could drink our fill.

The clouds cleared slowly, and the setting sun lit up the summit of Satopanth, which seemed unnaturally far above us. We were still stunned by this unexpected conquest and could hardly realize that we had climbed to over 7,000 metres. We spent an excellent night and the following morning happily descended to Camp I.

An hour later we set off for our camp on the Chaturangi Glacier.

The expedition shortly afterwards left Nandaban and proceeded eastwards up the Chaturangi Glacier, across the Kalindi Khal and down the right bank of the Arwa to Ghastoli. Lack of space has caused the omission of René Dittert's account of this crossing. Later in the journal there is a description by T. E. Braham of his journey over the same ground. Members will be glad to learn that Dittert has promised an article on the 1949 Swiss Expedition to Sikkim for our next issue. From Ghastoli the party turned northwards up the Saraswati valley towards the Mana pass and their next objective, Balbala.

A HIMALAYAN DREAM COME TRUE

ANNELIES LOHNER

We left for Jagrao on 23rd August at 6.30 and followed the winding track over a sea of stones, sometimes along moraines, sometimes over interminable barren spaces, climbing to about 17,000 feet through the perpetual brown and yellow country-side which Tenzing told me was typical of Tibet. A caravan of yaks and goats came down towards us from the col, and at 2.30 we reached Jagrao where we spent the night.

The following day was damp and misty. We were breakfasting when a lone, limping Tibetan, who had come down from the mountains, appeared before us. His equipment for the journey, which would take him many weeks or even months, was no more than a sack, a sling, a knife, and a needle with which to mend his boots. We cheered him on his way with a hot cup of tea and prepared to leave ourselves.

We crossed the Saraswati and climbed up to the glacier. The sun

and mist were fighting for precedence and the heat made the climb so unpleasant that the coolies, exhausted by the weight of their loads, refused to go farther until a tip of two rupees each encouraged them to go on working! They had improvised protection from the glare with makeshift eye fringes from black wool; even with my dark glasses my eyes were hurting me.

Leaving the glacier we climbed down a small incline which led us over snow and ice to a col at about 18,000 feet where we pitched our tents beside the glacier on some débris and we decided to make our attempt on Balbala from this point.

It snowed all through the night of the 24th, and when I awoke next morning my ears and throat were hurting, but a cup of tea soon revived me. We waited an hour for the weather to settle, but at 7 o'clock decided to start in spite of the mist and falling snow.

Our route lay along a glacier leading to an ice-wall, thence to the foot of a ridge below the summit. Dittert, Sutter, and Ang Norbu were leading and cut steps to the ridge where Graven, Tenzing, and I took over the lead. We had difficulty in forcing our way through snow-drifts and on account of the bad visibility could not be sure whether we were on the ridge itself or on a cornice. Crevasses lay in wait for us, and every step seemed a problem.

At last we set foot on the rocks of the ridge and sighed with relief. Roch went ahead and we struggled against the lash of the wind, still hardly able to see, and damp to the marrow of our bones. We rested a moment to weigh up our chances, for there was no hope that the weather would improve, but no one favoured retreat.

From there to the summit every step I took seemed to be a victory over the elements and danger until, at 10.30, we reached the summit of Balbala, 21,057 feet. We hugged and congratulated each other joyously. But this conquest meant far more to me than to my friends for it represented the crown of my adventures in the Himalayas, a crown which I had desired greatly and which had been denied me for a long time, for which I had paid the price of many hard and weary days. The poor visibility deprived us of the view we had hoped for, for this peak rises high over the Tibetan frontier—a bitter drop in our overflowing cup of joy.

We descended, cheerfully, through a snow-storm. After celebrating we struck the higher camp and while the Sherpas returned to Jagrao we made a detour as far as the Mana col which leads to Tibet. A sudden parting of the clouds gave us a glimpse of an endless vista of mountains tinted with purple, brown, and brick red; a fairy world shone before our eyes, only to vanish immediately behind the curtain of mist. We hurried back to camp in driving rain, but stopped a moment beside the Saraswati lakes to read the age-old phrase

devoted to prayer, meditation, and magic which was inscribed on a stone tablet—'Om Mane Padme Hum'.

THE ASCENT OF NANDA GHUNTI

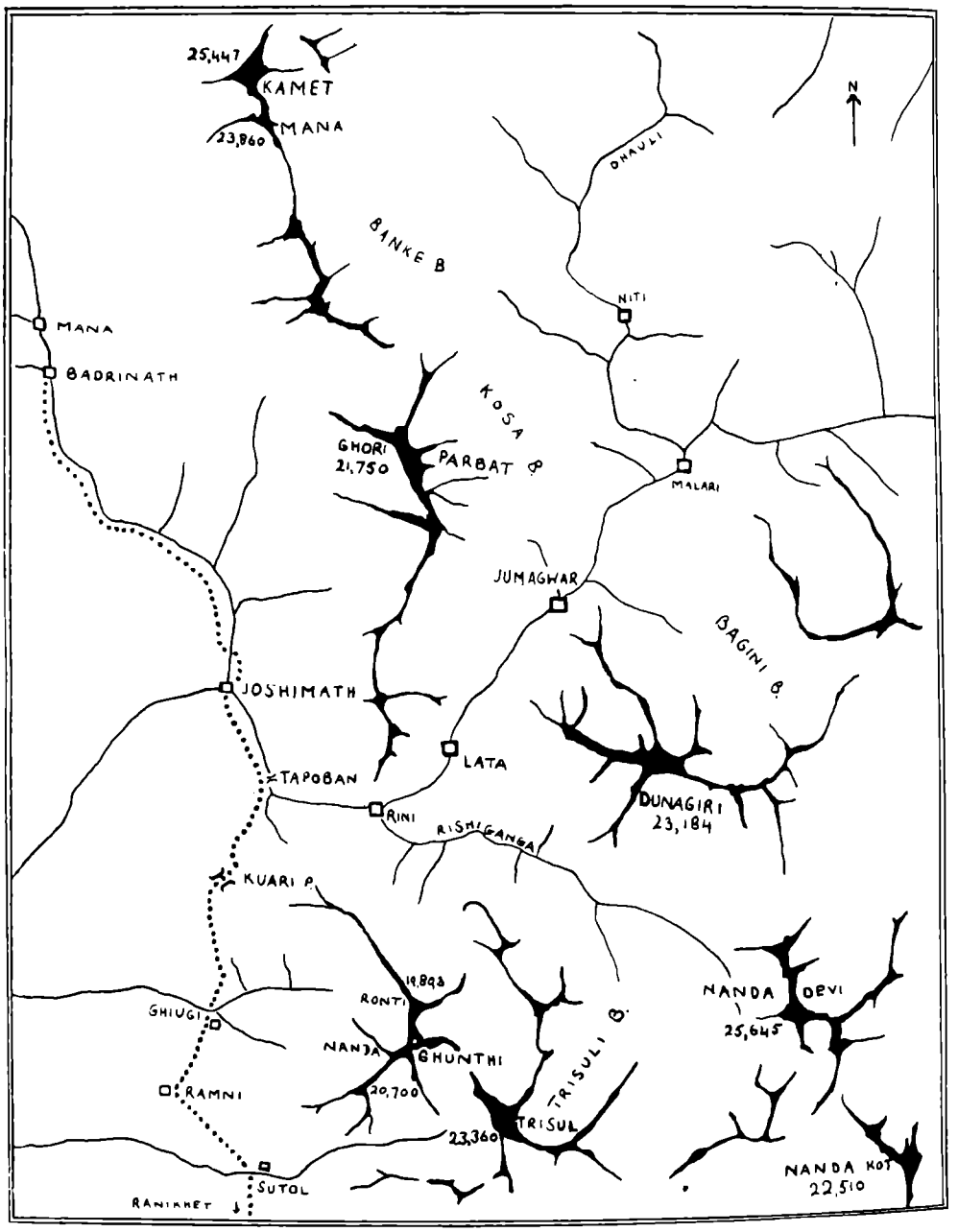
ANDRÉ ROCH

Sutter, Graven, Dittert, and I arrived at the village of Sutol where our Sherpas found us cucumbers, pumpkins, potatoes, and green vegetables. What was more they unearthed a guide to take us through the jungle, and arranged for him to meet us the following day. We pitched camp on a grassy patch overlooking the junction of two mountain torrents, in one of which we had a glorious bathe during the early afternoon.

A troop of monkeys was playing in the trees not far off when, just before our evening meal, the guide arrived dressed in a partly rolled up blanket, leaving his legs bare to the thighs. He wore ear-rings, and the hair beneath his little Hindu hat was short and bushy. We immediately christened him 'man of the woods' but his real name was Gulab Singh. We fixed his salary at three rupees a day, with a further rupee for the food he was to bring with him. He warned us that on the first day the track would be very bad, but the second day it would be even worse because there would be no track at all!

Dittert and I left Sutol on 7th September with three Sherpas, Ang Tenzing, Ang Norbu, and Penooree, three of our Harsil porters, Gathuk, Buang Singh, and Bagar Singh, and nine Mana porters.

A long steep climb over a good path led us to the hamlet of Tatra from where the long Nandakini valley slopes up eastwards. The valley is overgrown with woods of fir and sycamore, under which bamboos and nettles crowd so densely that if a path had not been cut with kukris it would have been impossible to move at all. The weather was far from pleasant; a watery sun showed its face for a short while in the morning, but was soon hidden by rain which got heavier and heavier. The trees dripped and we were drenched. In the early afternoon we came to a clearing in the trees where the undergrowth was so thick that we had to cut our way through. We camped under a species of tall oak and dried our clothes in front of a good fire. It rained all night, so next morning we started off on our second stage through the jungle, wet through. We thought it could be no more difficult, but in point of fact our experiences of the previous day were a mere nothing! A good track led into the woods but ended suddenly, after which we had to fight our way


25,447
KAMET
MANA
23,860
BANKE B
DHAULI
N
NITI
MANA
BADRINATH
KOSA
GHORI
21,750
PARBAT P
MALARI
JUMAGWAR
BAGINI G
JOSHIMATH
LATA
TAPOBAN
RINI
DUNAGIRI
23,184
RISHIGANGA
KUARI P.
19,893
RONTI
GHIUGI
NANDA
GHUNTHI
TRISULI G.
NANDA DEVI
25,645
RAMNI
20,700
TRISUL
23,360
SUTOL
RANIKHET
NANDA KOT
22,510

through incredibly matted undergrowth. It is very tiring never to be able to see where to set your feet and we often slipped or fell into holes. In places we found progress was made exceedingly difficult by moss-covered rocks. Later we had to cross several ravines with all but vertical sides, holding on to tufts of grass and trying to avoid the many thistles, nettles, and thorn bushes. The latter became more and more numerous, tore our clothes, scratched our hands and faces, and generally infuriated us. The north face, on the other side of the torrent, was very wild. Rocky, moss-covered walls, broken here and there by wild cascades, rose sheer for several hundred feet out of the jungle. Gradually the undergrowth thinned, but after the woods came slopes of rhododendron bushes which were even worse, for our feet kept slipping on the roots and we had to hold on with our hands all the time. However, we eventually descended to the torrent and climbed the left side where, having crossed moraines all summer, we were thoroughly at home on the stones and gravel.

The immense west face of Trisul (23,365 feet) which we had not yet been able to see on account of the mist, rose some 14,000 feet above us, closing the eastern end of the valley. A stone-covered glacier flows from the flanks of the mountain, while Nanda Ghunti stands at the head of a side valley which runs down from the north, to the left.

As yet we had not even been able to see the mountain we had come to attack, and in such conditions it was of course impossible to decide on a route, but towards evening the clouds parted and at last we could see the sparkling mountain. To the right was the southern ridge, snow-covered high up but rocky lower down. The eastern ridge sloped down gently to a shoulder which was connected to the Humkum Gala col (18,000 feet) by a long ridge, partially snowy, partially rocky, the lower part absolutely bristling with gendarmes. We were still too far away to make a definite decision, moreover, part of the mountain was obscured from view, but Dittert was of the opinion that we should try the southern ridge. I had not yet made up my mind but tended to prefer the eastern ridge.

I knew that Nanda Ghunti had already been attempted during the war,[1] but I had no idea of the route taken, nor of the causes of failure. We were therefore quite uninfluenced and had to depend entirely on our own judgement.

The following day we were in luck. It was fine, glorious sun bathed the entire valley. To our right the enormous and indescribably forbidding face of Trisul reared into the azure sky. At the end of the

[1] A spirited attempt on Nanda Ghunti had been made in October 1945 by the brothers Peter and Jeremy Wood with R. H. Sams. Vide *H.J.*, vol. xiv, pp. 44 ff.—ED.

valley to the north rose Nanda Ghunti, proud and mighty. From what we could see the eastern ridge, although much longer than the southern, presented no great difficulties. If we could turn the rocky gendarmes at the beginning of the ridge, the rest of the arête as far as the top of the shoulder did not seem to be particularly steep. From the shoulder to the summit itself appeared to be fairly easy. Dittert optimistically supported my views; we decided to try the eastern route and establish a camp on the Humkum col.

We made good progress over some easy moraines at first, and then slowly ascended the enormous scree slopes which led to the col.

All this time the sky had been cloudy; mists hid the view and it was raining. We reached the col together with the Sherpas and the three porters from Harsil, and prepared to return for the loads left by the coolies, but our Sherpas would not let us go down again. They went themselves and in three-quarters of an hour all the loads were on the col. In the meanwhile we had been preparing a site for the tents.

The following morning the clouds did not lift as usual, the mist clung to the ridges, and we could see nothing. We decided to establish a camp as high as possible on the eastern ridge, and succeeded in passing the first imposing group of gendarmes to the south. Then, over an unpleasant slope of scree we reached the ridge. We had to cross several rocky projections and admired the surefootedness of the Sherpas who surmounted such obstacles with ease in spite of their heavy loads. At about 18,000 feet we reached a very steep slope formed of wet slabs overlapping like fish scales. Roped and belayed Dittert tried to ascend, but his feet kept slipping. To climb this we would have needed to use countless pitons so we tried to find some alternative. To the left there was a sheer precipice of fluted ice. To the right, by descending a couloir of rotten rock, we reached some shelves leading to slabs over which we rejoined the ridge some 200 feet higher. From here it was only an easy 100 yards or so along the ridge to where the snow began. We thought that the passage we had just climbed was too tricky for the heavily laden Sherpas, so decided to pitch the two tents lower down on the north face. Two of the Sherpas stayed with us while the others went down to the camp on the col, and we went to bed as soon as possible to get as much shelter as we could from the pouring rain. It was only 2 o'clock but we were very demoralized. In spite of our optimism the weather had not improved. If it snowed during the night conditions would be deplorable and our attempt would fail.

I woke at 2 in the morning and put my head outside the tent. I could see some stars and called cheerfully to Ang Tenzing to

light the stove and prepare some food. Half an hour later Dittert looked at the sky which had clouded over again: more bad weather! There was, however, one star shining through the mist; it really needed unshakable optimism to decide that it was going to be fine. Ang Tenzing had got up and we asked him whether conditions were good. As a reply he threw us a stone. By the light of our candle we saw it was covered with verglas! Dittert and I looked at each other horrified, and resigned ourselves to tackling the rocks in crampons.

At 3.40 we left by the light of the lantern. Dittert led, I followed, and Ang Tenzing came third. We left Norbu at the camp because we foresaw that it was going to be no joy-ride. In the dark the ascent of the verglas-covered slabs took us nearly an hour. Once we had climbed the short rocky part of the ridge we reached excellent snow where we could make steps with one kick. Dittert led like a bat out of hell and climbed quickly. The slope became extremely steep, but in such good conditions climbing was a real pleasure, though I was hard put to keep up with my friend. Day dawned and the sky almost cleared. To the north, we could see the wild circus of the Ronti glacier over which towered the two peaks of Nanda Devi. To our left a chain of peaks of about 20,000 feet culminated in the pointed summit of Dunagiri and the even more awe-inspiring Changabang and Kalanka group. Behind us the panorama was completed by the great glacier of the west face of Trisul.

The ridge that we were following got less and less steep and then reared up sharply to the sky in a slender arête bordered with a cornice. Here the gradient was severe and we had to cut every step. Luckily the snow was firm and Dittert was in good form. We climbed quickly and reaching the top of the steep slope found that the ridge continued fairly level, but was so sharp that the impression it gave was somewhat terrifying. Dittert cut steadily on the north side till we reached the top of the shoulder where we crossed the arête and descended several feet to a rocky ledge to rest and photograph the magnificent view. From this perch the ridge, more slender than ever, rose to Nanda Ghunti. Just to look at it made us shiver, but the summit itself, only half a mile farther on and 1,000 feet above us, sparkled in the sun and appeared to be quite accessible. We progressed with great caution, making a belay at every rope's length. In one place the cornice reared up sharply in the form of an eagle's beak and hung several yards over the southern side of the ridge, forcing us to climb some little way down the very steep north side, an extremely unpleasant manœuvre. A second small cluster of rocks was a welcome oasis, but brought disappointment; the ridge did not lead to a snow-field as I had hoped, but stretched on for another 300 feet or so. The cornices formed the most delightful

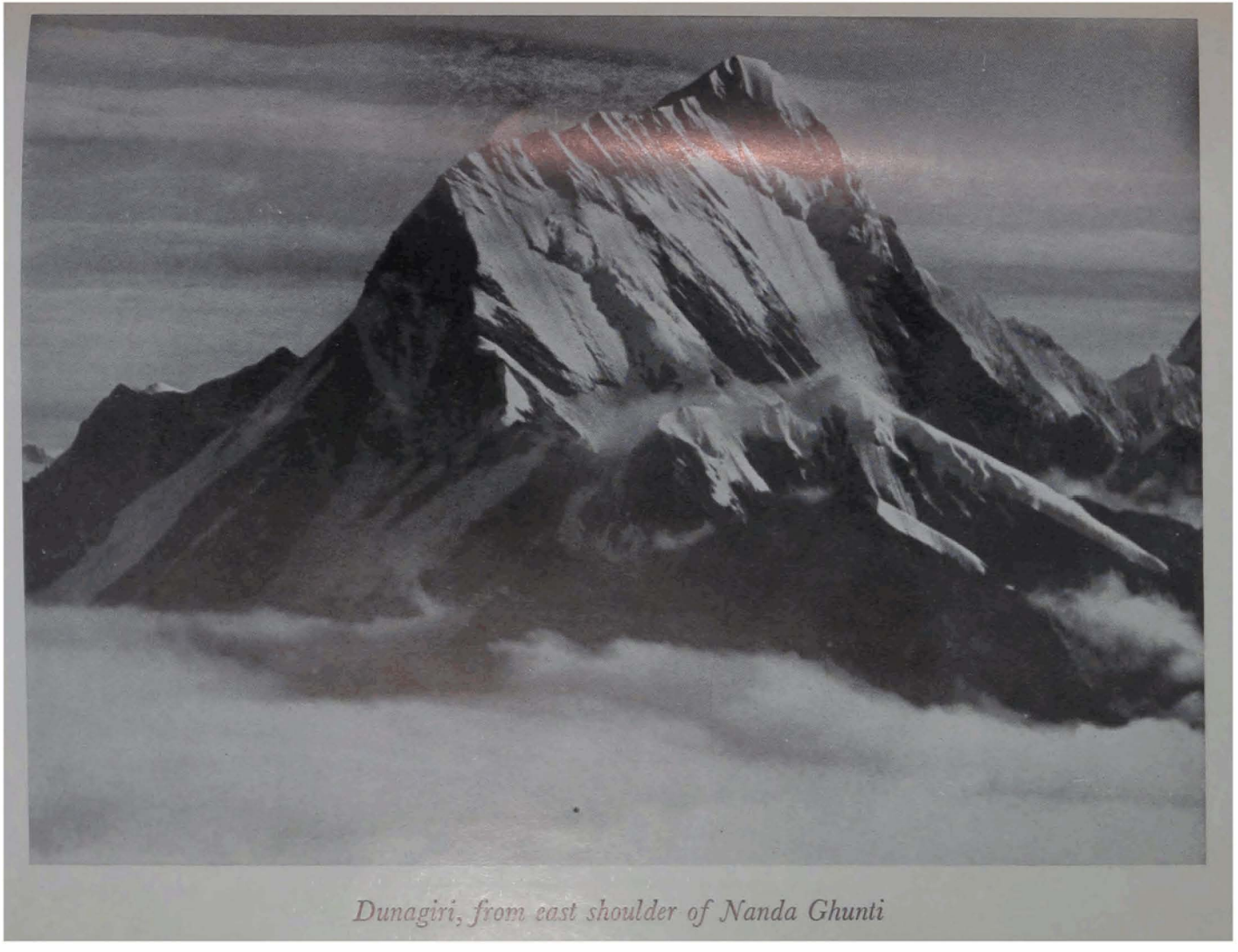
lace patterns rising above the flutings of the precipitous slopes. We would indeed have preferred less beauty and more comfort. However, confident that these difficulties would soon be behind us, Dittert attacked this last ridge.

At last the shoulder was passed. It was 9 o'clock already and had taken us five hours of unrelenting work. The sky was clouding over gradually and the next stage of the ascent was not exactly enticing. We had either to continue along the tapering ridge for some way, or alternatively to skirt it on snow 'terraces' below, which were separated the one from the other by very steep slopes or by impassable serac.

We compromised by starting along the ridge and then climbing down to the south on to one of the terraces from where we hoped to descend to a second. The slope connecting them was all but vertical but there was no alternative so we resigned ourselves to descending in a small gully of powder snow. Mist surrounded us, but it could no longer hold us back, for from what we had seen our difficulties were at an end.

Ang Tenzing was leading. A steep slope led to the foot of a large serac which we by-passed over a snow-filled crevasse, and then rejoined the rounded ridge which led to the summit. For a second the mists parted and we saw the peak quite close at hand. We almost forced marched up the last slope which was cut by an icy wall above which a slender and very steep arête led to the summit. To the right the wall was impassable, but to the left we found a way up to the melting snow of the crest. The slope soon eased and finally, at midday, we reached what we thought must be the summit for, although visibility was practically nil, we could climb no higher. We had no time to give vent to our enthusiasm and after congratulating ourselves soberly on this, the hardest ascent of the expedition, we turned and started the climb down.

It was snowing and our tracks had either melted or been covered. On the terraces I mistook the way and went down too low. We had to climb up again, and at 2 o'clock we had only just reached the sharp ridge starting from the shoulder. We could not contemplate starting along this for the snow was rotten and melting; it no longer clung to the ice beneath, and any attempt to descend would have been suicide. We looked at some of the crevasses, but none would have been of any use as a bivouac, so we decided to build an igloo. We piled blocks, cut with our ice-axes, one on top of the other and by 3 o'clock our house was ready. We got in on our hands and knees and sat in a row on a sort of bench where we prepared to spend the night as comfortably as possible. With great foresight Ang Tenzing had brought with him three packets of meta so that we could have



Dunagiri, from east shoulder of Nanda Ghunti

any amount of hot drink and he proceeded to make us some Tibetan tea and chapati soup. We succeeded in partially drying our stockings, and also in burning our gloves. Luckily the night was cold and clear, but in our little hut we hardly felt the cold. It was 5.20 before we were ready to leave, Ang Tenzing roped up between Dittert and me. When I attacked the first slope I was absolutely numb but the work soon warmed me. The whole way along the ridge we could remake our steps, often with a single blow of the ice-axe, sometimes with two or three. The view was marvellous, for we could see all the Garhwal mountains from Kedarnath to Kamet and the two peaks overlooking the Niti pass. The sun rose, bringing into relief the fluting of the north face, and started to melt the top snow with the heat of its rays. It seemed doubtful whether we would be early enough to negotiate the steep snow slope, and the steep arête just above it was particularly tricky. In spite of the comparative comfort of our bivouac we found we were too tired to concentrate properly.

At last we reached the slope and went down together, digging our heels hard into the melting snow. Luckily it was only soft on the surface, for it had been so cold during the night that the lower layer was firmly frozen. In places the layer of soft snow was so thin that our crampons bit into ice. The descent went according to plan and at 9 o'clock we reached the rocks and crossed the now dry slabs above the camp. These seemed far less steep than on our way up. There was only one tent, for the other had been taken down that morning. Norbu and Penooree had prepared some hot tea for us, and after drinking and eating we struck camp to descend to the col where Buang Singh and Gabar Singh from Harsil were awaiting us. The camp on the col was struck in turn and towards midday we descended the long moraine to the camp by the overhanging rock. Gathuk had been to fetch the Mana porters who were waiting for us in a meadow. They left loaded and by about 4 o'clock we were back into grassland again, still overwhelmed by our success.

We pushed on quickly and reached Ranikhet only to be told the other members of our expedition had just left a few hours before. We finally rejoined them at Mussoorie, the starting-point of our long journey home.

A NOTE ON THE U.S. EXPEDITION TO NEPAL, 1949[1]

FRANCIS LEESON

IN the autumn of 1948 a scientific expedition bound for the Himalayan foothills of Nepal, the first to be allowed access to this area, arrived in Calcutta. Headed by Dr. S. Dillon Ridley, Assistant Professor of Zoology at Yale University, the project was supported and financed by the National Geographic Society, Yale University, and the Smithsonian Institution.

Being at the time under contract to the National Geographic Society in its photo-survey of India, I was attached to the Expedition as assistant photographer and became the only British member of the party.

Besides Dr. Ridley and myself there was a staff photographer of the National Geographic Society, a preparator from the Peabody Museum of Yale, two student mammalogists from Yale, and two Goanese skinners, loaned by the Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay.

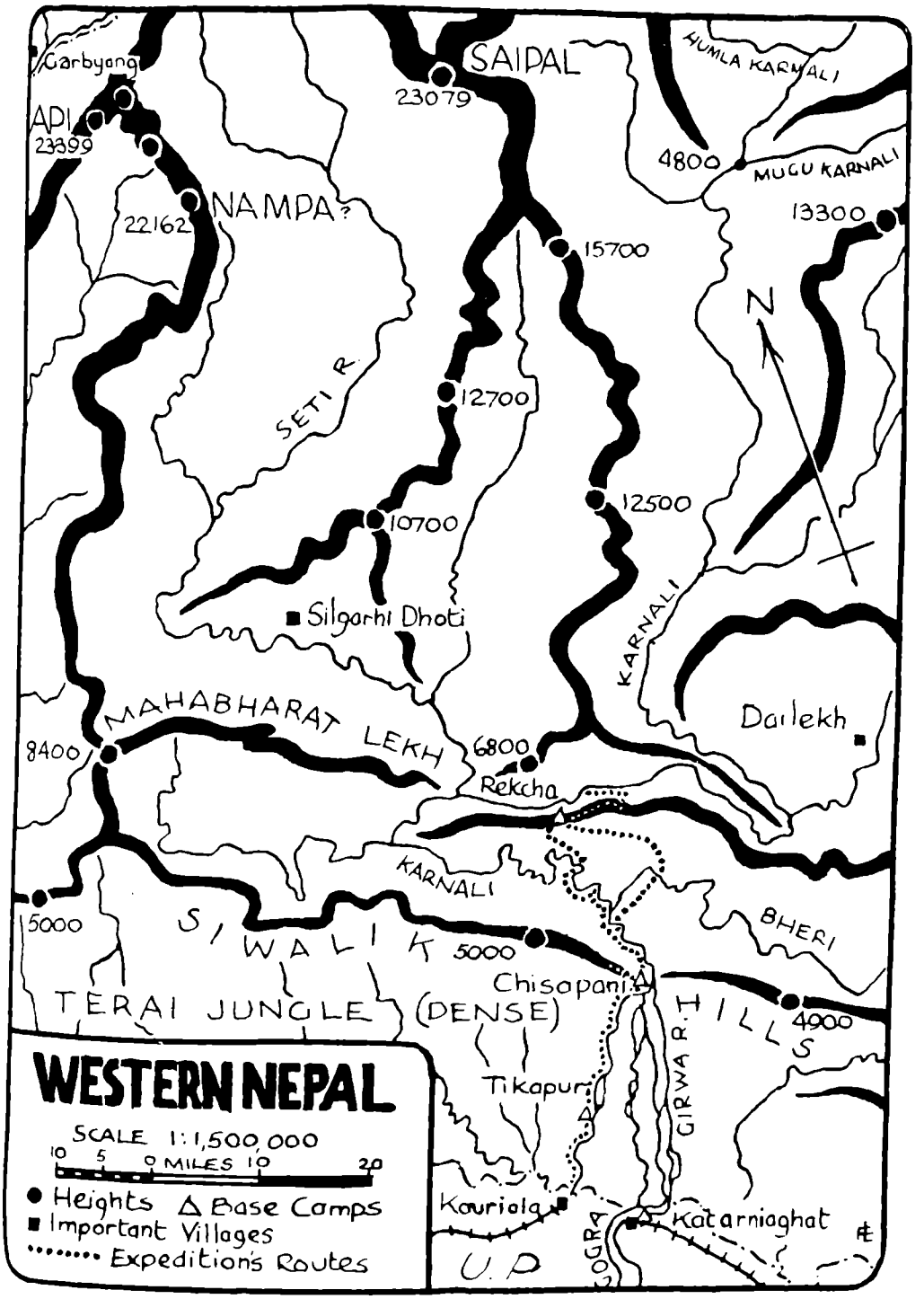
The main object of the expedition was ornithological and included as one of its aims the acquisition of a specimen of the rare partridge-like *Ophrysia superciliosa*, last seen near Naini Tal in 1876. But though we searched in three separate areas of the country and twenty-four copies of a painting of the bird were circulated among Nepalese local authorities, the bird remained elusive.

A selection of small mammals and their parasites, and fish, was to be made in addition, while we photographers were to concentrate on a full-length colour film of the country and the expedition, with a still-picture series for the *National Geographic Magazine*.

The main party reached Kathmandu in late November after collecting in the Terai jungle near Bhirganj and Simra. As a result of interviews with the Maharaja, permission was granted to visit both western and eastern Nepal, after completing work in the Nepal valley. The first glimpse of Everest was obtained at this time from a hill a little north of Pharping on the southern border of the valley.

The easiest means of access to the east and west extremities of the mountainous little kingdom is via the neighbouring provinces of India, and accordingly, on 10th December the expedition reached the U.P. railhead of Kaurialaghat. A couple of days later we set out on a three-day march through the Terai in an elephant and bullock-cart convoy. This brought us to the point where the Karnali

[1] This is published with the consent of the National Geographic Society of Washington, D.C. The author took part in the expedition as assistant photographer, and has drawn the maps and with the N.G.S. approval furnished the photographs.


Garbyang
SAIPAL
23079
HUMLA KARNALI
4800
MUGU KARNALI
13300
API
23399
22162
NAMPA?
15700
N
SETI R.
12700
12500
10700
Silgarhi Dhoti
KARNALI
Dailekh
MAHABHARAT LEKH
8400
6800
Rekcha
KARNALI
BHERI
5000
SIWALIK
5000
Chisopani
TERAI JUNGLE (DENSE)
HILLS
4000
Tikapur
GIRWA R.
Kauriala
KOGRA R.
Katarniaghat
U.P
WESTERN NEPAL
SCALE 1:1,500,000
10 5 0 MILES 10 20
Heights
Base Camps
Important Villages
Expedition's Routes

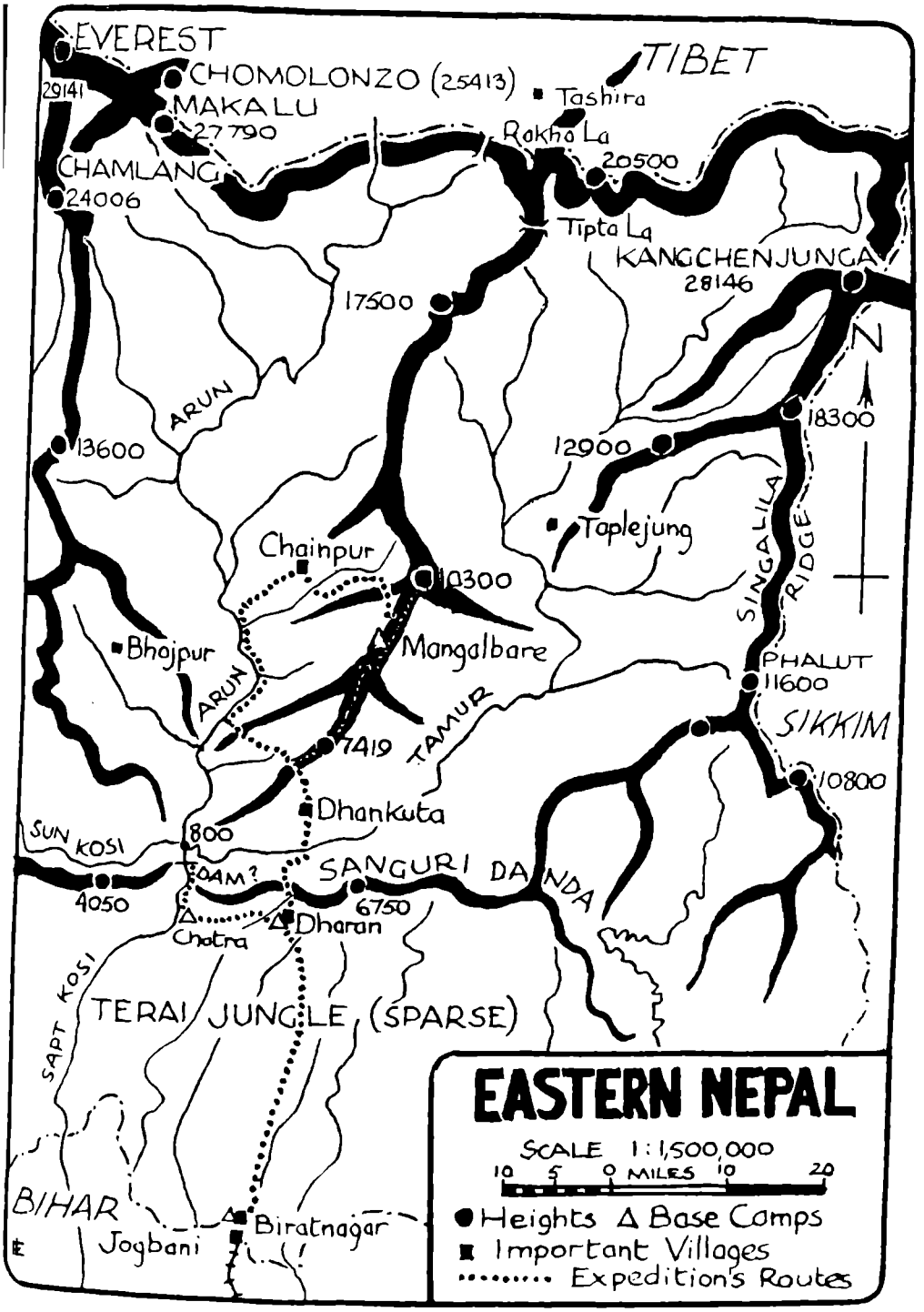
river, after its descent through a gorge, debouches into the plains to form the Girwa and later the Gogra. After a halt of a week at this point for collecting we pushed on beyond the Siwaliks with porters, crossing first the Karnali at Kuneghat and then the Bheri at Jummu. From this point onward, I believe, no Westerner had previously penetrated, though Colonel John Macdonald, author of *Circumventing the Mahseer*, fished the Karnali up to and beyond the Bheri junction several years before.

Our final camp was pitched near the village of Rekcha in a tiny valley high on the Mahabharat Lekh. From a ridge above the camp the peaks of the west Nepal Himalaya were visible. The local inhabitants called them the Zumla Himzal, possibly after the village of Zumla far up the Kamali valley. The mountains included Api (23,399 feet), Nampa (22,162 feet), and the Saipal massif (highest peak: 23,079 feet). The only record I can find of a visit to these peaks was that of A. Henry Savage Landor, two years after his journey across Tibet in the first years of the present century. He entered north-west Nepal, without permission, from north-east Kumaon and explored the area north of the Api and Nampa peaks, before returning to Kumaon.

Our return journey to the plains was made by a new route, reaching the Karnali south-west of Rekcha and following the west bank of the river down to the Siwaliks. The general impression of this part of Nepal was that it was more intensely cultivated than expected, even the hill-sides deep in the interior being crowded with tiny terraced fields. We had complete freedom of movement but were accompanied as a rule by a Subedar and two sepoys whose chief function was to obtain supplies for us and the coolies.

The lowlands of eastern Nepal proved more accessible than the west. Biratnagar, just across the border from the Indian railhead at Jogbani, is Nepal's only manufacturing town. On 21st January 1949 the party left for Dharan Bazaar, at the foot of the Siwaliks, in a truck and command car. The first part of the 20-mile journey was over a bad road which later developed into a fine metalled highway under construction by a Nepalese transport contractor. At Dharan we were received by Major-General Mahdub Sham Shere Jung Bahadur Rana, Governor of the District of Dhankuta, comprising the north-east corner of Nepal and including part of the Kanchenjunga massif. He had earlier met the expedition in Kathmandu.

The march into the Himalayan foothills took six days of steady climbing, crossing the Tamur river at Mulghat and passing through Dhankuta, capital of the district of the same name. This part of Nepal has been visited by Europeans more frequently than any other except Khatmandu. In 1848 Sir Joseph Hooker crossed into


EVEREST
29141
CHOMOLONZO (25413)
MAKALU
27790
CHAMLANG
24006
TIBET
Tashira
Rakha La
20500
Tipta La
KANGCHENJUNGA
28146
17500
N
ARUN
13600
12900
18300
Taplejung
SINGALILA RIDGE
Chainpur
10300
Bhojpur
Mangalbare
ARUN
TAMUR
PHALUT
11600
SIKKIM
7419
10800
Dhankuta
SUN KOSI
800
SANGURI DANDA
4050
6750
Chatra
Dharan
SAPT KOSI
TERAI JUNGLE (SPARSE)
BIHAR
Biratnagar
Jogbani
EASTERN NEPAL
SCALE 1:1,500,000
10 5 0 MILES 10 20
Heights Δ Base Camps
Important Villages
Expedition's Routes

the Tamur valley from Sikkim and followed the river up to the Tibetan border, returning on the Nepal slopes of the Singelela ridge and crossing back into Sikkim via the Islumbo pass. In 1934 J. B. Auden, with a party sent to examine the effects of the earthquakes of 15th January 1934, traversed from Jogbani to Dharan, Dhankuta, Chainpur, over the Milke pass to Taplejung, and thence by the Singelela ridge to Darjeeling. In recent years journeys have been made by several geologists in connexion with the Kosi Dam Survey, and only a few months before our visit, Dr. Cory, an American geologist on loan to the Nepal Government, travelled in the same area.

Auden reported bad visibility on his journeys, made in February, March, and April of 1934. The snows were never quite visible at all in east Nepal and visibility generally was so poor that it was often impossible to see more than a distance of five miles. We experienced overcast weather until, at Chitre, 7,500 feet up on the Buranse Danda on the night of 27th January, an ice blizzard enveloped the camp, causing one tent to collapse under the weight of ice. The following morning dawned clear and we had our first view of the east Nepal Himalaya, though Everest was hidden by the only cloud among the peaks.

Our next view of the snows was obtained from Mangalbare where our final camp was pitched on the north side of the 9,976-foot high, thickly-forested, Tinjure Danda. The mountains remained visible usually for only an hour or two after sunrise: then clouds would rise from distant valleys or drift across the camp and veil the stupendous panorama for the rest of the day.

Everest, though 64 miles away, was obvious, the south face falling away sharply while a ridge running east-south-east appeared to link the massif with a pyramidal peak (22,110 feet) some 17 miles nearer to us. Binoculars revealed clouds of snow blowing up frequently—apparently from the famous 'steps' of the north face of Everest, invisible to us. On windy days the ice particles were whipped into a great plume which trailed across the sky eastwards beyond Makalu. There was much speculation among us as to the identity of a great rock peak immediately to the left, and apparently just south of Everest, and certainly very close. It was possibly Lhotse (South Peak, 27,890 feet), for at sunrise the steep snow-free south-west ridge of Everest throws a dark shadow on the sheer black creviced face of this satellite.[1] It is interesting to compare our picture with the picture in vol. vi of the *Himalayan Journal* taken by the 1933 Air Expedition and entitled 'Summit of Mount Everest and South Face of Lhotse from the South'. Does the latter picture really show Lhotse?

[1] See also note on p. 53 on the identification of peaks in the Everest group.

Makalu, 10 miles nearer, dominated the whole mountain scene, and all the locals claimed it to be the highest peak, calling it Sagar Matha which, according to our Munshi, means 'the highest of all'. To the west of Everest and the peaks in its immediate neighbourhood stretched a long, dazzlingly white horizontal ridge, the western end of which rose slightly to terminate in the 22,208-foot peak of Chamlang, 54 miles from us.

I felt I had to 'do something' about the mountains, and as they were too far away to climb about on, and photography was too quick and easy, I rose at dawn on each fine morning and worked at a water-colour sketch of the scene. But the story about Everest generating its own weather was certainly borne out by my own observations for, very frequently, the only clouds in the sky were grouped about that peak, and to see the whole mountain unclouded was a rare occurrence. I was able therefore to sketch only a little each morning until, towards the end of our stay at Mangalbare, heavy snow brought a few crystal-clear mornings, but the accompanying drop in temperature and freezing wind then soon froze hands and feet and pierced even the warmest clothing of anyone rash enough to sit out in the snow at dawn!

Snow fell first on the night of 4th–5th February and continued throughout the following day until the camp was thickly blanketed. The bowers made from tree-branches and leaves to shelter the skinners' workshop and the kitchen from the wind became miserable and wet as the heat from the fires melted the snow covering, and water dripped down on the occupants. No one could keep his feet warm or even dry, as few had come prepared for a sojourn in deep snow. Little collecting could be done, though skinning and stuffing the many specimens awaiting attention continued while my fellow cameraman and I struggled out to record the blizzard and snow scenes in 'glorious technicolour', using towels to protect our equipment.

The camp now lay under nearly 14 inches of snow and evacuation became essential before the morale of servants and coolies broke. The latter, who numbered nearly sixty, were bare-footed and blanketless and sheltered only by rough lean-tos of branches. The Tinjure Danda was impassable so it was decided to retreat immediately below the snowline into the Arun valley to the north-west. This was done successfully despite a good many minor slips and falls, and the evening of 7th February found the party in the dry, 4,000 feet lower down.

I might mention here that those of us keen on climbing had little opportunity for anything serious, for our route took us over what are really nothing more than grassy forested hills of unusual height,

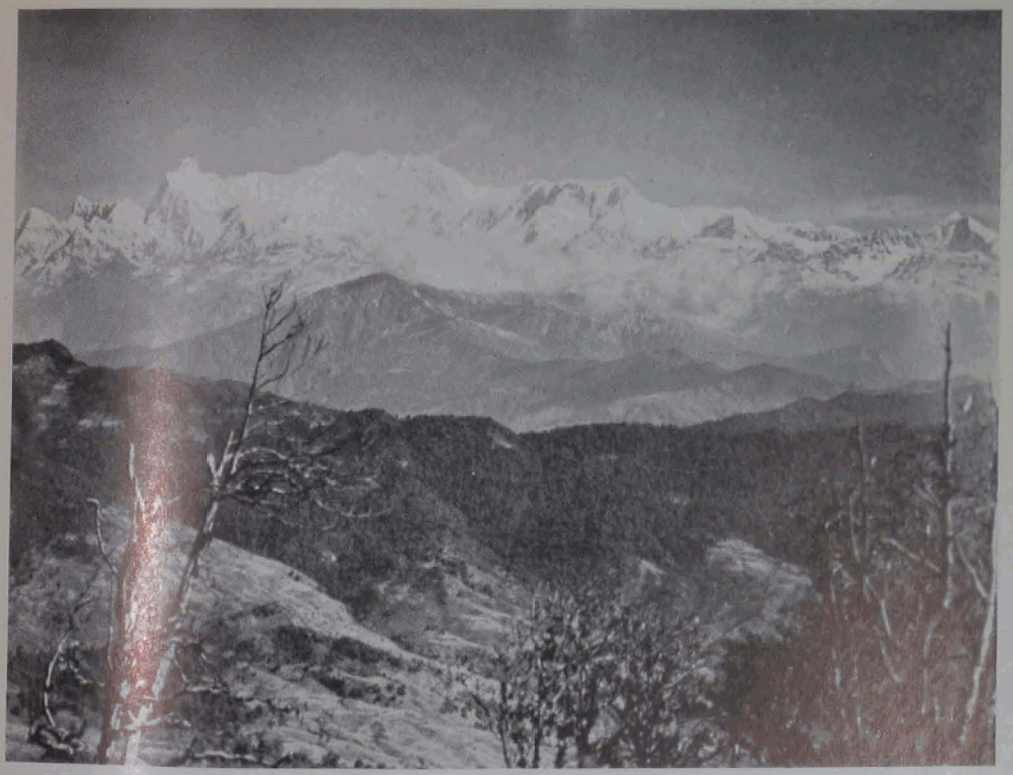
although these are, of course, the continuation of ridges leading down from some of the highest peaks in the world. The Tinjure Danda, for instance, forms part of the watershed of the Arun and Tamur rivers, which are fed by the glaciers of Everest and Kanchenjunga respectively. Only once did we reach a height of 10,000 feet, and this only on a trek to a spot height by a couple of us with the expedition altimeter in an effort to locate the exact position of our final camp in the absence of a good map and a compass. On this occasion we saw the Kanchenjunga massif rising up in a series of almost vertical precipices and battlemented ridges, 50 miles to the north-east. The well-known Phalut ridge, objective of many Darjeeling trekkers, was silhouetted against the eastern horizon.

The march back to Dharan Bazaar via Chainpur, the Arun river, and Dhankuta took nine days, for in eastern Nepal marches are short though wages high (at five rupees per porter per day, against two rupees eight annas in the west, and a little more in central Nepal).

At Dharan the expedition was again received by General Mahdub, who was just about to leave his winter camp there for his headquarters in Dhankuta, and then motored to Chatra on the Sapt Kosi for a final hunting camp a few miles south of the site for the proposed Kosi Dam. Many of us who had thought of this project as still being in a state of anticipation were surprised to find a permanent camp at Barakhakshetra with radio-telephone contact with other camps and New Delhi. Half a mile farther up-river forty-three tunnels were being blasted into the rock faces of a 1,000-foot-deep gorge to give geologists access to the heart of the rock, which must one day support a 750-foot high wall holding back a lake 74 square miles in area, stretching many miles up the Sun Kosi, the Arun, and the Tamur, making possible ferry-services north, widespread irrigation south of the dam, and hydro-electric power for all eastern Nepal, not to mention control of the floods which have laid waste a 70-mile width of Bihar.

The expedition returned to Calcutta at the end of February with nearly a thousand bird specimens, some of them of great rarity, and over a hundred small mammals, taken during the three phases of the trip. We reeled off 10,000 feet of colour film and took many hundreds of colour and black-and-white stills, which depict the landscape and life of parts of Nepal hitherto unphotographed.

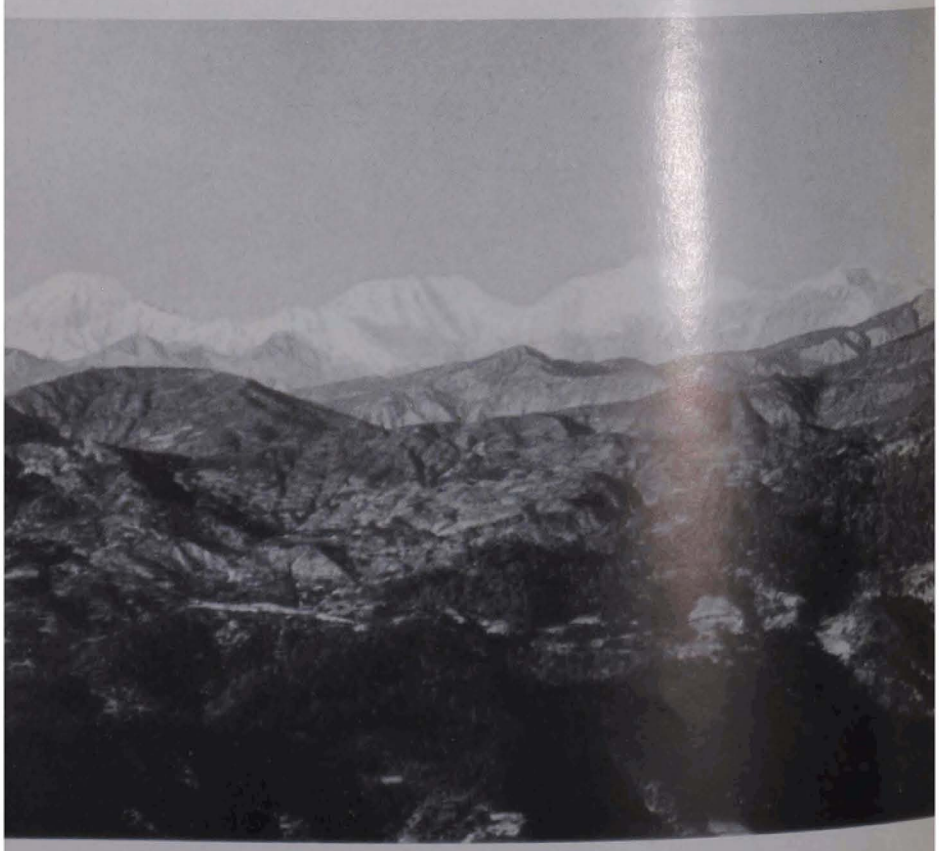
In conclusion I might say that from our experience of the co-operation and at the same time the *laissez-faire* of the Nepalese authorities, it seems very likely that permission would be granted without much difficulty for the passage of the next Everest Expedition through Nepal, thereby saving the long and weakening trek of the



Kanchenjunga group from south-west

Everest group from south-south-east

Api-Nampa massif, Western Nepal



Saipal massif, Western Nepal

past through Sikkim and Tibet. When I commented in Kathmandu on this new and pleasing attitude to the young and progressive General Bijaya, Nepal's equivalent of Foreign Minister, his reply was, 'Yes, we want to open up Nepal—now.'

Note on Photograph of the Everest Group from the South provided by the National Geographic Society of the U.S.A.

This was taken by Mr. Volkmar Wentzel from the Tinjure Danda (Survey of India Quarter Inch Map 72M) at a distance of 64 miles and an elevation of 9,360 feet. It presents the Everest Group from a new angle for, of course, every Everest expedition has approached and attacked the mountain through Tibet. Any previous telephotos have been taken from a greater distance and from further east. It should also be noted that no detailed maps have yet been made of the region south of Everest. All the above factors make identification of the peaks somewhat difficult.

The Royal Geographical Society have, we may say, examined the problem very carefully, especially when their attention was drawn to the misleading caption to a somewhat similar photograph published in *The Times* of 22nd March, 1949.

The Lhotse massif masks all but the top thousand feet of Everest, and the snow plume is only just discernible. Definite identification of some of the peaks shown in the illustration facing p. 52 is not possible. The prominent peak between Everest and Makalu is possibly Pethangtse (22,060 feet), or more likely Peak 22,110, which is nearer and may mask the former.

It may be of interest to know that Lhotse, which means 'South Peak', and Pethangtse were so named by the 1920 Reconnaissance.—Ed.

Hindu Kush Expedition, 1951

Several members of the Himalayan Club residing in Europe are planning an expedition to climb Tirich Mir (25,263 feet) in the Chitral Hindu Kush during the summer of 1951. Among those hoping to take part is Captain Ralph James, R.A., whose account of the 1946 attempt on Nun Kun (23,410 feet) in the Zaskar Himalaya was published in volume xiv of the *Himalayan Journal*. He considers another attempt on Nun Kun impracticable at the moment owing to the unsettled situation in Kashmir and the prohibitive cost of coolie transport there.

Anyone who would like to hear more about the Tirich Mir Expedition or who has any information about previous attempts is asked to contact Francis Leeson, 5 Southbourne Overcliff Drive, Bournemouth, Hants, England.

Api-Nampa Massif

The only confirmed visit to the Api-Nampa-Saipal region appears to have been a flying one by Dr. Longstaff in 1905. (Vide *A. J.*, vol. xxiii, August 1906).—Ed.

MONS CLAUDIANUS

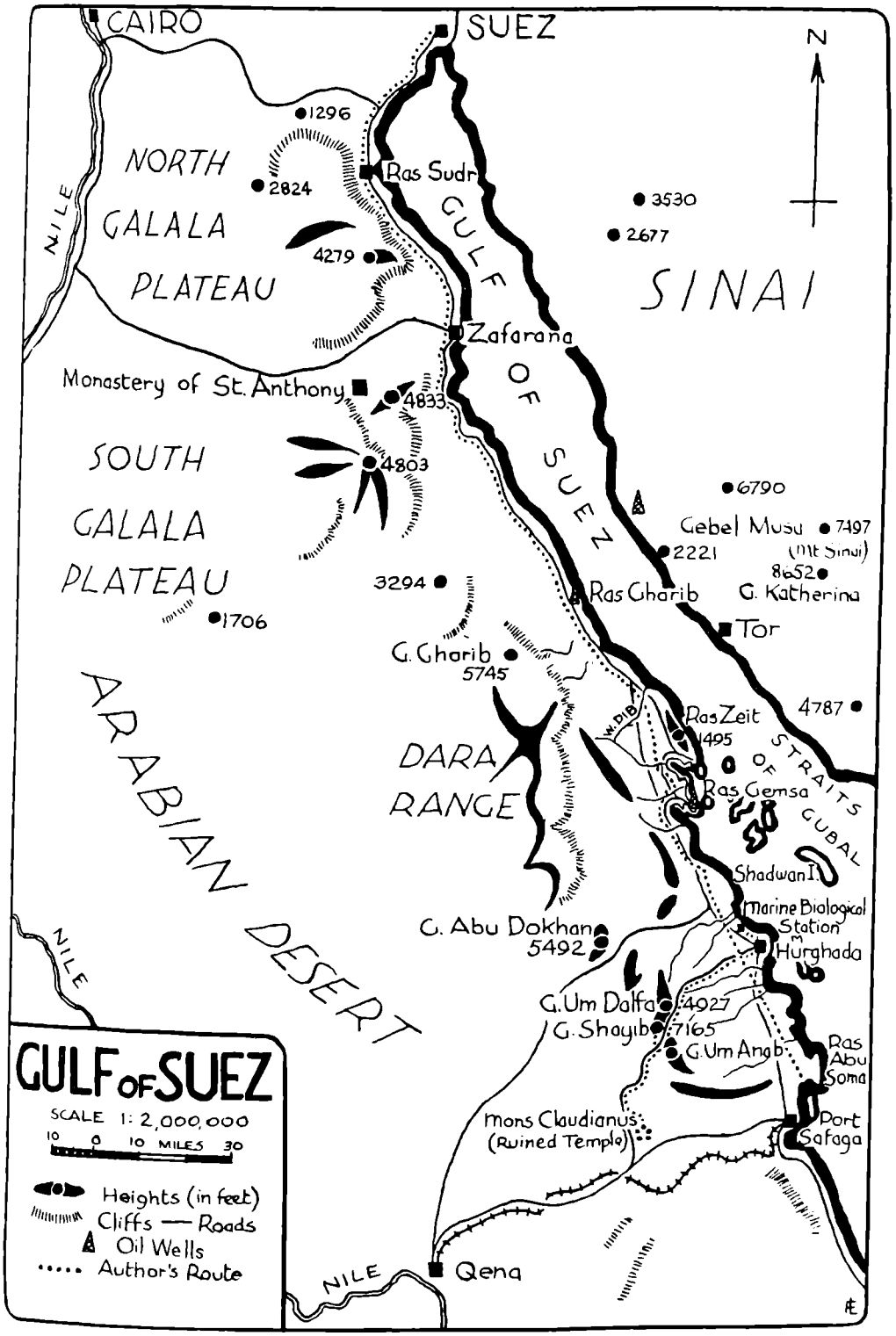
JOHN HUNT

APART from the Sinai peaks, which my wife and I had climbed early in 1948, the highest summit in Egypt is the Gebel Shayib (7,170 feet). It stands, a noble mountain despite its low stature, amid a spectacular array of granite satellites which compel the eye of the ocean voyager as he passes the head of the Red Sea. The mountain chain of which these peaks are a part is the northern extremity of the so-called Red Sea Hills, and forms a watershed between the coast at this point and the Nile valley at Qena.

Early in December 1948 we had the opportunity, in company with Dr. and Mrs. Bangham, to visit this interesting region. While our main intention was to make an ascent of the Gebel Shayib we were also keen to see the Egyptian Government's Marine Biological Station at Hurghada, and to visit the dead Roman town of Mons Claudianus, situated in the hills not far from our objective.

Travelling, perforce, in two vehicles—an old motor-cycle combination and a Standard-8 Tourer—ill-suited for the 250-mile journey to Hurghada, which can be very rough going, we set out on the afternoon of 3rd December. At dusk we stopped to 'brew up' beneath the high rugged Gebel El Galala, some 40 miles south of Suez, in a sheltered cove littered with driftwood which made an excellent fire. Our only mechanical defect thus far had been a broken motor-cycle chain, but later that evening more serious trouble developed when the same vehicle burst a tyre beyond repair. Owing to various misfortunes prior to our departure no spare wheels or inner tubes had been brought for the machine, and an anxious two hours were spent in extracting and fitting the tube from the spare wheel of the car into the motor-cycle tyre. The problem was the more difficult in that the respective dimensions of the two wheels bore no relation to each other. Here again we were lucky to find, by groping on the shingle in the inky darkness, enough driftwood to build a fire, to provide light for our operations. Late at night we passed in succession the lighthouses of Abu Darag and Zafrana, and towards midnight we found a sheltered hollow in the sand-hills south of the latter place, where we huddled for a few hours' sleep.

Next morning, after further mechanical adventures, we ran on into the busy oilfield settlement of Ras Gharib. As we approached over the good oiled road which runs for 40 kilometres on either side of this township, we had magnificent views across the Gulf of Suez to the Sinai peaks, bathed red in the morning sun, and were able to


CAIRO
SUEZ
N
1296
NORTH
GALALA
PLATEAU
2824
Ras Sudr
NILE
4279
GULF OF SUEZ
3530
2677
SINAI
Zafarana
Monastery of St. Anthony
4833
SOUTH
GALALA
PLATEAU
4803
6790
Gebel Musu
7497
(Mt Sinai)
2221
8652
G. Katherina
Ras Gharib
3294
Tor
1706
G. Gharib
5745
ARABIAN DESERT
DARA
RANGE
W. DIB
Ras Zeit
1495
4787
STRAITS OF GUBAL
Ras Gemsa
Shadwan I.
Marine Biological Station
Hurghada
G. Abu Dokhan
5492
G. Um Dalfa
4927
G. Shayib
7165
G. Um Angb
Ras Abu Soma
Mons Claudianus
(Ruined Temple)
Port Safaga
Qena
NILE
GULF OF SUEZ
SCALE 1: 2,000,000
10 0 10 MILES 30
Heights (in feet)
Cliffs — Roads
Oil Wells
Author's Route

pick out familiar summits. Nearer at hand, to the west, the fine dark mass of the Gebel Gharib rose abruptly from the sand plain some 40 miles distant. At Ras Gharib we refilled with petrol, which we were disappointed to find was more expensive on the oilfield than in the Canal area. The Shell Company officials were most kind in making available spare parts.

Soon after midday we set out to complete the 100 remaining miles to Hurghada. Much of the track has a good oiled surface, and with a strong following wind we made good time over this final stage of our journey. Before we reached Hurghada, the sun was setting behind the Gebel Shayib, throwing the long serrated chain of peaks into a fantastic silhouette of sharp and tortured forms.

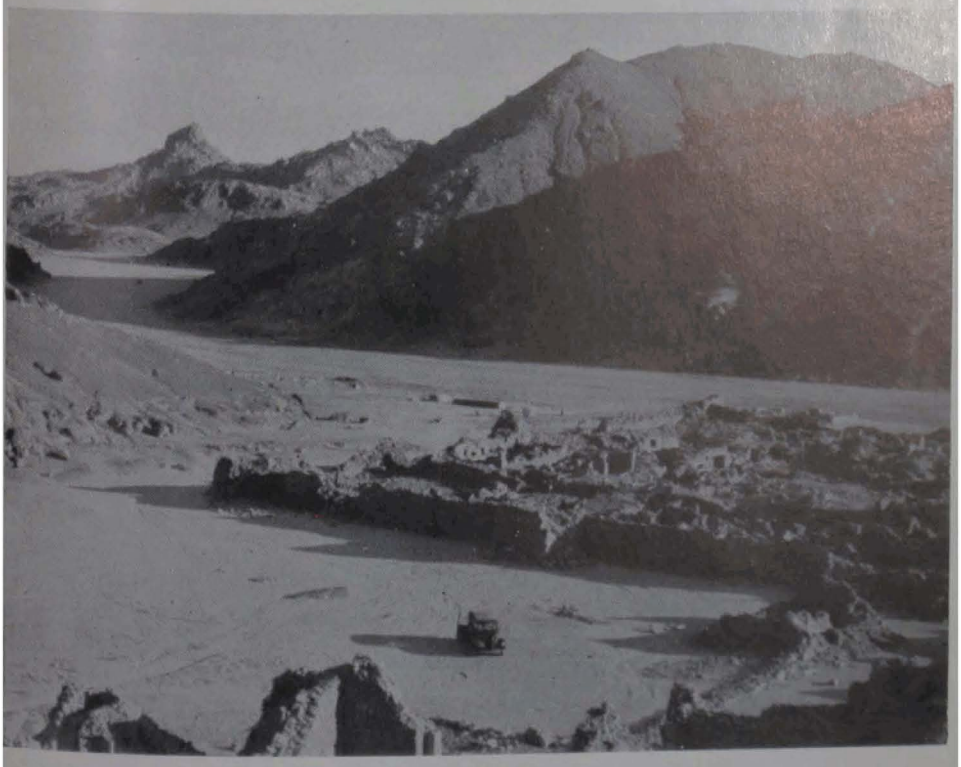
The oilfield officials had been informed of our arrival by telegram and the guest-house was placed at our disposal. We were pleasantly surprised to find it a well-appointed bungalow, with electric light, gas cooking, and running water—a strange luxury this, in a place entirely dependent for fresh water on a weekly tanker from Suez. An excellent dinner was served in a style almost embarrassing to our travel-stained selves, after which we settled down to make arrangements for our two-days' stay in this area.

Part of the next morning was spent at the Marine Biological Station. The Director, Dr. Gohar, was absent but we were shown around by his clerk. Among the many fascinating live specimens at this observatory were sharks, giant rays, and sea turtles, and hanging from a hook was a recently killed bull walrus, a rare catch in these parts, though cows are fairly common. In a glass-bottomed boat we rowed out to a coral reef, and gazed in amazement at the myriad shapes and colours below us.

In the early afternoon we started across the desert towards the mountains, driving fast over the sandy stretches to avoid 'bogging down'. After the first 20 miles we were in the foothills, while the higher peaks began to rise impressively from the flat sandy wadis ahead of us. After a further 20 miles, and over the watershed, we turned off into a remote wadi and suddenly, round a bend, came into sight of Mons Claudianus. It is built within walls about 100 yards square, the dwellings forming a veritable honeycomb of cubicles inside. Although the roofs had collapsed, the walls are in a remarkable state of repair, and on the rubble and sand-filled alleys and floors we found several domestic objects of obvious historical interest. It was tantalizing imagining what must lie buried in this as yet unexcavated city.

A little above and beyond the town is a temple similarly well preserved, and in the surrounding hills we found amazing evidence of the industry which had attracted the Romans—the quarrying

The Gebel Shayib and the Wadi Abu Abid



Mons Claudianus

and dressing of the local red granite. Wedge marks in the rock faces showed where great slabs had been split off by the action of water on wooden wedges. Tablets and cubes of granite lay around in profusion, some of them inscribed. Most interesting of all were the pillars, in every stage of completion, from the rough, unfashioned 'log' of rock to the perfectly rounded and polished column ready for export. One such monster measured no less than 50 feet in length and 8 feet in diameter; its weight, we were later informed, was 122 tons. Completely finished, this work of art had split across the centre, presumably while the craftsmen were endeavouring to move it from its horizontal bed of rock. In one wadi were numerous high stone cairns or platforms, where the slave-masters used to sit and supervise the work of the Egyptian slaves. The sun was already setting when we turned to go, reluctant to leave this remarkable relic of life as it was led nineteen centuries ago.

That night we bivouacked on the watershed at about 2,000 feet, and at dawn next day we set off to cover the 10 or more miles and 5,000 vertical feet which separated us from the summit of the Gebel Shayib; we had first to cross an intervening ridge to reach the great sand-stream of the Wadi Abu Abid, which runs beneath the south face of the mountain. Moreover, we had misinterpreted the sketch-map of the area in Murray's article in the May 1947 number of the *Alpine Journal*, and as a result wasted precious time and effort in seeking a way over this ridge; a maze of shallow wadis and indefinite stony hill-sides barred our view of Shayib and made navigation a difficult problem in the half light. It was not until 7 a.m. that we stood on the crest, and looked down on the upper reaches of the Wadi Abu Abid, and across it to the south face of our peak. About 1½ miles wide, this sand-filled valley reminded me forcibly, both in appearance and scale, of some Karakoram glacier: it was not the only reminiscence of the Himalayas which I was to experience that day. From this side, the mountain presents a complicated structure of deep twisting couloirs and bold dividing buttresses. It was clear that a number of routes to the foot of the final ridge were offered us, but with a bare minimum of available daylight, and with only this one day to spare for the peak, we elected to follow a proven route to the top rather than explore an alternative of our own, and followed Murray's footsteps via the head of the great wadi below us to reach the north face.

Dropping 600 feet on to the level sandy surface of the wadi, we made our way upstream and in 45 minutes reached another low col, giving access to the steep stony gully forming the head of the Wadi Abu Abid. In this we picked up a faint cairned track, and laboriously made our way along; Dr. and Mrs. Bangham dropped behind, and

as agreed, we went ahead without them. It was already past 9.30 a.m. before we emerged from the gully into a sheltered amphitheatre beneath the westernmost peaks on the summit ridge, which towered, by now not more than 1,000 feet, above us. I was beginning to feel the effects of a heavy rucksack—we had come prepared for a bitter wind—and lack of training, so we abandoned most of our paraphernalia, and began the climb up the western flank of the ridge with our objective a gap between the summits.

From here at last we had a view of the highest point. It rose, a smooth square tower of grey granite, depressingly high above us and a considerable distance away, probably more than 2 miles. Weariness grew as we plodded on beneath the summits and above a great deep wadi, and the ascent of a final boulder-filled gully leading to a col on the ridge immediately north of the peak taxed us to our outmost. From this col, however, only about 150 feet remained of apparently unscaleable rock, but by making a short descent on the far side we were able to skirt the smooth uncompromising walls and attain a gap dividing the tower into two distinct turrets. A few minutes of moderate scrambling took us up the smooth sloping dome, and on the stroke of midday we sat down to rest on the summit, beside the cairn built there by Murray twenty-seven years before.

The day was somewhat overcast and in the dull light the magnificent panorama lost some effect. Despite this, we were rewarded by a very extensive view, ranging from the Sinai massif 130 miles to the north to the ground below the Nile valley 100 miles to the west. The coast-line could be traced for miles and beyond it could be seen the tapering apex of the Sinai peninsula, a dark shadow on the deep-blue ocean. Below us, 4,000 feet down, the Wadi Abu Inn bounded the eastern foot of the crags on which we stood. The day was still, and it was difficult to realize that only 30 miles away on the coast a high wind was blowing.

Minutes passed all too quickly, and we knew scant time remained to reach our camp site in daylight. In $1\frac{1}{4}$ hours we were back on the little plateau beneath the western summit; I was suffering severe cramp in my thighs and we were both greatly parched. The descent of the long stony gully to the Wadi Abu Abid turned out as hard a trial coming down as it had been on the way up, but worse lay ahead. The 600 feet which had to be climbed to leave the wadi proved to be as great a nightmare as the climbing over 23,000 feet above Camp 6 on Peak 36 had been nearly fourteen years ago—we were nearly on our hands and knees with fatigue by now. Once up, however, I found my final reserve of energy, and with less than half an hour of daylight remaining—it was now 4.30—could push ahead and reassure the remainder of the party. In the failing light I could

just see two cars waiting at the end of the wadi where we had camped, and by 5 p.m. the party was reunited, and we were being plied with the mugs of hot coffee that we had been thinking of for so many hours past.

Ours was the sixth recorded ascent of Gebel Shayib. Throughout the day we found abundant traces of wild life: ibex, of which we picked up a horn, gazelle, marmots, and what we were informed later were wild asses. Once again we regretted the lack of available time to watch for and observe the creatures of the wild, parched, and desolate land.

The return journey occupied the last two days, not without its mechanical woes. On the second day my wife and I stayed behind to admire at our leisure the splendid stretch of coast north of Abu Darag, dominated by the great escarpment of the Gebel El Galala. We called in for water at one of the Camel Corps Outposts where watch is kept for contraband along this famous smugglers' coast, and were shown a giant ibex horn which dwarfed our own cherished find—we were surprised to find that these animals range so far north. On 8th September we arrived at Fayid in the evening, wearied from the long hours of motoring across the desert, but greatly refreshed in spirit by our visit to the fine mountains that surround Mons Claudianus.

ATTEMPT ON NANDA KOT, 1939

H. FRANKS

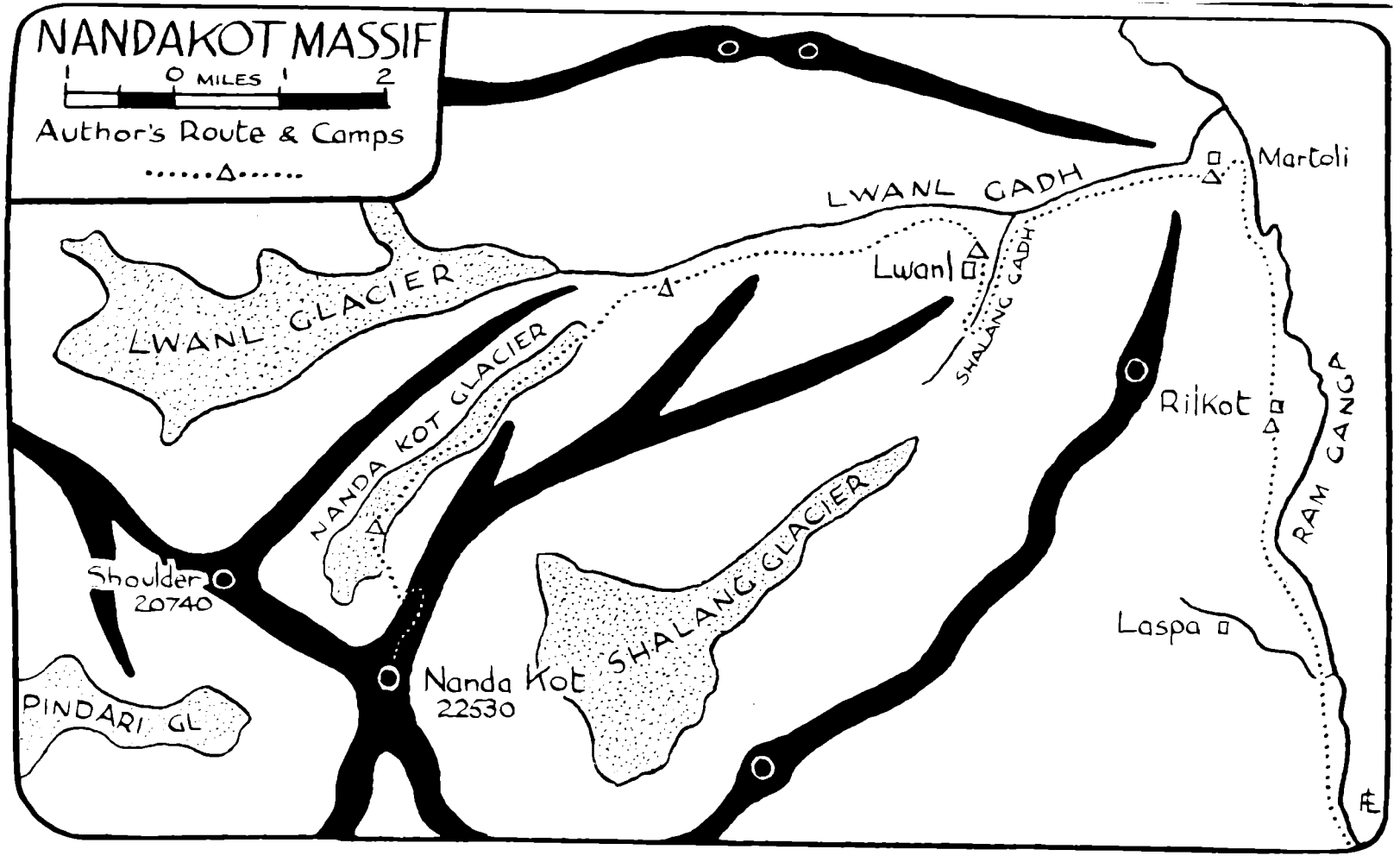
IN 1936 a Japanese expedition of six students succeeded in climbing Nanda Kot—the first known climbers ever to reach the 22,530-foot summit. Their story is told in the *Himalayan Journal* of 1938 by Mr. Hotta. In 1939 Lieut. L. C. Lind and I made an attempt to scale the mountain, and though we failed by 500 feet, we felt that our efforts, under the circumstances, were not without some success.

The Japanese adopted the siege system—a large party, a lavish outfit (sixty-six coolies and a large quantity of Japanese food), time limited only by the seasons, and above all that great asset in the Himalayas, Sherpa porters. We, on the other hand, were two strong; we started out with sixteen Dhotial coolies and near Base Camp added six Bhutias; we had brought no Sherpas, a large proportion of our kit was improvised, and to a great extent we lived off the land. Finally, and what turned out to be the most important factor of all, our time was strictly limited: the 'exigencies of the Service' demanded that we should be back in Almora by 11th June. In fact, 'rush tactics' as opposed to 'siege tactics'.

On 11th May we set out from Almora, and making our way through the beautiful foothills of Kumaon arrived at Rilkot on the 19th. Here we collected from Laspa the six Bhutia porters, atta, satu, and kerosene which Lind had arranged for previously. On 21st May we turned west from Martoli along the Lwanl Gadh, intending to establish Base Camp as high as possible. However, a mile out of Martoli a blinding snow-storm smote us and put us two days behind schedule. We established Base Camp half a mile from the foot of the glacier that descends from the north slopes of the Nanda Kot massif. Here we reorganized loads and set off, with eleven coolies, up the glacier. The eleven coolies left in Base Camp were to replenish the camp with atta and firewood from Martoli.

We pitched Camp I at the head of the glacier below an ice-wall at what we estimated to be 15,000 feet. The coolies seemed very comatose, would eat nothing and piled into bed, while Lind and I pitched tents and saw to gear. The ice-wall above the camp was a fortuitous barrier against the snow avalanches which thundered down throughout the night from the northern ridges.

Next day the Patwari announced that some of the coolies were sick and could not go on, so Lind and I with four chosen men set out to reconnoitre. After a demonstration in step cutting we told the


NANDAKOT MASSIF
0 MILES 1 2
Author's Route & Camps
Martoli
LWANL GADH
Lwanl
SHALANG GADH
LWANL GLACIER
NANDA KOT GLACIER
Rilkot
RAM GANGA
SHALANG GLACIER
Shoulder
20740
Laspa
Nanda Kot
22530
PINDARI GL

four coolies to make a route on the lowest slopes while we went up 1,500 feet and completed the step-cutting higher up. We then decided on the route we would take to the rocky ridge above us, where we would establish Camp II next day. There was a lot of ice on the route and, lower down, several difficult crevasses, and in one place we would have to cross directly beneath a hanging wall of snow—a potential avalanche—but with the route prepared for 1,500 feet the going ought to be fairly rapid.

May 25th. We rose at 5.30 a.m. to find another brilliant day, the temperature 18° Fahrenheit. Leaving one coolie and the 40-lb. tent behind we set off up our 1,500 feet of cut steps. At the foot of the ice slope the going appeared too difficult for the coolies so Lind and I started up to test it—slow and careful work. We had climbed a bare 100 feet when there was a roar, and snow, ice, and rock, luckily only in small amounts, hurtled down towards us from the hanging wall above. We decided that we could not risk so difficult a route with the added danger of avalanche, so returned to the coolies and the only alternative route, to descend, manœuvre round a wide crevasse and traverse left to a stiff pitch of avalanche snow. In spite of the fairly secure footholds the grade was too steep to preclude cutting steps, so kicking and cutting, we ascended some 500 feet to rock—the base of the rocky ridge where we hoped to make Camp II. It was bad rock, coming away at the lightest touch and, after scrambling the first few feet, we used ropes, Lind and I, with a rope each, ascending and then belaying, while the coolies made their way first to the head of my rope and then on again to the head of Lind's rope, what time I made my way a rope's length above Lind again. Thus relaying, we succeeded in climbing about 300 feet, and at 4 p.m. decided to make camp.

We sent seven of the coolies back to Camp I and kept three picked men. The returning coolies were chary of returning on their own, but fortunately were ably led by our head Bhutia, whose simple motto 'Kismet ki bat hai' enabled him to face life or death with equal serenity. We owed a lot to the willingness and ability and energy of Jagu. We and the three remaining Dhotials then went up a little way and made rope-holds along the more difficult bits of rock above us in readiness for the morrow, leaving our three 50-foot ropes belayed to firm rocks hanging down the mountain side. Returning we put up our tents, which seemed to be perched on most precarious positions. Just before sunset we saw the seven coolies arrive safely in the camp below. A series of domestic tragedies started here with the losing of our one and only dekchi, which gave us the slip and slid away down towards Camp I, swiftly followed by one of our two mugs! We found a coolie's lota a poor substitute for the

dekchi as it only gave us half a mug of tea at a time. The three men with us, Patwari, Parbat Singh, and Namonia, seemed tired but happy, and we felt we had picked three good men.

Next day after tea and aspirins—we all had headaches—we broke camp. We had found that the tents leaked a bit, and our blankets were thinly coated with snow which had fallen during the night. Lind started out first to reconnoitre while the coolies took the loads in relays up the ropeway; I came up last with the ropes to find the kit all stacked on a ledge. The rock was better and we were able to take the loads up, in relays, without the use of the rope, for some time, till we reached bad rock and the ropes were required again. It was late by the time we arrived at the foot of a steep snow ridge, too steep for setting up tents, so we decided, as we were all feeling tired, to camp on the junction of the snow and rock. Lind and I hewed away the rock while the coolies collected loose flat stones to make a firm base. After two hours we had made two platforms and put up our tents, reckoning we were at about 18,500 feet, 1,000 feet above Camp II. We were safe from avalanches here, but we felt sure that it would not need a very strong wind to blow down the tents or dislodge the platforms when, cold and tired, we turned in, only to find our limited ration had been shortened by a complete tin of treacle having broken open and oozed into the kitbag, leaving the tin as empty as space! We had by now a regular camp routine—I made the beds, while Lind lit the primus and cooked snow—a cold, lengthy job, demanding the utmost patience. The coolies would then cook the chapatis for us in their tent, while we got into our tent, took off our boots and knocked the snow off them, another cold and much-disliked job. We would then have supper in bed and spend the rest of the night trying to keep warm.

May 27th. Patwari woke us at seven to announce the coolies were ill and could not go on; we did not feel too good ourselves, so distributed aspirins all round and tried to stay in the sun and keep warm—the first day of rest we had had since leaving Almora. We spent the day drinking innumerable lotas of tea and discussing plans. We decided that next day we would leave one tent here and take only our own tent, rations, and bistra up to Camp IV, the coolies would return to Camp III, and next day Lind and I would make for the summit. At midday a strong gale started to blow and snow fell. The sun gave up the unequal contest and we found it difficult to keep warm; we hoped the gale would blow itself out before next morning as time was too short for us to waste another day in camp. We wondered how Camp I was faring, for that morning we had seen an immense avalanche rush down the mountain and, leaping the ice-wall, go bouncing over the single tent, hiding it from our view

with a spray of snow. We had stood petrified until the spray cleared, and thankfully we saw that the tent still stood.

That night was cold and stormy and the next morning still blew hard though the snow had stopped. Taking down the tent and dividing out all the loads for Camp IV was difficult in the bitter cold. With the help of Patwari and Parbat Singh—for Namonia had announced himself *hors de combat*—four loads were ready at last, our numbed hands battling with rope knots.

By the time we had finished light snow had turned to a blizzard, and the wind was violent. The coolies huddled in their tent—Lind and I ascended a little way to see how the going was, but visibility was almost nil—it was obvious we could do nothing till the storm blew over. The snow ridge was treacherous for beneath the snow lay ice, and the top covering, though thick, was powdery and loosely packed, giving way at the slightest pressure. We returned and packed into the coolies' Meade tent. The men were cold and glum; one glance at Namonia told us what he thought about it all! After an hour our feet were numb; we took our boots off and massaged each other's feet, warming them slightly. A corner of the tent blew loose and had to be adjusted; finally Nature, not content with the devastation she had created, sent one sudden gust which tore a gaping rent in the tent. After a period of intense cold we managed to repair this with a rain sheet, and an hour later, with no sign of the storm abating, climbed wearily out into the cold again to put up our tent. The platform was snow-covered and had to be cleared and the wind fought to tear tent and blankets from our hands; the knots seemed like knots of steel. It was an hour of struggling before we eventually shut ourselves in from the storm, cold, wet, and discouraged, to face another night in Camp III. The storm had cost us another valuable day and our chance of success seemed more remote than ever.

May 29th. The storm had at last blown over—it was still very cold. Namonia refused to work and lay huddled up, determined to appear as ill as possible. He certainly was sick, partly from mountain sickness but more from lack of food, as it appeared he was of different caste to the other two, and not allowed to cook his food inside the tent. As it had been impossible to cook outside he had just gone without, until thoroughly discouraged through weakness. Neither cursing nor cajoling were of the least avail so we left him bundled up in blankets, and got under way. It was obvious that going would be very slow, for the route was difficult and we were a man short. Once again we reconnoitred the icy ridge above but it was hopeless. At every dig the ice chipped away and the grade higher up became almost vertical, so we turned our attention to the rocky ridge. The

Base camp, about 12,500 feet

Camp III, about 18,500 feet

Camp IV, about 19,000 feet

Lind approaching ice wall and razor-edge ridge

top of this, where it met the base of the snow ridge, was covered in a slush of ice and loose rock; however, digging deep foot-holes we pushed on, then with our feet well embedded and as firm as possible, we belayed the ropes, one above the other, so that the coolies could bring the four loads up in two relays. We continued like this for about 150 feet, but it took a long time to cover even this short distance, for the coolies were working very slowly and needing long rests. The rock now merged into snow, and formed a single slope, and here we turned left, to climb the snow face and then reach the top of the snow ridge above us. This face was again very steep, with ice below the thin covering of snow. One large rock jutted out of the snow on which the coolies dumped the loads; above, the ice was steeper and impassable. Lind was traversing very slowly—the ice was still bad—but eventually reported better snow, and I joined him with a rope. We turned upwards and found it was now possible to kick our way up. The coolies found the traverse difficult and slipped several times to be saved by their grasp on the rope, but we succeeded in getting coolies and kit to the top of the ridge. We were now about 400 feet above Camp III but owing to the traverses, had covered a lot of ground, and taken six hours to do it. While the men rested we went a little way along the false crest of this ridge and turned upwards to find, 150 feet higher, a flat space beneath an ice-wall, cut off from the wall by crevasses. We went back, belayed at intervals, and eventually got the kit up to this area. The coolies then announced they were very tired and very sick and could not go on, and we decided that if we were to go on we would have to ascend several hundred feet to find anything resembling a possible camping ground—the coolies saw this too; they certainly had had a hard day's work and the height was obviously affecting them; we, too, were weary but perfectly prepared to go on if it was practical. However, it wasn't, so we made camp and sent the coolies back to Camp III with two of our three ropes to help them on their way, and orders to return two days later. The ground was ideally flat, and after levelling the snow we put up our tent and heated snow on a Meta stove inside. I had a splitting headache and increased my daily diet of aspirin to four—I reckoned that if I died on the mountain it would be from aspirin poisoning!

The sight of Nanda Devi from Camp IV was wonderful. From the immense walls that surrounded them, her twin peaks rose to firm pin-points of snow-covered rock and stood out starkly against the sky. A spume of snow blew from the western peak, and a black crow flying against the white background of the Nanda Kot shoulder added to the poetic beauty of the scene.

May 30th. After breakfasting on hot tea and raisins, we set off

with lightened rucksacks. For the first two hours Lind cut steps the whole way up a steep snow-face, while I held him on the rope, an amazing piece of labour, and it was only on retrospection that I realized the amount of energy he must have expended in those 120 minutes of non-stop work. Disdaining my offers to take over, he carried on till we reached deeper snow. Here we—or rather, he—rested for a while, then, still using the rope, we kicked our way up never-ending slopes, sometimes resorting to step-cutting to cover a stretch of ice. We then came to a precipitous slope, turned left to manœuvre round some crevasses, and ascended another steep slope—more step-cutting. We rested on a false crest and then kicked our way to the top of a ridge, and, left again, to the main ridge of which Nanda Kot is the summit. Here we made a reconnaissance. The main ridge was broken here, and to get on to the higher ridge leading to the summit, we must ascend a vertical ice-wall, directly beneath which was a deep crevasse, with a narrow ledge between it and the wall. We then went over the ridge to explore the other side and found an immense snow-field at the far end of which steep slopes led up to the Nanda Kot ridge. It was late by now so we decided to return to camp, and next day we would scale the ice-wall and make for the summit, which we reckoned was 1,000 feet above. It was not till later we knew our calculation had been 1,000 feet short.

Still roped we made our way down the snow rapidly till we reached the series of steps we had cut at the beginning of the day. These had to be taken carefully and with firm belays as the footholds had become very icy; we reached camp to find Patwari and Parbat Singh had brought up the primus and kerosene; this left them nothing to cook with so they must be living on satu. We felt confident that, given good weather, we could easily climb to the point we had reached to-day, scale the ice-wall and go for the top. There was no time to establish another camp, as the next day was our last—we must descend on 1st June to be in Almora by 11th June.

May 31st. The bright sun and cloudless sky of the morning augured another fine day and we left early. The sight of Nanda Devi, her majesty shiningly revealed by the rays of the morning sun, thrilled us again. We wondered how the Polish expedition was faring. Roped, we made our way swiftly up the slopes by our old steps, and in two hours were at our ice-wall. I belayed Lind on a short-rope and directed him while he cut foot and hand holes. Half an hour's work saw us above the ice-wall on a slope leading to a knife-edge ridge. At the bottom the snow was good and we kicked our way up, but soon the snow thinned and it was precarious going, step-cutting to the near end of the knife-edge. On the left was a steep slope to the snowfield and crevasses below; on the right the wall was sheer to the

head of the glacier; the top was a cornice overhanging the left side. We made our way along this, astraddle, digging our ice-axes in deep ahead of us to warn us of any possible breaks—twice we had to step over small breaks. But in the middle of the knife-edge we were confronted with a yawning chasm, too wide to step over; the only alternative to go down and round it, a slow job, and then continue along the ridge. At last this came to an end: we descended to the snow slopes, and started to kick our way up the thick firm snow. By this time we were pretty tired, and after an hour or so we were moving with difficulty. By 4.30 we were dragging ourselves up a few feet at a time, half asleep with fatigue, with leaden feet. We reached a mound 500 feet below the summit, and I sank wearily to the ground, and hauled up the rope that had been trailing behind me. Lind was looking at the summit in a very morose way; I assured him that I at any rate couldn't move another step upwards. We both looked long at the top and decided that, apart from our present condition, it would take two hours to reach it, for the final slope looked as though it were ice. Exhausted as this, it would be almost impossible to get over the knife-edge in the dark, if we were to go on now. Tired though we were, the feeling of deep disappointment seeped into our minds bitterly: we had failed in what we had set out to do. We had misjudged the height, as many have done before in the Himalayas, and our limited time had been diminished by a series of unfortunate incidents. It was with the greatest reluctance that we now turned our backs on our objective and started the long descent back. We roped at once and started down the snow slopes, shuffling, stumbling, and sliding.

Three days later we were at the Base Camp having picked up at Camp II a very welcome bag of mail which Major Foy had kindly sent on. In it was this letter from him:

Base Camp.
Polish Himalayan Expedition
31·5·39

Dear Lind and Franks,

Your post was sent to us by mistake yesterday, so I am returning it by our porter. We watched your ascent and return on the Nanda Kot Col today with great interest and congratulate you on your splendid effort, regretting that time does not permit of your reaching the summit of Nanda Kot on this occasion.

Wishing you better luck next time and a safe return to Naini Tal. I have one patient, Dr. Bujak who is unfit to climb at all.

Yours sincerely,
F. R. Foy.

P.S. I am sorry the blue prints were too late for you. Cheerio. S. Blake.
Best greeting from all. P. H. E.[1]

[1] Polish Himalayan Expedition.

Six weeks later Dr. Karpinski and Mr. Bernadzikiewicz were killed on the Milam glacier shortly after two other members of the expedition, Dr. Bujak (who was 'unfit to climb at all') and Klarner, had succeeded in reaching the summit of East Nanda Devi, the original objective of the Poles.

On 3rd June we left Base Camp, and were in Almora on the 12th. Nine years have gone by since Lind and I made this attempt. The day before we parted we made plans in Almora, and discussed the outlines of a long-term Himalayan climbing scheme: next year, Trisul, to give us more experience on an easy peak; and thereafter Kanchenjunga, Kamet, Chomolhari, Nanda Devi, Nanga Parbat, and one day—why not?—Everest. Three months later Hitler put an end to all such plans and two and a half years later Hirohito broke up our team—Lind, then Major L. C. Lind, M.C., The Kumaon Regiment and member of the Himalayan Club, was last seen brandishing an empty pistol at the oncoming Japs at Singapore, swearing at them with impotent fury and all the courage that had made him the great leader of our small, empiric Nanda Kot venture.

DESTINY HIMALAYA

H. PAIDAR

Schmaderer and Paidar had taken part in the fine ascent of Tent Peak in May 1939 which has been described in vol. xiii, pp. 48 ff.—ED.

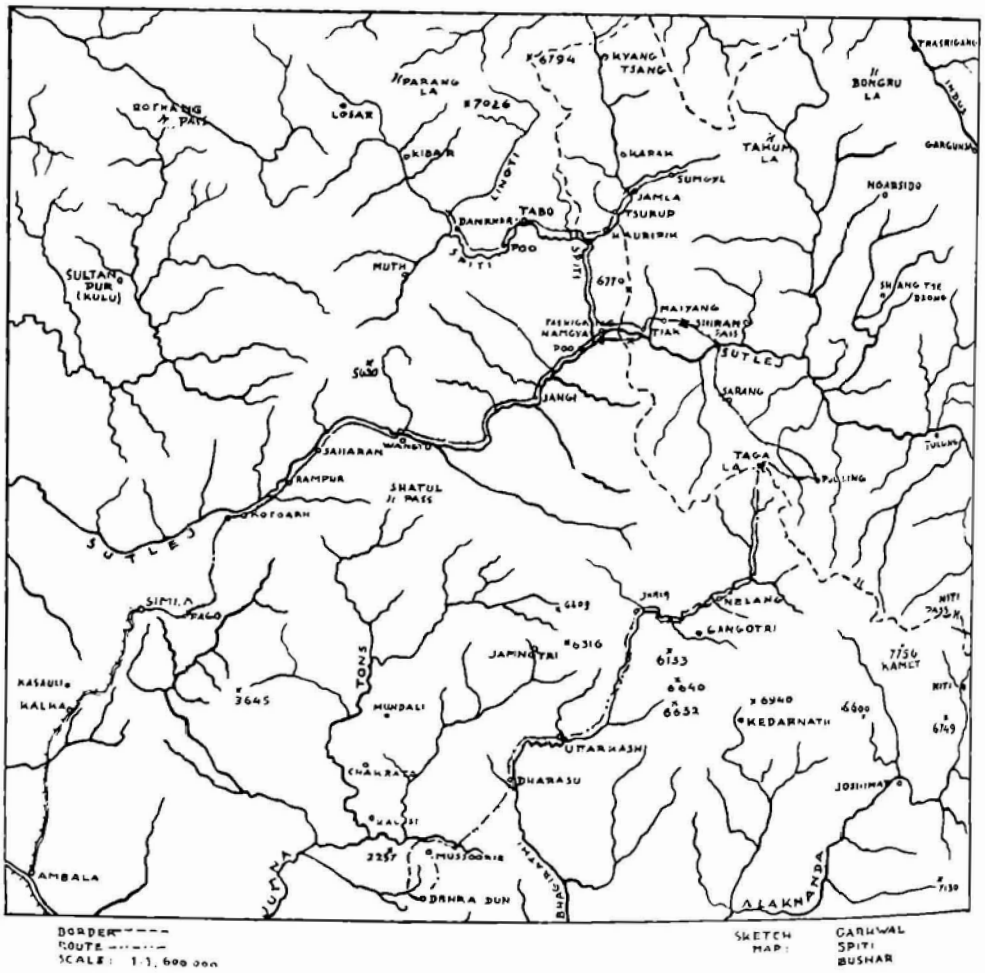
IT was about noon when we arrived at Gangtok, the capital of Sikkim. We were coming down from the high mountains round the Zemu glacier, ignorant of what was happening in the wide world. Next day—it was the 3rd September—we learnt that Britain was at war with Germany. That was the end of our second Sikkim Himalayan Expedition of 1939. Grob, who was of Swiss nationality, could leave for Europe and, because of the kindliness and help of the Political Officer of Sikkim, Mr. B. J. Gould, could take with him all our photos and films, but Schmaderer and myself, being Germans, had to be interned.

After several changes of camp, we landed at last at Premnagar, near Dehra Dun, at the foot of the Mussoorie Hills. That was in October 1941. It was not until May 1943 that Schmaderer made his first escape, with Schuemmer. They made their way along the Jumna, but near Rajgarhi they were recaptured and brought back, after three weeks' absence from the camp.

In March 1945, twenty-three internees were ordered to be transferred to Deoli, a camp in Rajputana, among them Schmaderer. To be sent away from the mountains which meant so much to him was more than he could stand, and he escaped again, having arranged that I should escape and join him, three days later. A cart called daily to take the rubbish out of camp to the refuse-ditches a mile away and, on 27th March, having had the driver called away on some pretext or other, I boarded this vehicle and was covered down with tins, straw, and filth by my comrades. The water-buffalo seemed uneasy as if there were something unusual with his load, but the driver noticed nothing at all—it was a very hot day and everybody a little lazy. The gates were opened and I rumbled out. Luck was with me. Before the refuse-ditches were reached, the driver stopped, unharnessed his buffalo, and disappeared! The sun was hot, his home was near, and no one was due at the ditches until 4 o'clock. I made for the jungle.

Two hours later I met Schmaderer in the Swarna Nulla, and that same night we reached the Jumna by way of the Kara-su saddle. The first ten days we did our marching by night, in case of arrest. About what we took to be the 14th April we reached Nelang, a

village high in the Jadhganga valley, and it was the end of April when we stood on the top of the Taga-la (*c.* 18,000 feet), a pass on the border of Tibet and India. The winter of 1944/5 was a hard one, and from 10,000 feet onwards paths and slopes were snow-covered.



Our tennis-shoes were in shreds, we had no boots, our rations were melting like snow in the sun, and we had another pass of 16,000 feet to cross before we reached habitation.

However, we reached Pulling at last, a small village, typically Tibetan and none too clean. The people were not very friendly and at first were unwilling to sell us the fat and ghur (sugar) we needed so badly. But there we met the Raja of Tulling and accompanied him down to Par, a more congenial village where we stayed eight days, making the acquaintance of the Dzong-pen of Shang-tse, who travelled with a tea caravan to Shipki. We put our few belongings on one of his yaks, and accepted his offer of escort to Shipki, travelling through barren country to a pass leading to the Ob, a tributary of the Sutlej. On our march we visited Ri, a picturesque place in an

amphitheatre opening to the south on a wild and narrow gorge, with a monastery and an old chorten with beautiful paintings on the walls. From Ri we went via Chuse gom-pa down to Sarang, crossing the Sutlej and climbing the Shiring-la (17,000 feet) from where we marched down to Mai-yang, and it was the end of May when we reached Shipki, high above the Sutlej with the rock and ice-walls of Riwo Phargyul in the background.

On 1st June we arrived at Nam-gya on Indian territory again, to learn that Aufschneiter and Harrer had been, like us, escorted to Shipki, in 1944. We had to decide between going down the Sutlej valley, with the possibility of being interned again, or try Tibet a second time. If we could have known that the war in Europe was over, our plans would have been different and Schmaderer would still be alive, but as it was, our anxiety was to get away, and so that night we escaped down the slopes to the suspension bridge crossing the Sutlej, and in the early hours of the morning we camped in the neighbourhood of Tashigang. Four days' forced marches took us to Lari, the first village in the upper Spiti valley. All the way we had to carry our entire belongings so we got plenty of first-hand experience in what it means to take a load of 60 to 70 lb. at altitudes of 16,000 and 17,000 feet, and reminded us of our porters and their heavy packs on our 1937 and 1939 expeditions.

Schmaderer's idea was that we should follow the Spiti for some ten days and then go eastwards to Gartok, but this proved to be wrong. We made up the Spiti valley as far as Dankhar, hanging like an eagle's nest among steep cliffs, and thence to Kibar, where the people told us the best way to Gartok would be via Sum-gyl. So we turned back to try this route, and bought a donkey to relieve our weary shoulders.

At Sum-gyl we met traders who were on their way to Trashigang on the Indus. Asking about the way to the Bibi-la, we were told it was impassable and dangerous, but our hearts were set on trying to reach Nepal and see the mighty mountains of the Lidi valley, so we decided to try it, in spite of the villagers' forebodings—they even offered us rations for our return journey!

Next morning when the waters of the Sum-gyl river were low we crossed and four hours later pitched camp. We were preparing our evening meal when from behind a small hill a man mysteriously appeared, followed by another, and later yet another—at last twenty-seven men in all, who formed a half circle around us in a very ominous manner. After an hour a spokesman came up and told us that on no account could we proceed to Trashigang and if we did not return to Sum-gyl there would be trouble—and accordingly back we had to go.

We next tried the road to Tibet without success, from Bartiok, and then decided to abandon all plans for Nepal, and turn west for Kashmir. So up the Spiti valley we went again, by now the middle of July. Lari was our first objective where we found the inhabitants had all moved to higher and better grazing grounds, and food was therefore not obtainable. However, we knew a farmer at the next village, Tabo, who had sold us cheese and tsampa before, and so Schmaderer decided to stop at Tabo and bargain for some food, while I continued to pitch our next camp, half-way between Tabo and Poo.

I went off about 11.30 and two hours later was climbing the little hill which leads to the camping-ground. From there I looked back over the route I had come, and about 2 miles off I could see three tiny dots moving, in my direction. That must have been about the time Schmaderer was murdered, because the three dots never materialized—no one came to join me. After four or five hours of waiting I became very anxious, and went back to Tabo. I could find no trace of Schmaderer's footprints, his army boots, heavily nailed, and everyone I asked told me the same story—'he had bought his provisions and left Tabo on the road for Poo.' As often as I questioned them, so often did I receive the same reply.

Early next morning I arose, loaded the donkey, and set off for Poo again. It was not an easy path to follow, disappearing as it does every now and then in the waters of the river, to the great despondency of the donkey, who had to be forced through the flood. Under overhanging rocks, in one place, there is a steep bridge to ascend, dangling and swaying in the air, with the hungry waters of the Spiti rushing below, and it was hard to drive the frightened donkey over this. However, at noon I reached Poo, to find that no one knew anything of Schmaderer—he had not reached that village. A few women who overheard me sat down and started weeping, which alarmed me, as it is only customary in that land to weep for the dead, but I got no clue and had to return to Tabo. There I got the same replies as before, but with a new suggestion: could my companion have been drowned by the river while crossing it? It seemed incredible that a trained man like Schmaderer could have been drowned in water that was only knee-deep, however fiercely it was flowing; moreover, there was a bridge and no reason to ford it. However, I searched both banks widely, and the neighbourhood generally, and after three days of fruitless inquiry and investigation decided I had better return to India. Something had to be done in this matter, and, I was sure, the people *knew* what had happened.

In fourteen days' time I reached Tashigang, meeting on the way a Tibetan from Sargong with whom we had struck up a friendship

on the Pulling–Shipki march. Tashigang was much nicer than it had been in June. The trees were green and the apricots were ripe, and the sheep were grazing on the new grass. I set up my tent each evening with a heavy heart; I was beginning to doubt that Schmaderer would return and the troubles and anxieties of the past fortnight be ended.

In the late afternoon one day a Tibetan arrived at Tashigang, and from him I learnt the story of my friend's disappearance, as we sat by the fireside of the Tibetan from Sarong.

The informer was a resident of Lari and had picked up the tale on the way through Tabo—Schmaderer had been murdered in Tabo. He had let the natives see his money and valuables when he paid for his provisions, and they had then and there murdered him and robbed him. When I asked for the names of the murderers, the Tibetan demanded money, to accompany me to Rampur and report the matter there. When I told him I had no money, as it had all been with Schmaderer, he disappeared and was not seen again. The friendly Tibetan from Sarong warned me not to trust this man and on no account to stay by myself at night, and one way and another I thought it would be best to push on to Poo[1] on the road back to India.

On arrival there I told my story to the schoolmaster, Neg Dharam Bag, and the headman of Poo, Devi Chand. They identified the suspicious Tibetan as Sonam Chhering, a very bad character, a robber and a thief, and were strongly of the opinion that he was after any remaining money or possessions of value. Accordingly I placed a full report with the Superintendent of Police at Saharan, where I rested for a fortnight after my journey there via Chini. Before my rest was up I was told that immediate action had been taken by the Deputy-Commissioner of Police, Kangra, while on inspection duty at Spiti. The culprits had been arrested, though two of them escaped afterwards, and one man, Raqzin Chherrup, was brought to Kangra, put into jail, and charged with the robbery and murder of Schmaderer. A police-inspector of Rampur, Parshotam Dass, told me it had been forty years since such an offence had been committed.

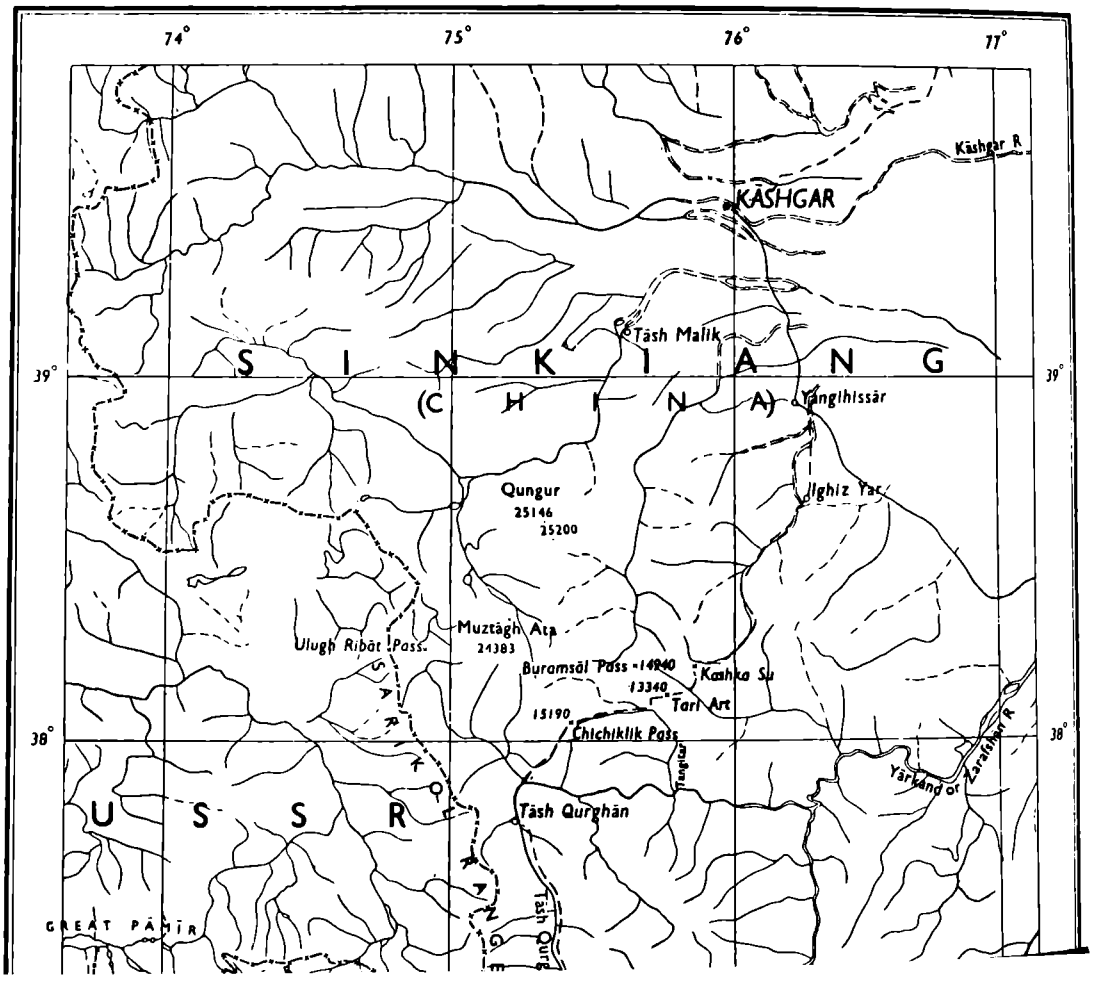
By the end of August I was in Rampur where the escort from the C.I. Camp Premnagar was waiting for me, and I returned to Dehra Dun via Simla, arriving on 6th September. Nearly a month later I was restored to Deoli, Rajputana, a sad blow, as I missed the mountains, valleys, and woods of the Premnagar camp so badly. During our internment we had many privileges to relieve the monotony of seven years' imprisonment, and the greatest privilege was to

[1] Not to be confused with the other village of that name, near Tabo.—Ed.

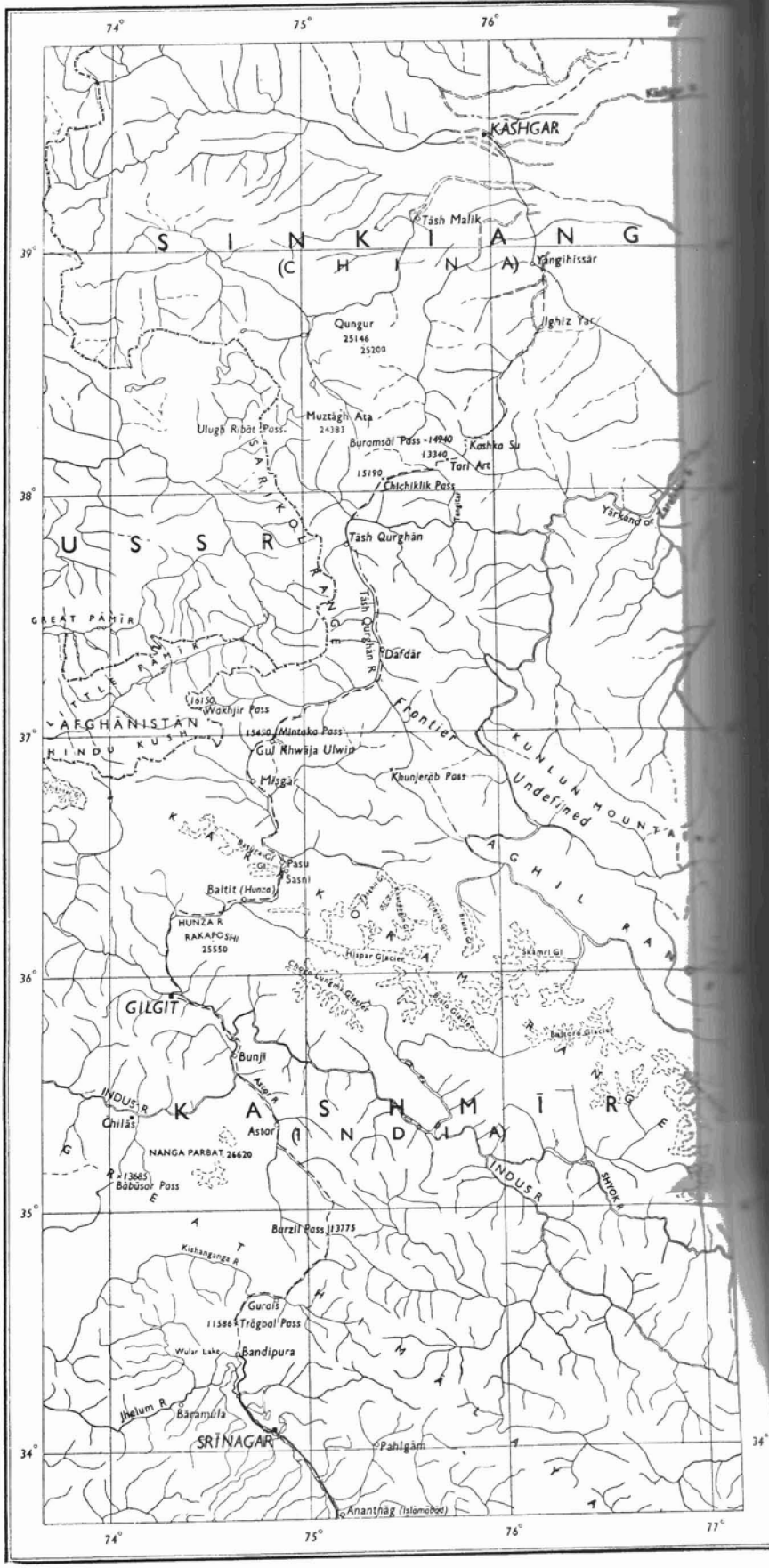
be allowed excursions, as we were. In September 1946 when the Italians from Deoli were repatriated, we Germans returned to Dehra Dun. Here I got another light on Schmaderer's murder, which I believe to be the true one. The natives saw the money, gold coins, and watch, &c., in his possession while he was at Tabo, and after he had left, three men followed him to the steep and narrow bridge on the way to Poo. There while he was talking they pushed him over into the river, killing him with stones from above, and drowning him in the Spiti, where they threw his body. His valuables were found by the Inspector on the Tibetans at Tabo, and this story was told to a fellow internee while on excursion, by a nomad he encountered who came down every year from the Sutlej valley. This story he had heard seems to record the ending of Ludwig Schmaderer, a fine mountaineer, and my friend and comrade of three expeditions.

Peter Aufschnaiter and Harrer had escaped from Dehra Dun to Tibet just a year prior to Schmaderer and Paidar, vide *H.J.*, vol. xiv, using much the same route to the frontier. They are still in Lhasa.—Ed.

MAP II


74°
75°
76°
77°
39°
38°
KĀSHGAR
Kāshgar R.
Tāsh Malik
S I N K I A N G
(C H I N A)
Yangihissār
Qungur
25146
25200
Ighiz Yar
Muztāgh Ata
24383
Ulugh Ribāt Pass
Buramsāl Pass 14940
13340
Kashka Su
Tarl Art
15190
Chichiklik Pass
Tāsh Qurghān
Tugilar
Yārkand or Zarafshan R.
U S S R
GREAT PAMIR

MAP II



Scale 1:2,000,000

Miles 20 10 0 20 40 60 Miles

Kilometres 25 0 25 50 75 100 Kilometres

MUZTAGH ATA[1]

H. W. TILMAN

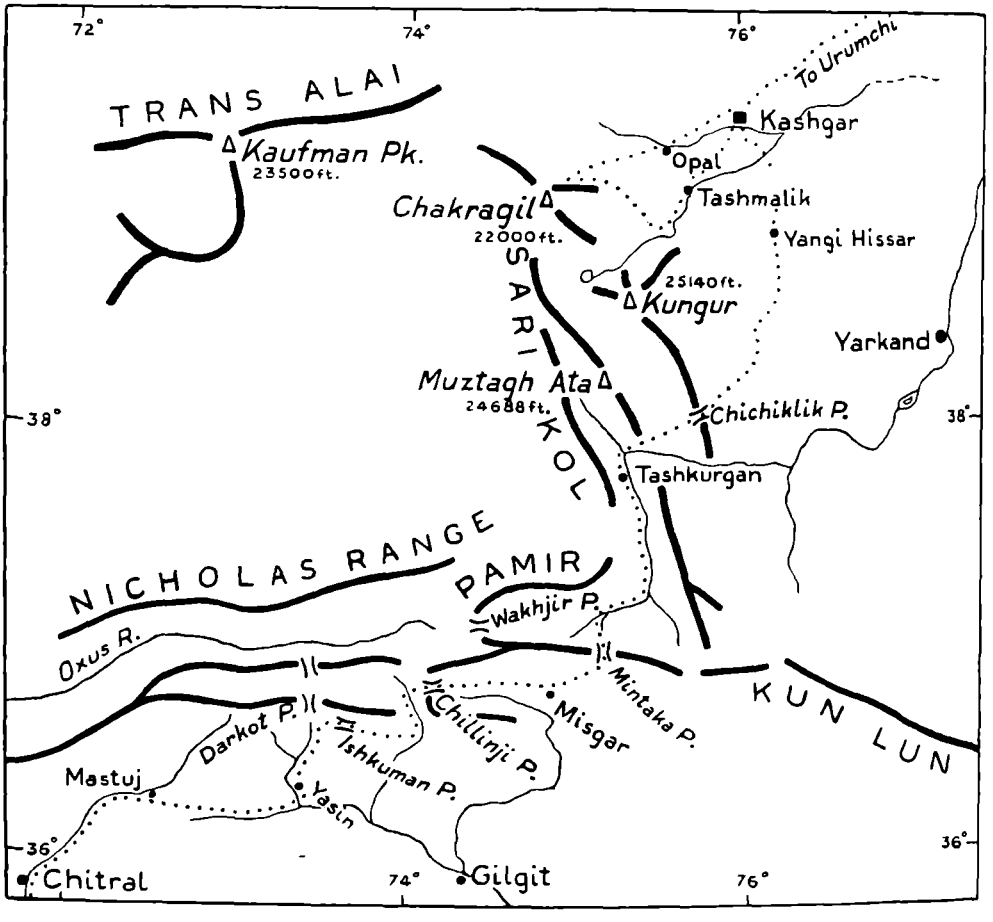
In a tent in the garden of the Hunza Postal Superintendent I found the Consul and his wife who had arrived the previous evening. They were on an extended tour. In this country and most others I associate consuls with climbs up long flights of stairs at the top of which is a locked door and a small printed card with the legend 'Office hours Saturdays only 10–12', and it struck me that in Kashgar a consul might be an even rarer bird of passage. However, the answer is that there the British Consul is not a parochial stamper of passports but is expected to travel about and, like the sun, shed his beneficent rays over the whole of Kashgaria. Tashkurghan, the capital of Sarikol, a receiving and dispatching centre on the mail route to India, necessarily deserved to be visited, and if the return journey were to lie in the direction of Muztagh Ata the Chinese of all people would be the last to demur; for did not Confucius say: 'The wise find pleasure in waters, the virtuous in mountains'; and again in the epigrams of Chang Ch'ao: 'If there are no famous hills then nothing need be said, but since there are they must be visited.'

In former days Tashkurghan must have been of more importance for it lay on one of the two ancient routes from China to Western Asia and the Persian Gulf. Two very great travellers, Marco Polo and the Chinese Buddhist pilgrim Hsuan-tsang (*c.* A.D. 600) must have visited it. It is not very busy now, comprising only a lifeless bazaar, some serais usually empty, the modern Chinese fort and magistracy, and the ruins of the small walled town of earlier days. But its proximity to the Russian frontier, across which there is a pass less than 20 miles south-west of the town, make it a place of interest to the Chinese who maintain a number of troops there. In 1946 the local 'nationalists', assisted and perhaps instigated from over the border, took and held Tashkurghan for some time.

Before we could start for Muztagh Ata, the duties of hospitality had to be discharged. The Amban of Sarikol and the officers of the garrison invited us to lunch and, since we were in a hurry to go, we insisted that they should give us our revenge by dining with us the same day. The Chinese custom of multiplying the courses of a meal almost to infinity is well known, and though the resources of Tashkurghan did not give our hosts the scope they would have wished,

[1] This article appeared in the *Wayfarers' Journal* in April 1929 and is reprinted with the permission of Mr. C. D. Milner, editor of that journal, with the concurrence of Mr. Tilman, to both of whom our thanks are due.—ED. *H.J.*

they did their best and we had to deal seriatim with the following: by way of limbering up there was tea with brandy butter in it, cake and apples, then meat patties, meat balls, fried eggs and radishes, roast mutton, liver, duck, a local fish, soup and rice, the last being the accepted way of delivering the *coup de grâce* at these feasts. Chopsticks, knives, spoons, forks, and fingers were all brought into



play according to the toughness of the opposition, and the whole was eased down with 'kumiss', fermented mare's milk—a colourless, slightly alcoholic drink, sour, and reminiscent of cider. The uncivilized yahoo when he gives a feast—and I prefer it his way—merely increases the quantity of the ordinary meal. Instead of a few scraggy bones one or two sheep are dished up, instead of a bowl of rice or pilau, a hip-bath of it; but civilized people like the Romans, the Chinese, and to a lesser extent ourselves, like to measure their state of civilization by the number and variety of the courses—a barbaric habit, destructive to the stomach and inimical to good cooking.

One of the principal difficulties in entertaining a posse of Chinese officials (Mrs. Shipton had fourteen to cope with) is to get them

inside the room. Questions of precedence lead to what threatens to be an interminable contest of polite diffidence until it is cut short by the pressure from behind of those whose claims are too low to be worth disputing and whose hunger is too sharp to be any longer denied. The posse surges forward, and when the less nimble have picked themselves up from the floor the contest is renewed over the question of seating. It was a pretty motley assortment that eventually got themselves seated, difficult to weld into a convivial whole even with the copious aid of Russian brandy and Shipton's manful sallies into the intricacies of Chinese of which he has a smattering. Most Chinese are abstemious to a fault. Only the Amban and a man who claimed to have accompanied Sir Aurel Stein on some of his journeys (in the capacity of coolie I judged from his appearance) would willingly submit themselves to the mellowing influence of brandy.

Next morning, 8th August, we got off at the surprisingly early hour of 9.30, accompanied by two camels carrying the baggage and a Mongolian Horde who were to speed us on our way—the Amban himself, all the officers, and Sir Aurel Stein's coolie whom I with difficulty recognized in Homburg hat, silver-rimmed sun goggles, and knickerbockers, looking now more like the great explorer himself. At the first village all dismounted, and after a long session of grinning and handshaking, the Lesser Horde took its departure and we headed for the north.

At this point the Tashkurghan river is deflected eastwards, and a low ridge, cut through by the narrow gorge of the Tagharma river, separates its wide valley from the even more extensive Tagharma plain. This continues to the north for about 12 miles until it meets another ridge beyond which an almost equally wide valley runs north, shut in between the Sarikol range on the west and the Muztagh Ata and Kungur groups on the east. The Tagharma plain abounds in villages and cultivation while the higher valley beyond is the happy home of many Kirghiz, their herds, and their flocks.

Emerging from the bare yellow rock gorge we were delighted by the sight of the green Tagharma vale, its scattered villages, high poplars, browsing herds, and waving wheat-fields. Our guides, vaguely aware that the consular mind was intent on mountains, took us too far to the east in the direction of the most southerly foothills of the Muztagh Ata group and we finally camped in a village close to a nallah which undoubtedly led direct to the heart of the mountains. With some difficulty we resisted the insistent invitation of this nallah, but next morning we sheered away to the north-west in the direction of the pass which crossed the low ridge north of the Tagharma plain. This erratic course involved us in a long day. By lunch time we were many miles short of the pass. The

transport—ponies now instead of camels—went by, and Naiad Shah was instructed to tell the men to halt for the night at a grazing-ground this side of the pass. But he had apparently failed to select from his repertoire the right language in which to give the order, so that when we reached the place—all of us fully ripe for stopping—there was no sign of the ponies. Shipton, the two mounted infantrymen whom we had been obliged to accept as guards, and anyone else whose beast was capable of it, all galloped off in pursuit but without success. By 7 p.m. we were on top of the Ulugh Rabat pass (14,000 feet) and in extremely bad tempers. There was a noble prospect to the dark plain below and the white dome of Muztagh above, rapidly dissolving in the dusk, but the noblest prospect is improved by the sight of an inn and though our inn was in sight on the plain below, it was rapidly receding across it. How we reviled that man of many tongues. Water arrested the march of the flying column and by 8 p.m., we and our transport were united by some muddy pools. Stragglers were still coming in an hour later. An unpleasant characteristic of most high uplands is their windiness, but that night we were spared the usual gale which makes cooking in the open impossible. While supper was preparing, we had leisure to reflect on the truth of Cromwell's remark that 'No man goes further than he who does not know where he is going'.

We were now fairly under the western slopes of Muztagh Ata, though not yet within striking distance, and were able to appreciate its enormous bulk. The south side of this so-called 'Father of Ice Mountains' is defended by two outlying peaks each over 22,000 feet; the north side is steep and broken, and the east side is unexplored. (On my return journey I passed round by the east side but bad weather precluded any view of the mountain.) The west side is a huge gently curving arc of snow, the lower part split by three almost parallel glaciers. Originating at about 20,000 feet in deep narrow clefts these glaciers, when they reach the snow line at about 17,000 feet, spill and spread over the slopes of brown scree like streams of white lava, descending in a cascade of pinnacles to as low as 14,000 feet. That one aspect alone of a mountain can contain three such glaciers is an indication of its breadth, for the lower parts of the glaciers are separated by 2 or even 3 miles of scree slope.

Two names famous in Central Asian exploration are connected with Muztagh Ata. In 1894 Sven Hedin, besides a rough survey of the mountain, made four attempts to climb it. Rough survey is the word, for he ascribed to it a height of 25,600 feet and 'the unchallenged pre-eminence of it over the peaks which cluster round, which is proved by its name "Father of Ice Mountains"'. The Kungur group, less than 25 miles north-east, he seems either not to have seen

or to have ignored, for the eye unaided by instruments can appreciate that they are higher than Muztagh Ata. With regard to the name, the story goes that the reply to the question about its name was simply 'Muztagh, Ata' or 'Ice Mountain, O Father'. In 1900 the late Sir Aurel Stein made a survey of the Sarikol valley and his surveyor, Ram Singh of the Indian Survey, carried out the triangulation of the Muztagh Ata and Kungur groups, discovering that the highest peak of Kungur is 25,146 feet against 24,388 feet for Muztagh Ata.

Having studied both the ground and Sven Hedin's account of his attempts we decided that the best line was that between the two largest of these western glaciers, the Yam Bulak and the Tergem Bulak. Some Kirghiz yurts were reported in a valley north of the Yam Bulak glacier about two hours away and there we thought we would have our base. In these parts of Sinkiang yurts have a powerful attraction which the wise traveller should on no account attempt to resist. The thought of doing so never for a moment occurred to us—we merely crawled from one yurt to the next, drinking tea, eating yoghourt, and studying nomadic life, though we ourselves were much more nomadic than our hosts whose life seemed remarkably static or even sedentary. Since travellers are rare they are usually welcome, and food, fire, and a bed are automatically put at their disposal by the kindly Kirghiz. When we reached the little valley under the slopes of the mountain where we proposed harbouring, we were disturbed to find there only one yurt, the other families having just moved down to Subashi a few miles away, the principal place of the Sarikol plain. This family, too, were about to go, but readily postponed their move when they heard that Mrs. Shipton would be alone there for a day or two while we were on the mountain. In the afternoon we sorted out food for our expedition and in the evening we walked up towards the Yam Bulak glacier to reconnoitre a route for the morrow. On the moraine two herds which looked like wild goats were playing about.

Sven Hedin was a great explorer, but he made no claims to be a mountaineer. He therefore had no false pride and in his attempts on the mountain he made full use of the local aids to progress. Of his four attempts the most successful was the second, when, carried on the back of a yak, he claimed to have reached a height of 20,600 feet. As he justly observes, the secret of freedom from the troubles of altitude (a secret which so far has eluded research) 'is the avoidance of bodily exertion'.

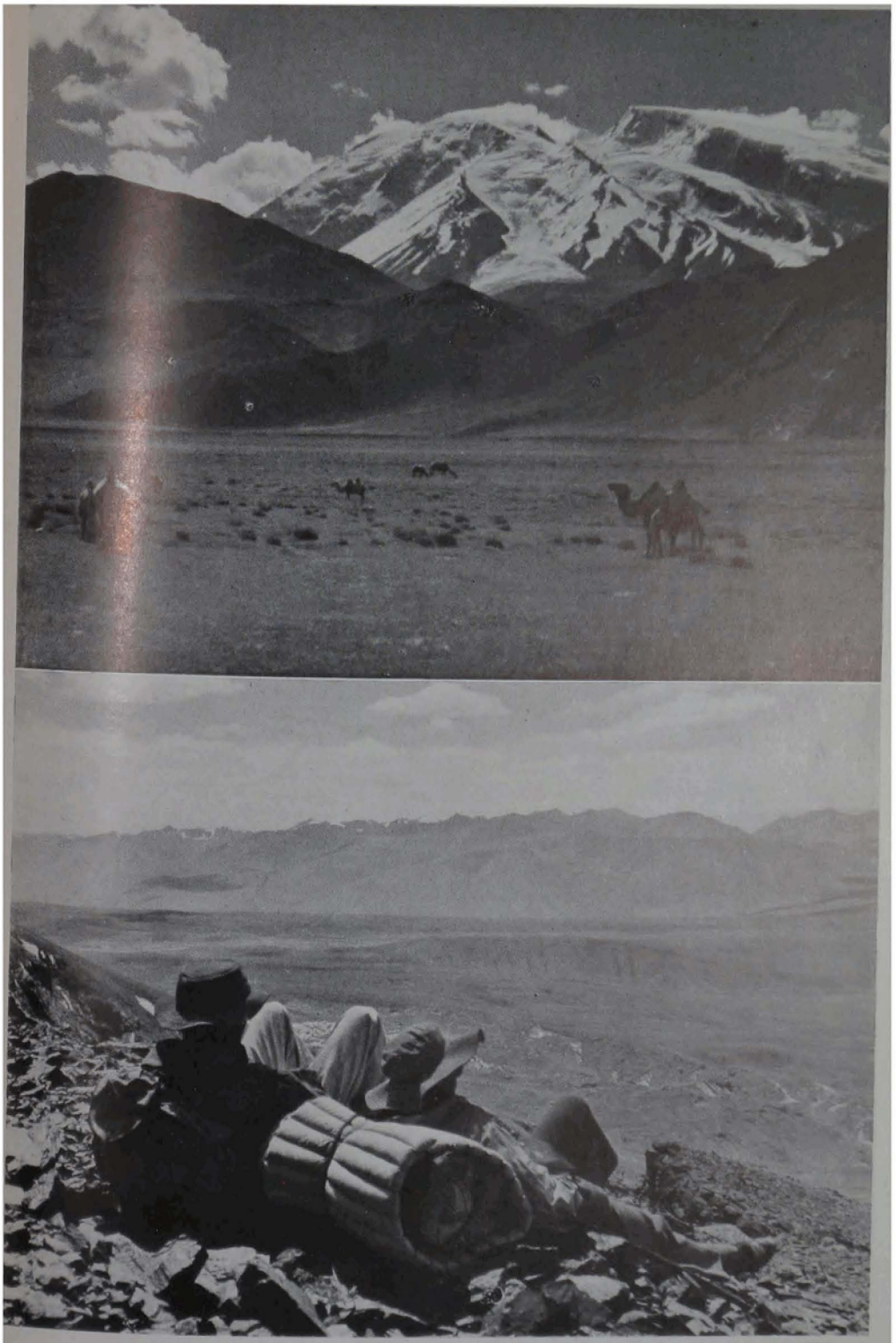
From his free use of yaks on the mountain we may deduce several things; the absence of any technical difficulties on the west side of the mountain, at any rate for a great way up; the absence of man power

in Sinkiang, where no Turki who can afford an ass and no Kirghiz who owns a yak or a pony ever walks, much less carries anything; and finally, the all-round supremacy of the yak over donkeys, mules, horses, camels, or even elephants, though Hannibal might dispute the last. As a load carrier, the yak's powers are well known, but his virtues as a hack are unrecognized. Although Central Asia is the home of the horse one may travel there a long time without being aware of it, or if aware of it one may conclude that he has remained at home too long. No doubt there are good horses, but the locals very wisely keep them for themselves, mounting the innocent stranger on their sorriest screws, so that if he should happen to fall down with them no harm is done except, perhaps, to the stranger.

A good riding yak is much preferable to the sort of beast one is commonly invited to put one's leg over. He will do his 3 miles per hour without the incessant kicking and flogging which is essential in order to keep the local jade up to the bit (the yak, by the way, has no bit, only a rope through the nose), and his short legs and quick step give the rider the comfortable if illusory impression that he is covering the ground at a great rate. On him the rider has not to dismount when going uphill in order to spare his mount, or when going downhill in order to spare his own neck, for the yak takes everything as it comes, uphill or downhill, rough or smooth. In fording rivers, despite those short legs, he is as steady as a rock, for his great weight keeps him well anchored to the bottom. And, of course, at heights of 16,000 feet or more, when the horse like the rest of us is beginning to suffer from the effects of 'alt', the yak is beginning to feel at home; he may blow like a grampus, but his tremendous girth ensures that there is plenty of air in the bellows. And, finally, when the snow is reached, he is sent ahead to break a trail for the floundering men and horses behind him, and his fortunate rider has merely to turn round and yank a length of hair from his copious tail in order to provide himself with an adequate pair of snow-glasses.

Profiting by Sven Hedin's example, Shipton and I determined that though we ourselves might condescend to walk, we should have a yak to carry our camp to the snow line at about 17,000 feet. Not wishing to have to retract much of what I have just written, I must presume that our yak was the exception that proves the rule, or that like most other mountaineers, yaks have their off-days. He was, indeed, a total failure.

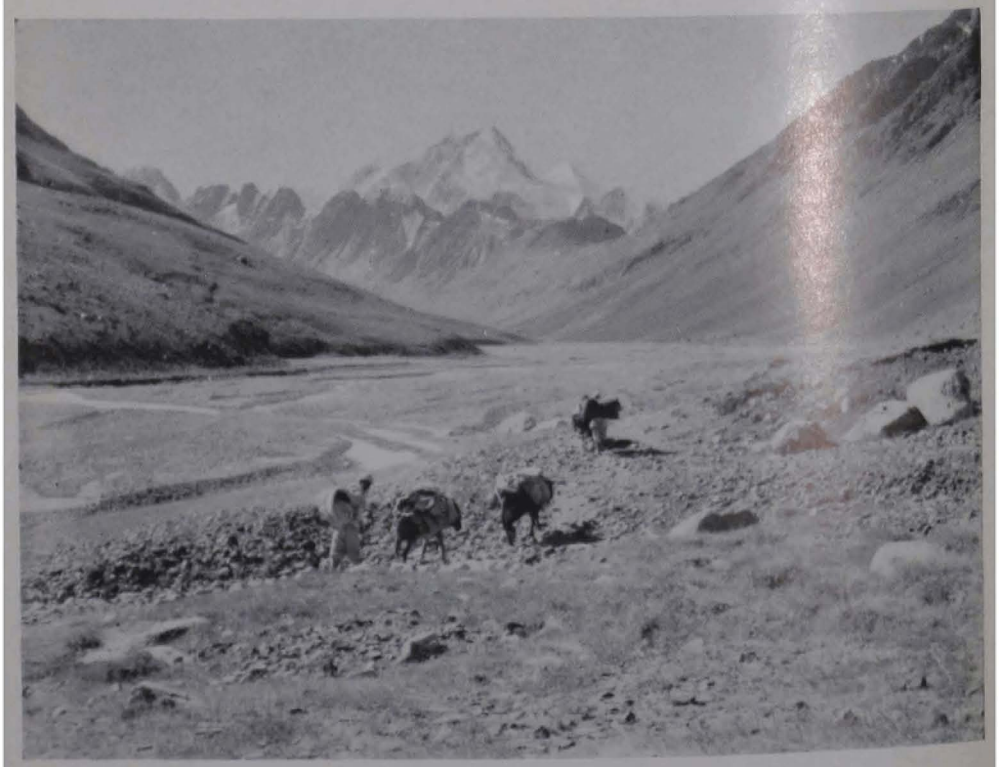
With stores for six days the three of us started on 11th August, accompanied by the Sherpa Gyalgen, a Turki lad, a yak, and his driver. The weather since we left Tashkurghan had been cloudy and unsettled but to-day it was fine, calm, and sunny. Having passed



(*H. W. Tilman*)

Muztagh Ata (above)
Mr. and Mrs. Shipton at 16,000 feet (Consul and Consolation?)

Muztagh Ata Kaikuli. Shipton and Tilman ridge on right skyline



Mintaka Pass from Chinese side

round the snout of the Yam Bulak glacier, 3 or 4 miles from our yurt, we took the long easy scree slope lying between that glacier and the Tergem Bulak to the south of it. Unencumbered ourselves, confident in our yak's prowess, we climbed comfortably to about 16,000 feet, where we sat down to await the arrival of the yak and the rest of the party. Time passed, confidence waned. Nothing could be heard, nothing seen, for the slope from bottom almost to top is as regularly and convexly spherical as a schoolroom globe, presenting a horizon limited to less than 100 yards. Reluctantly, we started down to investigate and presently came upon Gyalgen, the Turki, and the yak driver, staggering up under heavy loads. Of the yak there was no sign, he having very sensibly struck and sat down at the first hint of what was expected of him. The driver, too, was no keener on mountaineering than his charge. Groaning and moaning on account of a splitting head and the certain death that awaited us if we persisted, he had to be sent down immediately, pursued by sounds of desultory ill will, while the rest of us struggled on with the loads, marvelling how much better these things were done in Sven Hedin's time.

Shipton, his belief in the principle of the economy of force overcoming his chivalry, allowed his wife to relieve him of a sleeping-bag and a cork mattress. There was apparently more in marriage than I had yet realized, but it was too late then to do anything about it—I must bear my own burden. We plodded on for another thousand feet and camped at 3 p.m. just below the first of the snow at about 17,000 feet. From here Mrs. Shipton and the Turki lad went down, leaving Gyalgen, myself, and her grateful but unfeeling husband to finish the job.

That evening we did a short reconnaissance. Just above the camp, scree gave place to snow, or rather ice, for the snow had melted from the lowest 200 or 300 feet of underlying ice. The slope, however, was gentle enough so that one could walk without nicking steps. Higher up was an ice-fall which could be turned, beyond that a long stretch of crevassed snow slope, and higher still, unbroken slopes extended to the summit dome. Most of this, except for the actual summit, the exact whereabouts of which we could not locate, we had already seen from below. Our safe and methodical plan was to have a camp at about 20,000 feet and another at 22,000 feet, from which, however moderately we rated ourselves, we ought to have no difficulty in crawling to the top.

Next day we started, we two carrying very modest loads, Gyalgen rather an immodest one. The ice-fall was soon overcome by an outflanking movement, and having threaded our way through the worst of the crevassed section we camped at 3 p.m. in a snow hollow,

crediting ourselves with a rise of 3,000 feet. The snow was in really excellent condition, everything was going to be too easy. This gratuitous supposition and Gyalgen's faltering under his too heavy load had already caused an alteration in a perfectly sound plan. Assuming that the snow, so good here, could be no worse higher up and might well be better, we agreed to cut out the intermediate camp at 22,000 feet and to take only one bite at the cherry—an agreement which I, aware of advancing years and limited high climbing powers, had no reason to make. This pregnant decision was come to during a halt on the way up from Camp I while we were pondering over ways of easing Gyalgen's burden, neither of us having the indelicacy to suggest taking some of it upon ourselves. Since this new plan meant that we should if all went well spend only one night on the mountain, some of the food (we had four days' supply) could be dumped. But Shipton's liberal ideas of dumping and his ruthless whittling down to a bare one day's supply led to a sharp debate. Though I may have had private misgivings about our only needing one day's food, since I had already agreed to the change of plan there was little I could urge against this wholesale jettisoning beyond the desirability of having an ample reserve; and possibly the fact that none of it happened to come from my own load made me the more reluctant to see so much left behind.

Through having been on Rakaposhi only two months ago I expected to be better acclimatized than I proved to be, but there, though we had been twice to 20,000 feet, we had never slept higher than 17,000 feet. That night I had a violent headache and in the morning felt as little like climbing 4 feet as the 4,000 which we had cheerfully set ourselves. Still it had to be done—one day being our self-allotted span—so at 6 a.m. we got under way.

Though not a breath of wind stirred in our hollow, it was noticeably cold in the bleak and pallid dawn. Merely by fumbling with buttons after some necessary business outside my thumbs and forefingers were so chilled that they never felt right for the rest of the day. Well down as we were on the western side of this great protuberance on the earth's sphere—almost another sphere in itself—the sun would be long in reaching us. The more reason therefore for pressing rapidly onwards and upwards to meet it, so off we went over the good hard snow. For 1,000 feet we climbed rapidly and hopefully, then a deterioration set in, the snow assuming that vile consistency which necessitates one's stamping with all one's might first time, or even two or three times, to ensure that the step will not give way the moment it is stood upon. Worse still a wind started to blow. Its force seemed negligible. One had not to lean against it, for example, and had we been wearing straw hats and carrying umbrellas I doubt

if we should have been inconvenienced by it. Nevertheless, it went through us to the marrow. The exertion of stamping steps contributed nothing to our warmth, nor did the sun when he at length reached us, and even at this early stage the effects of these conditions began to show. Shipton was overcome with a fit of rigor and lay shaking in the snow while we sat by shivering in sympathy with only a little less violence.

On we plodded up that vast tilted snow-field seeing nothing either to north or south by which to measure our progress. Though we moved slowly we moved continuously, for it was too cold to sit and rest and eat. As early as one o'clock we had the impression of arriving somewhere and two hours later all that we could say was that that impression was no weaker. Still we thought the end must be very near. We reckoned we had climbed 1,000 feet in the first hour when the snow was good, and having been climbing steadily since then for eight hours we argued that most of the remaining 3,000 feet had been accounted for. Whenever we dared to look up our eyes met the same unbroken horizon of snow apparently less than 100 feet above, and now long hours of cold, fatigue, and hope deferred began to tell.

Some time before this my contribution to step-kicking had become of small account and now Gyalgen, too, found himself unable to take his turn. Shipton still had a little left in him so that we agreed to struggle on until 3.30 p.m. when if there were still no firm indication of the summit we would give up and try again another day. Quite early in the afternoon I had suggested going down so that next day we would have the advantage of a great many ready-made steps; but this had been overruled on the ground that the steps might no longer be there; which was true enough because when we did go down we had trouble even to find the steps, so completely had the driving snow filled them.

After a generous half-hour's extra play in this game between the mountain and ourselves a decision in our favour seemed as far off as ever. For me the delusion of the summit being at hand had long become stale, stimulating despair rather than hope. I feared that even if we reached a point from which the summit could be seen we should find it at the wrong end of a long flat ridge, for the perversity of inanimate objects is always a factor to be reckoned with. By this time we were all pretty much on our knees. Had the summit been in sight and our remaining task measurable some hidden reserves of strength might have been found, but there was still nothing to be seen beyond the next 100 feet or so of snow. To persevere one must have hope, and this, which had been pretty severely tried, was now extinguished by too long deferment.

Allowing only two hours to get down we might still have struggled

on for another hour could we but force our bodies to do so, and to give in before the decision was imposed on us by the clock may seem weak-minded—in fact we damned ourselves heartily later. But our wisest actions are often those for which we are not really responsible and the sequel showed that we did well to go down. Exclusive of halts for vomiting by Shipton the descent did take about two hours. Our outgoing tracks were obliterated so that the finding of the way through the crevassed section was less easy than it had been coming up. After dark we should not have found it.

Back in the tent an unpleasant discovery awaited us. Shipton found all the toes of one foot were frostbitten—dead white that evening and black in the morning. The tips of my big toes were slightly touched and went black but came painfully back to life forty-eight hours later. I was wearing the 'expedition' boots with the heavy moulded rubber soles and Shipton a pair of the heavily nailed porter's boots which I had brought out for Rakaposhi which he maintained had got wet the previous day so that they had ice inside them before we started. Gyalgen who was wearing lightly nailed boots came to no harm. As a purely speculative consolation it may not amount to much, but it seems likely that had we persevered for another hour the damage might have been much more serious. Success would have been a very considerable consolation, whereas here we had failure with frostbite thrown in. The condition of Shipton's foot was, of course, decisive—we must go down—but apart from that not one of us was fit to try again next day or for several days. The effort had taken more out of us than we realized. A week later I still found it more than usually difficult to walk uphill at all.

Whether the top of the mountain is a long flat ridge or whether, as seems more likely, it is a flattish dome we still do not know. Shipton is of the opinion that we were on the summit dome and not more than 100 feet below the top. An inexcusable assumption of probable snow conditions, over-confidence in our powers, and unexpected cold, had proved our undoing, and of the last alone had we any right to complain. In early June on the North Col of Mount Everest one would not experience such cold. Here it was mid-August, and though Muztagh Ata is in Latitude 38 degrees while Everest is 10 degrees farther south one would not expect that to make so much difference. We live and learn, and big mountains are stern teachers.

REMINISCENCES OF SOME EXPEDITIONS IN THE HIMALAYAS

REX CARDEW

I

In June 1938 I visited Kyelang in Lahoul. There were three of us in the party and we had a month's leave for the trip. The journey from Lahore to Manali is well known, but on the way we made a little diversion to get into training. From Dharmsala we made a quick visit to the Indrahar pass which is one of the passes across the Fauladhar range from the Kangra valley into the Ravi valley in Brahmaur. I was anxious to climb to this view point as, two years previously, I had travelled from Dalhousie to Dharmsala over the range by the Gaj pass, which is about the same altitude but a few miles west of the Indrahar.

We camped at Laka Gok in our bivouac tents at about 10,000 feet, taking two local men who had been up the pass before. At about 5.30 we got off and after a mile or so on a long snow-bed struck off to the left, crossing and recrossing the valley of the snow-bed later when it became too steep to negotiate easily. On the steep rocky pitch which followed I caught my shin bone on a sharp projection and managed to cut open a vein. However, snow wrapped in a handkerchief staunched the somewhat profuse flow, and we reached the pass (14,500 feet) just about noon.

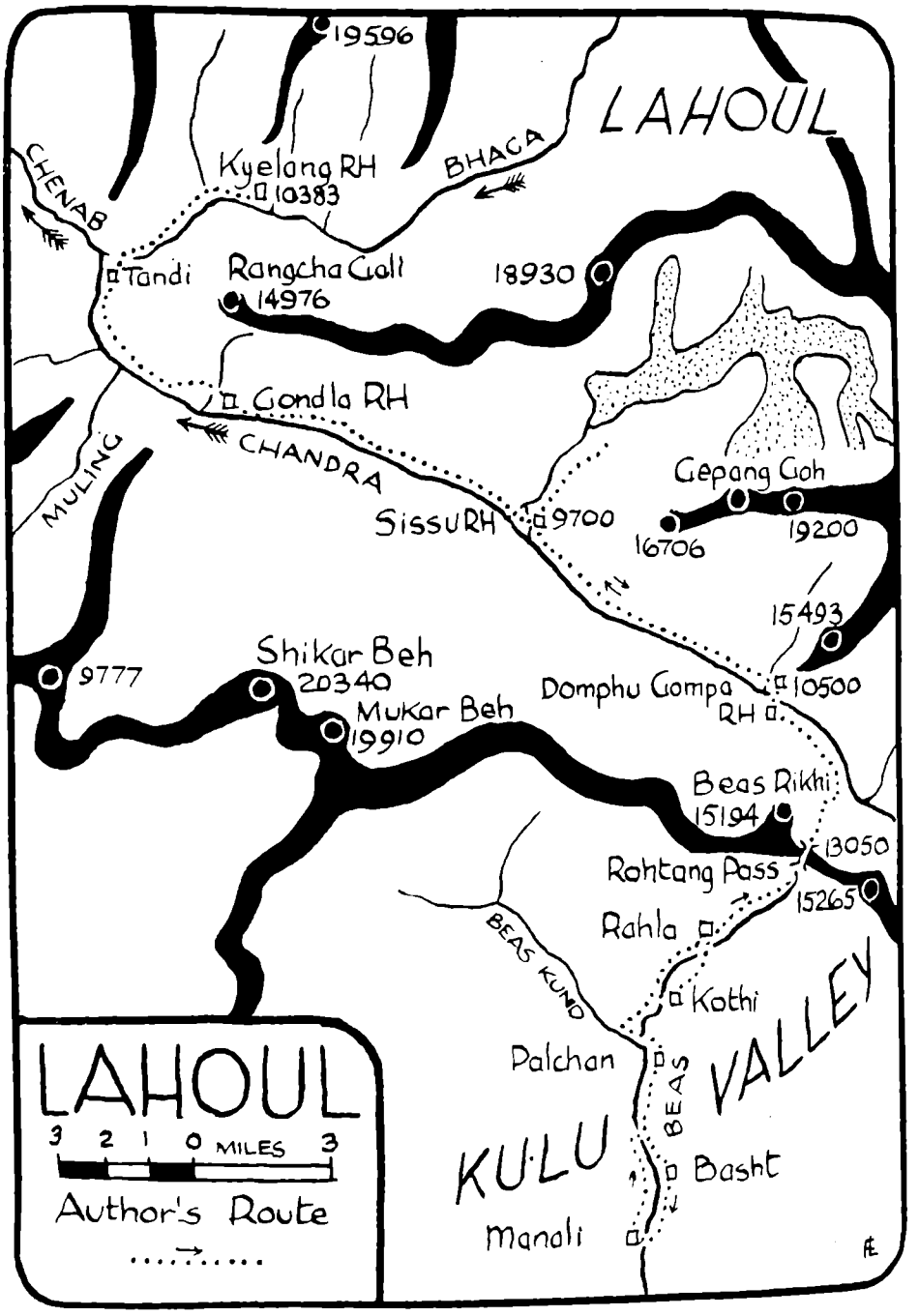
The view all around was magnificent. On the way we had overtaken some shepherds and their sheep who had started earlier than ourselves, and just as we were preparing to leave the summit, they joined us again. It was fascinating to watch the flocks wending their way up towards us across the untrodden snow on the north slopes of the pass.

Our descent was rapid; we were back at Laka about 4.30 p.m.

II

After our diversion to climb the Indrahar pass, we left Manali, 8,000 feet, at the upper end of the Kulu valley and marched up a picturesque valley to Rahla (some 10 miles) where there is a rather dilapidated rest-house. On the way we crossed the bridge near Kothi where the Beas runs in a narrow gorge, almost 100 feet deep and scarcely 20 feet wide, for about a mile.

Soon after leaving Rahla next morning the road up the Rohtang pass began, with its 'thousand steps'—the ponies taking the longer,


19596
LAHOUL
CHENAB
Kyelang RH
10383
BHAGA
Tandi
Rangcha Gali
14976
18930
Gondla RH
CHANDRA
MULING
Sissu RH
9700
Gepang Gah
16706
19200
15493
9777
Shikar Beh
20340
Mukar Beh
19910
Domphu Gompa
RH
10500
Beas Rikhi
15194
13050
Rohtang Pass
15265
Rahla
BEAS KUND
Kothi
Palchan
BEAS
VALLEY
KULU
Basht
Manali
LAHOUL
3 2 1 0 MILES 3
Author's Route

less steep track. Some devotee of earlier times constructed this stairway of massive stones, each step from eighteen inches to 2 feet deep, making both ascent and descent rather tiring. After the stairway, the valley flattens out and the road rises gradually through green pasture land to the snow line, and thence over rocky spurs and snow slopes to the summit, which stretches more or less level for a mile or so. A little off the beaten track the source of the Rikki Beas springs under a large rock, near the cairn where all travellers place a stone, as a prayer for safe conduct. In June the rock was almost snow-covered and it was necessary to scramble down 6 feet of snow to reach the water.

The pass is about 13,800 feet, and the descent on the northern side to the rest-house and village at Koksar (10,000 feet) was fairly easy going, as most of the snow had melted. We got a good wetting where the pathway leads under a waterfall. At Koksar the road crosses to the north bank of the Chandra by a modern suspension bridge. There are signs of bridges of older times which have doubtless been washed away and replaced. We followed the right bank of the Chandra down to its junction with the Bhaga, about 20 miles from Koksar. Rest-houses and camping grounds are very pleasantly situated at Sissu and Gondla, about 8 miles apart. At Gondla there is a very picturesque Buddhist Gompa with a pleasing square tower with sloping sides studded with small windows like a medieval castle. By the road side are Buddhist drawings cut into the rock.

At the confluence of the Chandra and Bhaga rivers, the road to Kyelang crosses the Bhaga and carries on up its right bank. The junction is considered a holy spot, and we had good reason to know it—we camped there and in the early hours of the morning, hearing weird and mournful noises, we peeped out of our tents to see fantastic figures dancing around to the beat of drums and other 'musical' instruments. This was a party of mourners bringing the ashes of a deceased friend to be committed to the swirling waters of the river.

The way to the holy shrine of Triloknath lies down the combined streams of the Chandra-Bhaga rivers, the upper Chenab. We passed many pilgrims and sadhus on their ways to and from the shrine, clad only in the scantiest of clothing though they have to contend with the bitter winds and blizzards usually met with on the Rohtang pass. We ourselves had only run into a slight snow-storm on the top.

The approach to Kyelang is very attractive, through fields dotted with Chortens and Mane walls and a number of Gompas perched on the mountain spurs. We arrived just in time to climb another 1,000 feet, and see the Lama dancing, the orchestra, actors, and

dancers all being the Lamas of the Kyelang Monastery. On the terrace above the dancing, the visitors from the surrounding valley were provided with refreshments and local brewed beer, and two policemen maintained at Kyelang by the Government were in attendance to watch over those who drank—not wisely but too well—and found themselves in difficulties getting home along the precipitous paths.

The Lahoulis are an honest, peace-loving people, Hindu, Moslem, and Buddhist living happily in their various valleys, and never bothering to lock their houses when they leave them. The women dress attractively and wear a little plate of gold, silver, or copper on the back of the head like a halo, with two large turquoise or pieces of amber on the temples. The men wear little pill-box hats made of cloth, nearly always decorated with wild flowers.

The Thakur, who is the ruler of the state, honoured us by an invitation to lunch. We ate sitting on cushions on the floor, each with a small decorated lacquer table before him, and Chinese or Tibetan bowls as dishes, and after lunch we met the Thakur's wife, a delightful little lady in full ceremonial attire and a wonderful head-dress. We were shown round the palace which, like all the dwellings in Lahoul, is built primarily to withstand the rigours of winter at 10,000 feet. During the cold months all families live in an inner room surrounded by store-rooms and warmed by a large fire in an earthern firepot arrangement. The cattle live below, and for about four months no movement outside the house is possible owing to the depth of snow, which has to be cleared off the housetops to avoid the danger too much weight would occasion. For economic reasons half the population go down to the plains for the winter, and the other half for the summer months.

III

During July and August 1938 I was able to make an expedition up to Kargil in Ladakh. We went by the usual route through Dras but returned from Kargil to Dras up the Suru valley as far as Sanko and over the range by the Umba La. The route is not well known and a short description may be of use to travellers though of course it is mentioned in the various route-books and guides to Kashmir.

While at Kargil we visited the Lalun (Hamoting) La, about 10 miles to the east. From the pass there is a magnificent view across the Indus valley to the high peaks of the Karakoram range, and I turned back with regret for it is the nearest I approached to the Karakorams.

Leaving Kargil, instead of carrying on across the bridge on the road to Leh, one follows the left bank of the Suru river, through

wooded glades on to shaly slopes and down again into wooded glades. We camped at Tsalis Kot and thence made Sanko. The village had suffered severely a few days before, when a mud avalanche had demolished many houses and damaged the crops during a heavy thunderstorm. I promised to report their plight to the Resident, and did so on my return, but I never heard whether the unfortunate village received any assistance from the Kashmir Government or not.

At Sanko I came across a lad who was 'syce' to a brother-officer in Simla. Quite a number of these villagers go to the hill-stations of India for employment, and every three or four years or so make the long journey home on leave.

I discovered later that I missed a fine view of the Nun Kun group (23,000 feet) by not going one march beyond Sanko, up the Suru, towards Parkatse. As it was we set off up the Umba La, a hot and tiring climb, starting from Sanko. Although it is about 14,500 feet there is no snow and no water in the summer-time. From the summit there is grand panorama to the south and east with the peaks of Nun Kun just showing and the Zanskar range in the distance. From the top there is a steep descent into a pleasant grassy valley with water and an excellent place to camp at Lobar (where we found wild rhubarb in abundance, a welcome addition to the menu). Marmots were plentiful in this valley and a source of great attraction to the roan spaniel Mickie; during my complete journeying I covered some 300 miles on foot, but Mickie must have done at least four times that distance.

Gentian were in full bloom at this time up in the valleys above Dras and were a lovely sight. A point of interest at Dras, which perhaps the majority of travellers miss, is the meteorological station maintained near the post office and managed by the Postmaster, which must be one of the highest meteorological stations in the world, 10,600 feet above sea-level. Readings of the wind directions and speed, barometer, rain gauge, &c., are transmitted daily by telegraph on the line which runs from Srinagar to Leh.

We made one other small excursion off the main route to climb to the summit of the ridge above Saribal and look south to Kolahoi peak and down on the Kolahoi glacier and the west Liddar watershed. Saribal is about midway between Baltal and Sonamarg. It is a fairly stiff ascent—nothing difficult. I had to hurry at the end as clouds were gathering, and before I could get my camera into action, the peak of Kolahoi had been partly hidden.

From all of this you can judge there is much to see off the main track of the Kashmir–Ladakh road, that one can enjoy without having to be a climber in the strict sense of the word.

FROM KALINDI KHAL TO THE BHYUNDAR PASS

T. H. BRAHAM

I PARTED company with the Swiss Expedition on the top of the Kalindi Khal (19,510 feet) on 14th August. We had been together in the Gangotri region for two months. There had been a brief but inspiring view of Kamet and Mana peak from the top of the pass; but by the time I was ready to commence the descent into the Arwa valley at 8.30 a.m. a heavy mist had come up reducing visibility to a few hundred yards. Two Sherpas, Angtenzing and Thundu, accompanied me, and we were all pretty heavily laden.

The going was easy at first down gentle snow slopes below a 21,000-foot peak rising to the right; soon, however, care was required owing to the presence of a large number of crevasses. Crossing a steep 15-foot ice-gully in which steps had to be cut, we traversed to the left on to rocks and descended the rather crumbly slopes for the next 700 feet towards a badly broken, if level, glacier. We had to cut down about 100 feet of steep ice and overcome a few intricate crevasses before we sat down on the ice on the glacier at 11.30 for our meal. Thereafter the going was fairly straightforward, though we did not yet remove the rope owing to the badly-riven ice.

We arrived at the snout of the glacier within a couple of hours, and proceeded down the rocky bed of the valley on the left of the stream. It soon became apparent that we would have to cross to find a good camp-site, and in fording the torrent I contrived to lose my balance and got a thorough drenching in the icy water; however, once on the right bank, progress was rapid. In soaking clothes and facing a biting wind I raced down the valley to a good camp site at about 16,000 feet; it bore signs of having been used before.

It rained most of the night, and the next morning I awoke to the patter of rain on the tent roof. We struck camp at 7.15 a.m., and within half an hour were walking across the sandy bed of the now dry Arwa Tal. The weather was continuously bad throughout the day with heavy mists, a damp wind, and intermittent gusts of rain; the Arwa valley looked terribly wild under such conditions. We kept to the right bank of the main stream throughout but were constantly worried by small tributaries racing downwards from the numerous glaciers to the south (about six join the main valley, with the resultant heavy deposit of moraine debris). Towards its end, the Arwa valley narrows down to almost gorge-like width before turning into a broad level plain at its junction with the Saraswati. We reached Ghastoli that evening, and camped on a hospitable meadow across

the river. It had taken us ten hours to cover about ten miles. It was a refreshing sight to see horses grazing nearby. Towards dusk, a solitary shepherd, who evinced much interest in our camp, passed by with his flock.

We reached Badrinath on 16th August. There I met Mr. Rao, the Transport Officer of the Swiss Expedition, who was awaiting the arrival of the party. I collected some welcome mail from the post office, and spent the next three days reorganizing and procuring the good things of life, such as were obtainable at the village. The pilgrim season was in full swing and the shops were full of activity. I engaged three Mana coolies for the next part of my journey. They were Netar Singh, who possessed quite a good chit from Smythe in 1937, Bal Singh and Inder Singh, two inexperienced but hardy lads who turned out to be very satisfactory during the next three weeks.

The weather took a sudden change for the better on my last day at Badrinath, and I was informed by the inhabitants that the end of the monsoon could confidently be expected in these parts by the third week of August; this information proved to be unduly optimistic. However, we set out for Pandukeshwar on 20th August, in brilliantly clear weather, making our 4,000-foot descent a hot one. Dozens of pilgrims were on the Badrinath road. Those toiling upward bore melancholy expressions of despair and seemed on the point of giving in; those on the return from their pilgrimage appeared no happier for their experience.

We reached Pandukeshwar shortly after noon. I had slight foot trouble so spent the day resting in the bungalow and feasting on the luscious, if green, peaches in the garden.

Early on the 22nd we set out, and leaving the main road after 1½ miles we crossed a rope bridge over the Alaknanda. The path up the Bhyundar valley plunges almost at once into dense vegetation and thick undergrowth. About half-way up the valley is situated the Sokpal Temple, and the path is consequently in fair condition up to this point; beyond a shepherd's track provides a satisfactory route almost to the head of the valley. It was a hot march—the Bhyundar river thundered down the narrow valley not far below. There were signs of cultivation at intervals and small groups of people were encountered. Flowers were numerous in variety but disappointing in extent and evidently past their bloom. We reached Bhyundar village in the afternoon and were at once surrounded by its inhabitants: the village comprises a small school, one or two cretins, and numerous goitre cases. Leaving the smells and dirt behind we rapidly made our way upwards, and camped at about 8,700 feet, in a small clearing beside a clear stream.

It was drizzling next morning as we followed the track which soon petered out into a hopeless tangle of undergrowth. After much time had been wasted in searching we came upon the crude bridge that leads across the river to its true left bank—two hours later we came upon open meadows, bestrewn with flowers or under crops. A solitary figure approached us and was delighted to exchange about 4 lb. of freshly picked potatoes for an empty Ovaltine tin. We crossed the river again and reached the large shepherds' habitation of Bhamini Daur where we were obliged to cross the torrent issuing from the Khanta Khal. A shepherd on the opposite bank was trying in vain to coax his sheep across; eventually they were driven in and reached the other side after a short but desperate struggle. The crossing-place was about 7 feet wide where two unbound bamboos had been placed on boulders at either end. Tenzing recklessly attempted to carry his 65-lb. load over, lost his balance, and fell into the torrent; he would certainly have been swept away if the shepherd had not managed to get his load off him at the right moment. The rest of the loads were hauled over on a rope and we crossed with extreme caution! Cold, and soaked by a persistent drizzle, we made Bhamini Daur, where two shepherds were sitting beneath a rock shelter smoking contentedly round a fire, and camped a little farther on where the valley extends into a vast grassy plain; there were huge flocks of sheep in the valley and it seemed to me that most of them busied themselves sniffing round my tent the entire night long.

Next day one of the shepherds, a jovial old man named Harak Singh who had spent twenty-one summers in this valley, led me to Joan Margaret Legge's grave, informing me that he had seen the accident in which she was killed eight years ago—the grave is situated in a beautiful spot commanding a splendid view up the valley. That afternoon we pitched camp at about 11,500 feet at the snout of the glacier near a solitary shepherd whom I questioned about the Bhyundar pass, as I lacked an adequate map; he informed me that the pass was in regular use by shepherds several years before, but it began to prove too dangerous for their flocks, so fell into disuse, and nowadays crossings were never attempted. He promised to accompany me on a reconnaissance next day.

There was no change in the weather and it was a damp, heavily clouded morning when Tenzing, Bal Singh, and I set out to find a way to the pass. My shepherd friend kept his word and joined us. A faint track on the true right of the glacier climbed the hill-side very steeply in a northerly direction, and in about two hours we stood 12,750 feet up on the dividing ridge overlooking a broad glacier; the shepherd assured us there would be a splendid view

Dunagiri from near Tapoban

Gamsali and Banke Glacier

from here but the weather had deteriorated so much that our view was confined to the moraine-covered bed of the glacier 500 feet below. The general direction of the pass was pointed out to us and we were advised to wait for a break in the clouds which would reveal the pass itself. However, no break in the clouds came and we were to learn next day that the shepherd's indications were entirely misleading. We decided to return to camp along the glacier, cairning a route for the morrow, to avoid the steep ascent with loads, and the shepherd flatly declined to follow us, saying he always avoided glaciers. Next day, 26th August, our cairned route took an hour to follow up and we then emerged on to ice which, though broken up, presented no difficulty. At the head of the glacier, where visibility was confined to a few hundred yards, we came to a definite disagreement about the route—the Mana men, in deference to the shepherd's reports, favoured a northerly route; Tenzing, who had always his own notions about everything, was convinced the pass lay to the east. I compromised and plumped for an ascent of the slopes rising to the north-east above the glacier. Four and a half hours later, completely enveloped in cloud, we decided to camp at 16,500 feet. Our camp-site had evidently been used before; our tents were pitched on level platforms well preserved through the years, and we found empty containers of Ogden's Gold Flake and Fry's Cocoa.

Next day the weather had not improved at all and the Mana men looked rather pitiful, but we were away at 7 a.m. and three-quarters of an hour later we found ourselves at the top of the Bhyundar pass, 16,688 feet. Descent had to be cautious as the boulders were dangerously loose; on reaching the level ice a glacier was visible, distant and far below, issuing from the north face of Rataban. When we arrived at the brink of the level ice we were relieved to discover nothing worse than 40° slopes, leading down for a couple of hundred feet to easier ground. The Mana coolies, improperly shod, were justified in downing loads whilst Tenzing and I strapped on crampons and cut a staircase, and when this was ready the coolies, like the fine fellows they are, descended bravely in the steps, where a slip would have been impossible to hold. Without further difficulty we reached the level glacier; I considered the Bhyundar pass hardly a suitable place for shepherds—half-way down we found the remains of a sheep killed in a fall some years back.

That afternoon we pitched camp at 13,300 feet at the snout of the Banke glacier. Three shepherds, camped nearby at a place they called Chor Gar, sold me a sheep for Rs. 15. Its meekness affected me and I did not have the courage to witness the ceremonial

slaughter by the coolies. Towards evening the weather showed signs of improvement and next morning, after a luxurious breakfast of liver and kidney, I set off up the river with Tenzing in brilliant sunshine.

We continued our ascent of the glacier along its left bank, and as we gained height the lovely peaks surrounding the Banke region appeared more and more impressive. Rataban, whose north face was now in full view, looked supurb across the glacier, and Nilgiri Parbat, an impressive sight from our low camp, was changing in aspect and increasing in loveliness as we drew nearer. We camped that afternoon at about 14,800 feet on a moraine belt above the Banke glacier. Directly opposite, two small tributaries issuing from a basin with Nilgiri Parbat at its head joined the main glacier, the left tributary sweeping down in a steep and difficult ice-fall. In the evening I climbed the slopes above our camp and was rewarded with a splendid view to the east, before the clouds rolled over at sunset.

The 29th August dawned cloudless, and Tenzing and I left camp at 6.30 to climb a rock peak to the north. In three hours and a half, after some very easy climbing up boulders and rocks, we reached the top (*c.* 18,000 feet). Above this sprang the small glacier which had kept our camp below so well supplied with water; this tongue of ice was evidently a western outlet of the great snow plateau lying high above the Banke glacier. The view was splendid. The main glacier sweeping upwards to the north-west is enclosed by a great dividing ridge along which lofty snow-covered peaks were visible; further view of the great divide and of the pass at its north leading to Mana was barred by a 20,000-foot snow-ridge close at hand to the west, which also obscured Kamet and Mana peak from our viewpoint. Just visible in the distance beyond the divide were Chaukhamba and Nilkanta. Rataban in the south paled before Gauri Parbat looming up behind; whilst a vast array of mountains rising close at hand in every direction under brilliant skies emphasized the splendour of this valley—truly the mountaineer's paradise, filled with accessible peaks of moderate height. Far away to the south-east could be seen Nanda Devi and Trisul, majestic in the distance. We spent an hour on the top: the whole scene filled me with regret that I must return to the towns and cities of our civilized world.

We went back to our camp at the snout of the Banke glacier that evening, and the following day we marched down to Gamsali along the delightful Sagar valley on a carpet of grass amidst sparkling streams. The road down the valley from Gamsali is in perfect condition, and the scenery is of surpassing beauty throughout and frequently enhanced by glimpses of distant snowy ranges. We passed

many shepherds leading their flocks or camped by the wayside—the music of their bells, the bleating of the sheep, the cheery faces of the men, and the scented air of the forests are memories that will linger. Soon we were able to replenish our depleted stocks of food and enjoy better dinners round blazing camp-fires. The first evening we camped 4 miles below Malari, the second at Surai Thota; on the third day we reached Tapoban. From there we took the road to the Kuari pass, crossing it on 3rd September in dreary weather, with no view from the top. Thereafter, via Pa Pana, Ramni, Ghat, and Dungari we reached Ghaldam on 7th September. There, early next morning, I had my last glimpse of the High Himalaya when the mists lifted with dramatic suddenness and revealed Trisul and Nanda Ghunti, dazzling in the sunlight. At Baijnath on 9th September I said good-bye to the Mana men who had served me so well, and when they shouldered their packs to take the road, I boarded the bus to Ranikhet. It was good to return for a while to the more varied and indulgent ways of life, but I knew well that in a very few weeks I should be yearning once more for the high hills.

Note.—For maps see III. Swiss Garhwal Expedition, p. 18.—Ed.

EXPEDITIONS

THE LOST PASS (CHINKANG LA)

An interesting note by Lieut. (now Major) James Waller, D.S.O., written three years prior to the attempt on Mashebrum, has come to light and is reproduced here.—ED.

IN the Shyok valley there is an elusive legend. An ancient pass is said to lead over to the long disused Muztagh pass, which was last crossed by Sir Francis Younghusband in his great journey across Central Asia in 1899. He also rediscovered the pass, which was by that time merely an old man's tale, as was mine.

I said that the legend of the pass was elusive—so elusive was it that few save the oldest inhabitants of the valley had ever heard of it; and most of them seemed to disbelieve it. But one old man, living at Doghani, 10 miles down the Shyok from Khapalu, had repeatedly told Mr. Read, the missionary dwelling at Khapalu, that he could show him the pass and could make him famous by its rediscovery.

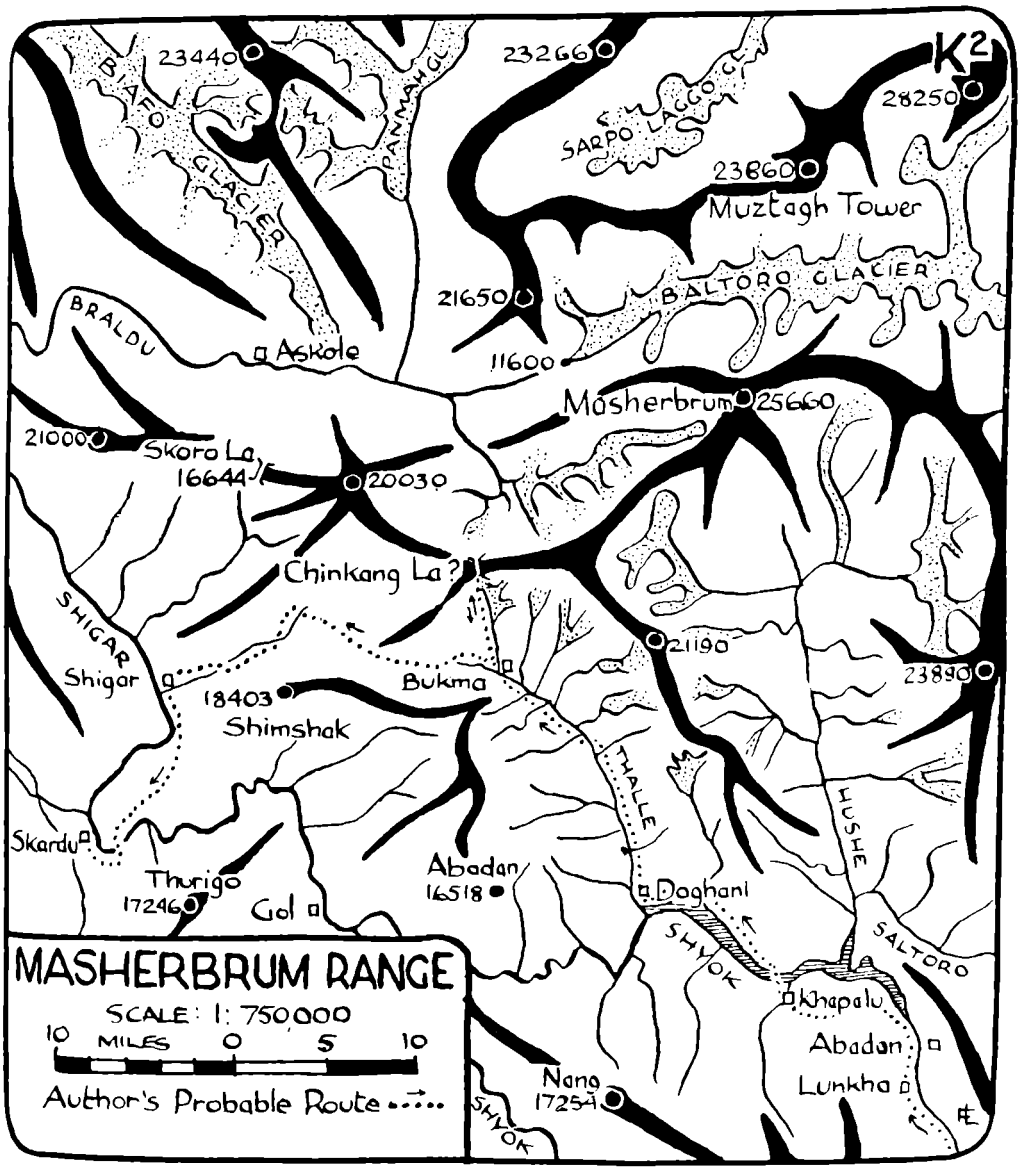
The legend is as difficult to unravel as it is hard to find. It appears that this pass was greatly used in the days of the Hunza raiders as a direct route from Yarkand via the Muztagh pass, the Baltoro glacier (scene of the International Expedition's mountaineering and film activities in 1934), and then southwards over this pass. The men would appear in the Thalle Nulla, leading 20 miles in a north-westerly direction from Doghani. Its head appears to be guarded by a complete ring of almost unclimbable mountains 19,000 feet high. The only known pass leads over the Thalle La to Shigar near Skardu. It was certain that it was not this pass that was used.

It is not plain whether the pass was used by the Hunza raiders themselves, in lightning raids upon the fertile Khapalu valley, or whether it was used by merchants trying to escape from them. The former seems probable, for as late as 1899 Sir Francis Younghusband, crossing the Muztagh, was forced to leave his tent at night to sleep on the bare ice of the glacier for fear of the Hunza robbers. When the advancing ice made the passage of the Muztagh too difficult, this smaller pass to Khapalu must have fallen into disuse. Now there appears to be only one man alive who believes he knows where it is; he is living in India, out of touch with his relations in Doghani.

I have long believed that a pass should lead over the lower southern Baltoro Wall: here at last I got confirmation of that belief. I determined that, if there was such a pass, I would find it.

After floating down the Shyok for the 10 miles to Doghani on a skin raft, I turned up the Thalle Nulla. It took me a long day's

march in it to reach the head nullas; here at the last village of Bukma, only inhabited by shepherds in summer, I pitched my Base Camp, from which to explore the two valleys which fork at this point. I spent a day in each valley. At the end of that time I had



found only two cols which appeared to give any hope. Both were at the head of the valley running up to the north-west, the Chinkang nulla. I took camp up to the foot of the glacier that fills the head of the valley. Just above me was a steep, avalanche marked, snow depression narrowing at one point almost to a couloir. Its top, nice and smoothly rounded, was nearly 2,000 feet above. There was obviously no difficulty to the climb, but after a fall of new snow it would be dangerous from avalanches.

At dawn next morning with one local coolie and my dog, I climbed to the top, to look down dead easy snow slopes the other side, leading to an increvassed glacier and a low winding valley. A glance at the map showed that this valley must also be called the Chinkang; a rather startling discovery which confirmed me in my decision that this really was the pass I was looking for, and appears to me to be clear proof.

I did not cross the pass, owing to shortage of money, so that still remains to be done. Some shikari or mountaineer, travelling with a dozen or so lightly loaded coolies will, I hope, confirm my observations, before I have time to return. I have named the pass the Chinkang La.

After the pass I had to get to Skardu to collect more money. Dropping down to Shigar I had an exciting journey down to Skardu on a skin raft. Several times I was soaked to the skin, when 8-foot waves reared their heads. It was marvellous to see the boatmen control their 'zak', bobbing and thrown about in the rapids like a cork in a mill-race. They were armed only with round poles as oars. My windproof trousers from K.36 did not prove a success—water came in over the top and collected in a pool inside the seat!

A three-day rest in Skardu ended, I made for Srinagar as fast as I could. It took me six days to cross the Deosai plains, the Burzil pass, and the Tragbal pass, and drop down to Bandipur, a normal journey of ten days. And then, Srinagar and the Flesh-pots.

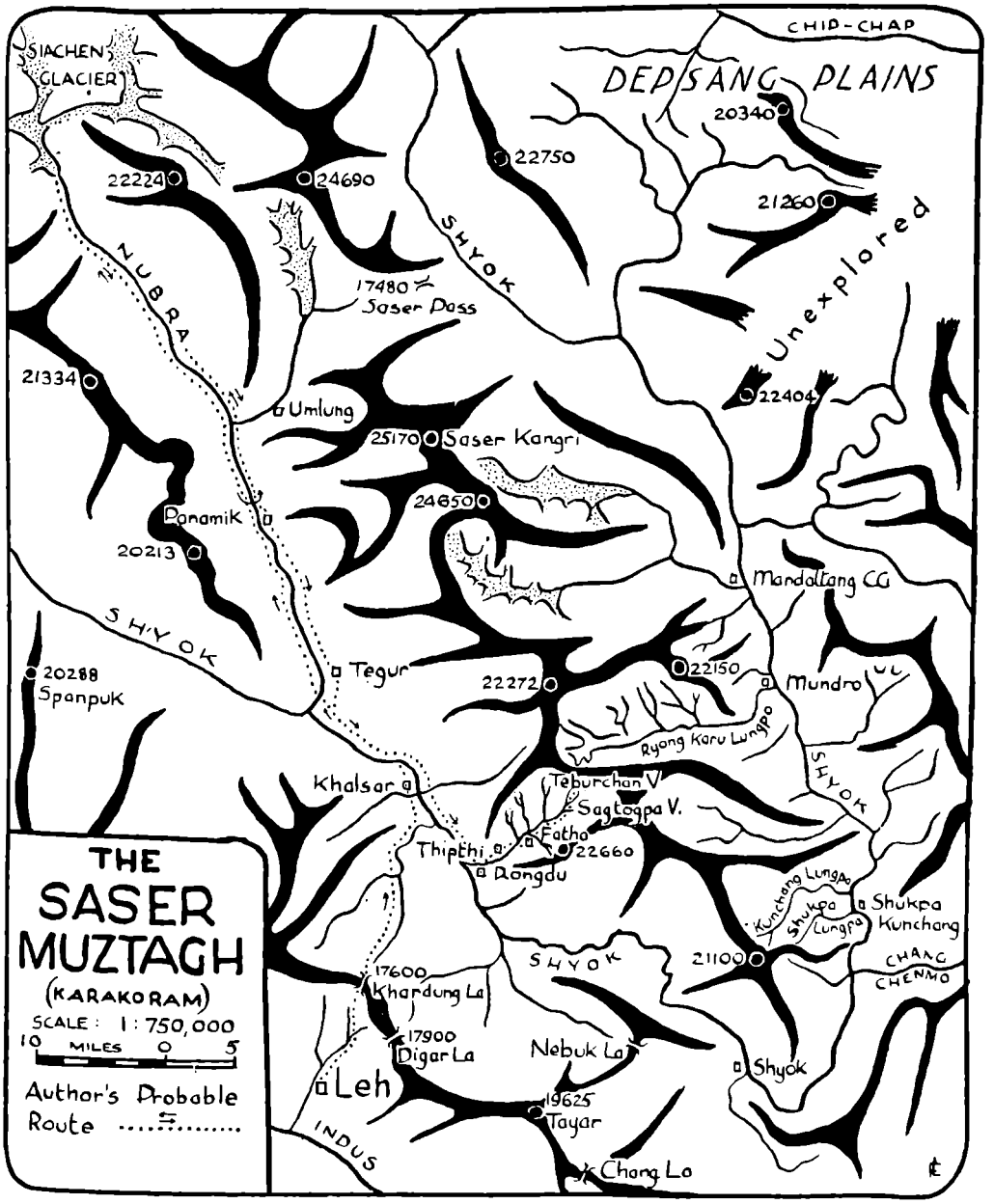
JAMES WALLER

RONGDU AND THE NUBRA VALLEY

IN July and August 1947 we had endeavoured to reach and then ascend the Siachen glacier in upper Nubra, and had even cherished the ambitious design of crossing the Turkistan La and returning to Kashmir by some other way than the rather dull and orthodox route. Our efforts had failed. We went up the left of the Nubra river, but on arriving just short of the Siachen glacier found that that mass of ice had moved from the left of the valley to the right and it was impossible to gain a footing on it. Our progress up the left of the river was barred by a great sheet of boiler-plate rock. Not to be defeated we went back to 2 miles north of Panamik, crossed the Nubra river by a new, rickety, gimcrack bridge and, hoping against hope, toiled up the right of the river, only to be foiled this time by a cliff face jutting into the stream and barring any advance.

There is, however, one way of reaching this glacier at any time of the year which means taking with one enough skins to form a 'zaq'

or raft. It was this precaution which we took in 1945 in moving up the Muztagh or Shaksgam valley and is the one method of dealing with the unfordable and unbridged streams. We tried this time in



the Nubra to ford the river at places where the map humorously marked non-existent fords. The attempt was a failure as not only was the current strong and the water bitterly cold, but the bed of the river was constantly changing and it was impossible to be sure of a foothold. The Ladakhi, moreover, is no bold adventurer and is unwilling to run the slightest risk. My Hunza men did good work in

searching for a passage but it was of no use, and we had to abandon the enterprise and leave the Nubra, defeated on every hand.

Our intention now was to regain the Indus valley in Ladakh by some new route. We were tired of the Khardung and the Diger passes. Our idea was to ascend the side valley on the right of the Shyok which joined that river at Rongdu, and after crossing the watershed reach the Shyok higher up, and probably regain the Indus over the Chang La. Accordingly we went up the right of the Shyok as far as Rongdu. This hamlet is tucked away at the mouth of a narrow gorge, and is very sheltered. So warm was it that apricots grew abundantly there as they did nowhere else in the country: we arrived there just as the fruit was ripe and the villagers were much alarmed lest we should eat the whole crop, greedy as we were. Rongdu was 10,970 feet above sea-level. Continuing up the valley we rose high up a barren hill-side, 800 or 1,000 feet above the village, with an extensive, but not very attractive, view over the dreary brown Ladakhi landscape. After sundry ups and downs we reached grass, tamarisks, willows, and good water, and arrived at Thipthi where there were huts and barley fields and an enormous rock in the middle of the cultivation where a hermit lived in an eyrie above his devotees. On the hill-side above a Lama guarded the Patha Shrine. We pushed on, crossed a ramshackle bridge, and reached a wide cultivated plain with huts, the summer headquarters of the villagers. This seemed to be the Fatha marked on the map, although, as there is no F in the language, the map must be in error, and the name Patha Lungpa. Animals were grazing and the people came out to welcome us. Our Ladhakis were anxious to stop here but the day was still young and we went farther up the valley and camped rather bleakly in the lee of a steep ridge of a lateral nala, at a place called Gulnis Spang.

After a wild night of wind and rain we started up the valley, now rougher and broken, so that progress was slowed up. Constant stone-filled gullies had to be crossed and one stream in particular flowing from Peak 22660 was full of rock and rubble and proved very troublesome.

On 8th August 1947 we camped by the stream that flowed from the Kunzang group. The Ladakhis said they and the yaks were tired yet the height was only a trifle over 15,000 feet. Hot springs were numerous, steaming and smelling abominably, till the whole valley seemed full of the fumes of sulphur. In some cases the water was too hot to touch, but where it was cooler I found aquatic weeds growing luxuriantly. I saw no solfataras, whence issues the volcanic gas without the water. We reconnoitred the area but the weather was poor, so we moved next day to the spit of land above the junction

of the streams from the Teburchan and Sagtogpa glacier, and continued our examinations there. My headman, Daulat Shah of Hunza, was an expert in these matters and as indefatigable as he was reliable. He went up the centre of the Sagtogpa glacier whilst I went to the left of it. We disregarded the Teburchan as it led to the north and it would lead into the upper Nubra which we had only recently left. As a result of our reconnoitring we decided that there was unquestionably a way across the watershed and down on to the upper Shyok river. There were, in fact, two definite routes over this watershed: one came out at the head of the Shukpa Kunchang Lungpa and to the camping-ground of Mandaltang, and the second at the head of the Ryong Kharu Lungpa and Mundro.

Our deductions could not be realized, for the Ladakhis and still less their animals could not make the effort. The obstacle to all exploration in Ladakh is the problem of transport—the Ladakhi is a good cheerful fellow, but he is timid and spineless and will not go beyond the recognized routes. His pack animals are very poor and he himself is a bad horsemaster and cannot understand the need for care. To accomplish the fascinating exploration that can be found in Ladakh, transport must be brought in from outside, otherwise there can be no hope of success. The best transport is Turki: the best coolies come from the Gilgit area. The cost would be great and the feeding of both men and beasts would need considerable previous arrangement, but no success can be expected if reliance is placed on local Ladakhi transport—I myself have lost two caravans in the Aksai Chin. The animals just die; on the second occasion collapse was so swift that we were lucky to regain settled country.

After seeing the head of the Patha Lungpa and realizing the impossibility of crossing the watershed, our only alternative was to return to the village. On the way down I visited the small shrine we passed before; it was under the tutelage of a fierce 'gonbo' or demon, but the lama in charge was most courteous and gave me every protection from the fiend! This cell, with its surrounding fields of waving barley, its rose bushes, and streams of clear water, belonged to the great monastery of Hemis. The place was clean, the frescoes well executed and most elaborate.

If this watershed is ever crossed, one caution is needed—the Shyok river may be difficult to descend; it would be advisable to carry a raft which should be sent up from Shyok village. For the actual crossing, from the upper part of the Patha Lungpa on to the Shyok river, coolies would be needed. Incidentally, there is no use taking a 'zaq' if an expert to work it is not also engaged.

R. C. SCHOMBERG

IN MEMORIAM

FRANK SMYTHE

'LET us now praise famous men.' Others have written of Frank Smythe's general record and readers of *The Times* will not soon forget the noble tribute paid to him on 26th July, by that great mountaineer, Geoffrey Young.

To me falls the honour to pay respect on behalf of the Himalayan Club, whose battle honours include Kamet and other Garhwal peaks, and the forlorn hopes on Mount Everest, honours which none did more to sustain than Frank Smythe.

His was a complex personality. First impressions were of extreme youth, both of body and mind; a shy aloofness; a confidence born of experience and achievement; courage without Gasconnade; a whole-hearted enthusiasm, occasionally over-impulsive but usually controlled by a sane appreciation of facts. Finally, a warm heart and a sense of humour.

I write mainly from my knowledge of him on the Mount Everest expeditions of 1933 and 1936. He was not really at home in a large party, but this applies to many of us—how many mountaineers can call themselves 'good mixers'? In the discussions rapidly degenerating into arguments and even acrid recriminations which are a feature of life at close quarters, he took little part and would retire into his own tent for peace and meditation. But on the many marches he and I did together he threw off reserve and was a good and stimulating companion, revealing often the thoughts of a mystic, and when the real mountaineering began his stature, both physical and mental, seemed to grow steadily. Altitude affected him so little that infirmities of various kinds, due mainly to lack of oxygen, took no hold upon him. On the Tibetan plateau, scourged by the spring winds and dust, he had taken a full share of work on transport and messing problems. Now he girded up his loins for the supreme struggle, and his hardihood became apparent.

Most mountaineers have, I think, an affection for 'ruggedness'—for toughness at all times; a pride in indifference to discomfort and in a capacity to endure in all conditions. Frank would have none of this. In face of tradition, and sometimes of ridicule, he preached his faith in 'be comfortable while you can, then stick it when you must'. So at the beginning of an expedition we would behold an apparently unmuscular, soft and almost paunchy Capuan, appreciative of the lush hospitality of the Planters' Club at Darjeeling and blandly unconscious of such a thing as training.

But we saw a different Frank when Base Camp was reached. The 350-mile march had given him all the training he needed, and he was fit, alert, and ready to play his part in the establishment of the camps up the East Rongbuk glacier, although not until the great ice-wall of the North Col had to be reconnoitred and climbed did his exceptional powers come into play. I wish he could have been spared the strain of this, but the 45-foot ice-cliff which barred the approach to the Col itself in 1933 needed the whole skill and courage of the best ice-expert in the party, and none of us will forget his superb effort; a compound of resolution, energy, balance, and sheer ability with the axe amounting to genius. I can see him now on his return to Camp III—tired but happy, and entirely modest.

For the attempts on the summit our chief hopes rested on him and Shipton in one party and on Wyn Harris and Wager in another. I remember discussing our chances with the pick of our porters in their tent on the North Col. Those shrewd judges of character and form were not personally devoted to Frank, who could never master more than a few words of their language and was a little shy with them. Their usual symbol of regard—a jovial nickname—was not bestowed upon him. But they unhesitatingly picked 'Ishmythe Sahib' as their best bet for the top.

Frank's bearing was beyond all praise. His three nights at Camp VI, at 27,400 feet, one of them spent alone, gave the men of science a new measure of human capacity, and his single-handed effort, after poor Shipton's collapse, has sustained our hopes that the summit can be reached in better conditions. That even he was nearing the limit was shown by his illusion, near the great couloir, that Shipton was with him on the rope; and by his apparent hallucinations in regard to cloud formations and movements, which we unkindly described as 'Frank's pulsating tea-kettles'. Yet he maintained his form on difficult ground, took photographs, coolly assessed the possibility of further advance and the likelihood of a better route; and, on his way back to the North Col, alone, survived a blizzard which would probably have been fatal to most men. Finally, he strolled into Camp III completely unruffled, and was the only man of those who had been high whose heart showed no sign of strain.

In 1936 there was no possibility of going beyond the North Col, but Frank's splendid judgement of snow conditions, so difficult in the Himalaya, probably averted a disaster on those treacherous slopes.

In 1938, which was a bad year also, he climbed with the party which reached about 27,000 feet, where snow stopped any further advance.

Of his successful ascent of Kamet and his climbs with Peter Oliver in Garhwal, I need not write in detail. Everywhere he showed

the same ability, the same devotion to mountains, the same love of beauty in landscape and in flowers.

During the war his splendid knowledge was devoted to the design of special equipment for troops and the training of men on difficult ground: in Norway, in the Canadian Rockies, and in Sicily. His eye for country and his flair for conservation of energy and effortless, rhythmical speed were priceless assets in preparing men for action in the hills.

After the war he returned to Canada for one season of climbing and exploration, but his great love was the Himalaya, and this year he went out once more, partly to seek flowers and partly to attempt Panch Chuli in the Almora District. Little did I think, when I discussed Panch Chuli with him and offered a few notes on the possibilities of approach to that lovely mountain, that we would not meet again.

He, more than most, has conveyed to others less fortunate the grandeur of the high hills. He has done this through his lectures, his books, his unrivalled skill in mountain photography, and his unassuming contacts with all classes of men.

He has been taken from us untimely: a very great mountaineer, an artist, and a friend. 'Frater, ave atque vale.'

HUGH RUTTLEDGE

NOTES

Mountain Club of India

It was in Calcutta, twenty-two years ago, that the Mountain Club of India, precursor by a few months only of the Himalayan Club, came into being. Now that our Headquarters have moved from Delhi to Calcutta it may interest 'original Members' (as they were styled) of the Mountain Club to recall old times by scanning their first 'List of Members' which has been sent to us by the first Honorary Secretary, Allsup. It is good to realize that the majority of those figuring in the list are still going strong.

At the inaugural meeting of the Mountain Club at Peliti's on 23rd September 1927, the following office-bearers were appointed:

President: Brigadier-General the Hon. C. G. Bruce, C.B., M.V.O.
Hon. Secretary: W. Allsup.
Hon. Treasurer: N. Macleod.
Committee: C. R. Cooke, A. G. Dyce, J. S. Hannah, A. A. Marr (junior), H. Newman, E. O. Shebbeare, H. W. Tobin.
And Miss Pille (Delhi), A. G. Dyce (N.W.F.P.), J. W. Rundall (Assam), and G. W. Houlding (Sikkim) agreed to act as local Correspondents.

List of Members

Hon. Members

Brigadier-General the Hon. C. G. Bruce, C.B., M.V.O.
D. W. Freshfield, D.C.L.
Sir Francis Younghusband, K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E.

Members

G. D. Adami, R.E.
W. Allsup, M.I.Mech.E., M.I.F.I.
J. B. Auden, B.A.
Lieut.-Col. F. M. Bailey, C.I.E.
B. W. Battye, R.A.
Sir William H. E. Birdwood, Bart., F.M., G.C.B., G.C.M.G., K.C.S.I., C.I.E., D.S.O., LL.D.
Capt. E. St. J. Birnie.
Capt. J. F. Blackden.
F. B. Blomfield.
J. M. Bottomley.
Capt. H. Boustead.
Capt. F. O. Cave, M.C.
Capt. E. R. Culverwell, M.C., R.A.
C. R. Cooke.
G. A. Cooper.
The Hon. Sir Geoffrey Corbett, K.B.E., C.I.E., I.C.S.
Major A. G. Dyce.
Capt. J. R. Foy.
H. Frolich.
E. M. Gill.
G. B. Gourlay, M.C., B.Sc.
C. T. Groves, M.A.
Major K. C. Hadow, M.C.
J. S. Hannah.
A. M. Hicks.
H. Hotz, A.M.I.E.E.
G. W. Houlding.

H. C. Hunt.
H. P. Jordan.
F. E. Kreis, M.C.
J. Latimer.
E. Lyne.
F. D. Lonergan.
F. Ludlow.
N. MacLeod.
The Hon. A. Marr, C.I.E., I.C.S.
A. A. Marr.
Major K. Mason, M.C., R.E.
H. I. Matthews, M.C., B.Sc., A.M.I., Mech. E.
H. Newman.
Lt.-Col. E. F. Norton, D.S.O.
A. H. Oliphant.
Miss E. V. Pilley, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.
A. M. Robertson.
Capt. G. W. Rundall.
H. Ruttledge, F.R.G.S., I.C.S.
R. A. K. Sangster.
E. O. Shebbeare.
Capt. R. C. Sinker, M.B.E.
A. J. B. Sinker.
T. H. Somervell, M.A., M.B., B.Ch., F.R.C.S.
G. R. Speaker.
G. A. R. Spence.
N. Standish.
Lt.-Col. H. W. Tobin, D.S.O., O.B.E.
J. D. Tyson, I.C.S.
Major R. L. Vance, I.M.S.
M. S. Vernal.
G. W. Wood-Johnston.
L. Williams.
Col. R. C. Wilson, D.S.O., M.C.

The Mountaineering Association

This note together with the article by C. O. Milner is printed by the courtesy and with the consent both of the Mountaineering Association and of Mr. Milner.—Ed.

The Mountaineering Association, formed in 1947, ought to be made known to those members of the Himalayan Club not yet aware of its existence. It provides at low cost, to all comers, elementary training for mountaineering, an urgent need which has become increasingly evident in recent years. Headquarters of the Association are conveniently situated in London at 1 Kildare Gardens, W. 2, and its objectives are outlined in the 'Constitution' from which two relevant clauses are quoted here:

2*a*. The Association seeks to embody persons who are interested in climbing and mountain walking and who hold that these pursuits are valuable especially to the young, as a stimulus to initiative and responsibility, and that they provide scope for adventure, which is so important in our highly industrialized community. The Association aims at encouraging the sport of mountaineering in Great Britain, and facilitating its practice at home and abroad by providing advice and practical training to aspirants of both sexes.

2*b*. The Association exists to promote, encourage and provide training in mountain walking, rock climbing, and mountaineering in all its aspects and in particular but without prejudice to the generality of this object, to establish schools in the form of hostels, specially equipped and conveniently located in mountainous districts. The schools will especially cater for young persons of limited resources.

The marked initial success of the Association is indicated in two

circular memoranda sent to British climbing clubs from which clauses are also reproduced here:

A start was made in 1948 with four courses which provided training for 40 pupils. This year it is proposed to hold eight courses, particulars of which are given in the 1949 programme.

The Association's Register of Leaders now comprises eighty experienced mountaineers and rock climbers who have volunteered to assist with our work. The number of applicants for training during 1948 and the response to the programme for 1949 makes it clear that more voluntary help is needed to meet the growing demand for training. The Association is anxious therefore that this part of our work shall become known to all members of clubs who are interested in encouraging and tutoring the newcomer to mountaineering and it invites all mountaineers of goodwill to offer their names for inclusion in our Leaders' Register.

The Association issues a quarterly news-letter entitled *Mountain Craft*, and a *Short Manual of Mountaineering Training*, which will shortly be available at a very moderate price, is of first-class value. The third number of the news-letter begins with an article by C. Douglas Milner, President of the Wayfarers' Club, and a member of the Alpine Club. With the author's consent we reproduce this also:

Training for what?

I have heard very many people talking about their ideas of training for the mountains in the last few years, and it is surprising what a range and variety of opinion is held.

Setting aside a small minority who think all training is bad, and that there are far too many people on the hills already, we find among those who speak in favour of training many very diverse aims in mountain climbing. Some think of it as a form of social service, bringing young people out of crowded cities into the fresh air of the hills; some as a form of religion—a sort of nature worship; others see in it great military value; others a struggle which must be advanced to even higher levels than it has at present reached; and some look forward over the low summits of the British hills as mere training-grounds to the great rock and ice faces of the Alps, and the peaks of the Himalayas, seeing at the end of the road 'the complete mountaineer'.

My own view, perhaps shared by the great majority of climbers to-day, is that climbing is a fine recreation, a great sport, but little more than that. 'It is not real life and it is not religion.' As a form of social service it is likely to appeal to only a small minority of young people; as a form of religion it is grievously inadequate; its military value in an atomic age may be questioned: whilst as a recreation rather than as a career, very great possibilities of enjoyment lie at all levels of skill, and in every district.

That is the delightful part of climbing . . . not only is it possible for one good man as leader to give safety to several others, but almost everyone can find in the mountains something that to him is well worth the doing.

It seems to me that the ideas of elementary but thorough and steady training that are being put forward by the Mountaineering Association will serve many people, isolated groups or individuals, who feel the attraction of the mountains, yet do not quite know how to begin; or who, having walked over the tracks of our own hills, wish to try their hand at rock climbing without rushing into the immediate dangers that can surround, and all too often eliminate, the beginner who tackles rocks without first learning to climb behind a leader.

There is so little scope for trial and error in climbing. Whilst the chances of falling from an 'easy' climb are less than the chances of falling from the 'severe' climb, the consequences are remarkably similar. Young people are often over-enthusiastic and impatient to go ahead; yet when we consider that an active climbing life can be spread over the forty years between twenty and sixty, it is surely worth while laying a good foundation for a recreation that can be enjoyed for so long?

I hope the Association will, indeed I am sure it will, blow an effective counterblast to the theories that burst upon us from time to time, mainly put forward by young men of exceptional personal abilities, that climbs of the older type, or of less than perhaps 'severe' standard are not worth doing. What nonsense it all is! Some of the finest routes in Britain—or in the Alps for that matter—under proper conditions, are little more than 'moderate' technically, yet in beauty of setting, in length or interest, are fine routes.

There is of course a good deal to be said, once we have passed the very early stages, for tackling climbs a little harder than we have done previously, and the element of difficulty for each person is part of his sport. But it is emphatically the difficulty *for each person*, and that means taking into account all the other things that training cannot provide, or can only enhance to a small extent. Both men and women vary in strength, in stamina, in aptitude for the work, or in their stores of courage or of determination. And it is for each to find his own level. All climbers, once their training has taken them as far as their personal abilities allow, should stop at that point, and then seek to draw from the mountains the richness of experience that lies within their limits.

In the courses provided under good leaders, there is the chance that a few gifted climbers will emerge. But they would have emerged somehow without any training body, and they are not the main concern. It is the greater number of reasonably competent, happy people who will be helped to find their level that matter. They are the real salt of the earth. They buy the books the experts write, they climb cheerfully and even unambitiously on rock or ice as they choose, they enjoy themselves on the routes the experts have worked out, and provide (let it be said very loud and clear) the great bulk of climbing club members, who keep out of the troubles that foolhardy inexperience or ambitious daring alike may bring.

Remember what J. H. Doughty once said: 'It is not primarily to get to the top of things I would climb. It is going to the right places with the right people and in the right mood. It is not—*getting anywhere.*'

BURMA'S ICY MOUNTAINS. By F. KINGDON WARD. *London: Jonathan Cape, 1949. 8×5 inches; 287 pages; illustrations and maps.*

In his latest book, *Burma's Icy Mountains*, Captain Kingdon Ward deals with two separate expeditions to little-known parts of the Burmese frontiers. The first sixteen chapters tell the story of a courageous journey of botanical exploration to far northern Burma, to the region of a group of snow-peaks rising to nearly 20,000 feet and dominated by the majestic Ka Karpo Razi, 19,269 feet. It is difficult to keep track of Kingdon Ward's journeys, so numerous have they been, but as the author tells us, this journey made during 1937 was the third occasion in twelve years that he had visited the mountains beyond Fort Hertz.

Starting from Myitkina in mid-June, and reaching Fort Hertz on 22nd July, Kingdon Ward set out for the valley of the Nam Tamai, arriving there on 4th August. Thence he worked up the river to the junction of the Seingkhu and Adung valleys, making two diversions to explore the Tamai-Dablu divide, one of the main objectives of the expedition.

The Seingkhu confluence was reached, at the end of the bridle-path, on 16th September. In 1931 Kingdon Ward had first seen Ka Karpo Razo at a distance of 12 or 14 miles from the vicinity of the Namni La which he later crossed into Tibet. He now decided to explore the southern approaches to the mountain in the hopes of getting a nearer view, and on the 20th he set out up the Adung valley keeping to the right bank of the gorge where the 'path' was, to say the least of it, extremely hazardous. The Gamlang, a river flowing from the southern slopes of the mountain, was reached on the 29th, and the next fortnight was spent within a few miles of Burma's highest mountain, though only once was a close-up view of it permitted to him. The long journey back to civilization was started on 13th October. Again diversions were made to the Tamai-Dablu divide to collect seeds, and Fort Hertz was reached on 12th December after an absence of just over four months.

The last seven chapters deal with the Vernay-Cutting expedition to the Burma-China border in the neighbourhood of Imaw Bum during the winter of 1938–9, which Kingdon Ward was invited to join. This was a zoological and ornithological expedition on behalf of the American Museum of Natural History. As may be imagined this was a very different affair to Kingdon Ward's lone journey, an affair of fifteen servants and over 100 mule-loads of kit.

Kingdon Ward's main interest is in botany and the very detail that makes this book a veritable joy to the botanist and gardener may not be properly appreciated by the botanical ignoramus. But even he must be interested by the author's clear elucidation of how climate and altitude cause strange vagaries in a number of Alpine and sub-Alpine plants. Moreover, he tells his story vividly and comments in a delightful way on incidents of the journey as well as discoveries.

Burma's Icy Mountains is illustrated by a number of attractive photographs taken by the author himself. The two maps are most welcome. A third giving in more detail the wanderings of the American expedition would have made it somewhat easier to follow their journey.

D. G. LOWNDES

DELHI–CHUNGKING. By K. P. S. MENON. *Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford University Press.* 9 × 5 *inches*; 245 *pages*; 19 *illustrations*, 2 *maps.*

This is the diary of a journey to and through places which have not been visited by many British or Indians, and from the story the reader will see how well the author, now Secretary to the Government of India in the Department of External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations, is qualified for his present job. He has travelled widely in Europe and Africa as well as in Asia, and has made friends with many interesting men, a great number of whom are in high positions. He possesses, moreover, the faculty of keen observation, a great sense of humour, and is very well read.

The stages of his journey to Gilgit need no remark other than a protest against the inclusion, in a reference to Nanga Parbat, of a dramatic but happily premature account of the death in 1937 and subsequent exhumation of Paul Bauer. The great mountaineer is still very much alive and during the war became the father of two fine girls. Mr. Menon apologizes, and hopes one day to meet him, after disposing of him so romantically.

Mr. Menon describes vividly the arduous marches up through Hunza across the Karakoram by the Mintaka pass, and on to Yarkand, interspersing his narrative with bits of Hunza history and legend, and quotations from two great Chinese pilgrims, Fa-hsien and Hsuan Tsang. These two had visited Sarikol, the 'silk country', in about A.D. 400 and 600, and Mr. Menon fully appreciated the privilege of following in their steps.

From Yarkand, in the company of Mr. Gillett, his host in Sinkiang, a visit was made to Khotan, and thence, still by car, back along the 'Silk Road' through Yarkand to Kashgar. Though Kashgar itself

was comparatively dull, many interesting contacts were made before starting the thousand-mile journey to Urumchi. The onward route lies, for the most part, parallel to the Tian Shan and is one of the great caravan roads of history. Mr. Menon gives an outline of the Tungan rebellion, and also tells of a meeting with a Chinese Christian general who once baptized a whole regiment with a fire hose. He describes the scene from Urumchi as one of incredible loveliness: the blue skies, the purple-hued bare willows, the half-frozen blue and white Urumchi river, and the white peaks of Bogdo Ola, the 'Spirit Mountain', sacred to the Mongols.

Under the heading 'Return to Civilization' he describes various functions and interesting contacts during the nineteen days' wait for a plane to take him on to Lanchow, where, in a lovely glen surrounded by hills standing like sentinels, is the tomb of Genghis Khan.

Chungking, the final stage, was reached on 10th December, just six months after leaving Delhi. The numerous apt and interesting quotations from Chinese and other travellers, philosophers, and historians enhance this most interesting diary. It is, moreover, a pleasure to note here and there the author's affection for his own Malabar and its people. H. W. T.

IM GARTEN DER GÖTTLICHEN NANDA. By R. JONAS. *L. W. Seidel und Sohn, Wien.* 167 *pages*; 93 *illustrations*, 3 *maps.*[1]

This is an account of the Expedition to Garhwal in 1938 in which five Austrians and one German took part, with whom, for liaison as well as for climbing, was Whitehead of the Indian Army. Publication was delayed by the war, but the appearance of this book now is opportune, for it enables close comparison with the recently published narrative in *Montagnes du Monde* of the Swiss Expedition of 1947 to the same region. The leader of the 1938 party was Professor Rudolf Schwarzgruber, and the author, Rudolf Jonas, was the doctor.

Though this part of the Himalaya is comparatively easy of access owing to the sacred shrines about the sources of the Ganges, the great mountains hard by had received less attention than the still greater peaks farther east, such as Trisul, Nanda Devi, and Kamet.

The book begins with a brief history of climbing in the Himalaya, and a comparison with that in the Alps. There follow descriptions of the climbers and their Sherpa porters. Of the latter, Wangdi Norbu (also known as Ongdi) was outstanding, for he had been on no less than five expeditions—on Kangchenjunga 1929 with Paul Bauer,

[1] 'Meade Col', just north of Chaukhamba on the Gangotri map, is only some 30 miles away from 'Meade Col' on the ridge joining Ibi Gamin East with Kamet.—ED.

Kamet, Everest, Nanga Parbat, and Mana Peak with Smythe. He was later on the Swiss Expedition of 1947 and nearly lost his life on Kedarnath in the second major accident of his career as a 'Tiger'.

There is an interesting discussion of the origin of the 'heavenly Nanda', from which the book takes its title. Nanda is often found in Himalayan nomenclature—viz. Nanda Devi, Nanda Ghunti, Nandaban, Alaknanda. The Sanskrit dictionary gives the meaning as 'joy' and also as a name for Vishnu. Nandā is a synonym for the goddess Durga. A Garhwali legend tells of a Kumaoni princess Nanda whose lover, though turned away by her father, nevertheless continued to strive for her. Eventually the princess sought refuge on the unconquerable peak of Nanda Devi.

Schwarzgruber's party were favoured with exceptionally fine weather, for the monsoon ended early. Dividing forces, they acclimatized themselves gradually with ascents of the lesser peaks of Bhagirathi North (21,364 feet) and Chandra Parbat (22,073 feet). Thus encouraged they decided to try Satopanth and Chaukhamba, twenty-three-thousanders, the two highest mountains in the district.

On the former, Ellmauthaler, Frauenberger, and Whitehead, with two Sherpas, encountered great difficulties, and Whitehead, though not fully recovered from his illness developed on the way up from the plains, took over most of the load from a sick Sherpa. His illness was subsequently diagnosed as sprue, and during the expedition he lost over 30 lb. in weight. They concluded that Satopanth should be attacked pre-monsoon by the north-east ridge, which was in fact the route successfully taken by André Roch in 1947.

On Chaukhamba, Messner and Spannraft spent more than four weeks examining the approaches from all sides. Only that from the north-east by way of the Bhagirathi-Kharak glacier seemed feasible, but here unfortunately their porters failed them after an avalanche swept over the tracks they had just made, covering them with ice-dust. In view of the avalanche disaster in 1939 which overtook Roch's party in almost the same spot, killing two porters, it appears there were some grounds for the Sherpas' hesitancy. Roch also inspected the western approaches in 1947 and agrees with Messner and Spannraft that the most promising approach is from the north-east.

Meanwhile Schwarzgruber, who was just recovering from a severe attack of dysentery, Ellmauthaler, Frauenberger, and Whitehead had been tackling Kedarnath (22,770 feet) from the north-north-west, but were brought up by a dangerous ice-wall. As they were directly in the track of avalanches they decided the risk was unjustifiable and returned to base camp at Nandaban. They agreed that the route tried by Marco Pallis in 1934, up the long ridge between

'White Dome' (as the Swiss named the eastern satellite) and the summit, afforded the best chance of success, especially in the pre-monsoon period. It is interesting to note that the Swiss party, who successfully used this route in 1947, decided to descend directly to the Kirti glacier, thus avoiding retracing their steps along the ridge, and must have followed approximately the proposed route of the Austrian expedition.

Sri Kailas (22,742 feet) was the next and final objective and was scaled in intensely cold conditions on 16th October by Schwarzgruber, Ellmauthaler, Jonas, and Frauenberger. They were surprised to find themselves on the northern edge, as it were, of the Himalaya, looking down to and over the plains of Tibet. Jonas questions the name of this peak. Kailas, the real Olympus of the Hindus, lies some six score miles to the east. Sri, of course, means 'holy', but it seems strange that a mountain so far from the pilgrim track should be named Sri Kailas, the 'holy of holies'.

No account of the Gangotri region would be complete without reference to Shivling, mountain of Shiva the destroyer, the 'Himalayan Matterhorn', which towers, mighty and majestic, above the base camp at Nandaban, inspiring the hearts of the climbers. Though at first a vision of utter inaccessibility, Shivling soon became more familiar and almost like a guardian sentinel. Indeed, they so far forgot their awe as to plan routes for some further ascent.

The first illustration is a very fine colour photo of Shivling, and the many other photographs in the book are of exceptional quality.

The book ends with a few medical notes and a résumé of the accomplishments of Austrians in the Himalaya. Though his last paragraph is touched with sadness because it must be so long before his countrymen can climb again, Dr. Jonas does not doubt that there will be many more Austrian climbers playing their parts in the future exploration of the Himalaya.

Dr. Jonas has given an excellent account of the expedition, and has added materially to our previous knowledge of the Gangotri region.

To conclude with a banality: Dr. Jonas waxes ecstatic on the subject of the British plum cake, which, he writes, 'is to be found wherever Britons live'. (Alas that we must now substitute 'was' for 'is to be'!) H. W. T.

CLIMBS OF MY YOUTH. By ANDRÉ ROCH. *London: Lindsay Raymond.* $8\frac{1}{2} \times 5\frac{1}{2}$ *inches*; 159 *pages*; 16 *illustrations.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

This, as the title indicates, is the story of the early mountaineering feats of one of the world's finest climbers, whose name is well known

far beyond his own Swiss frontiers. Climbing is in his blood, for his father and uncle were both first-class mountaineers, while he also had the advantage of friendship with the famous Lochmatter family of St. Niklaus, with some of whom he began to climb when he was thirteen. When he was eighteen, a descent from the summit of the Grepon, which began late with a storm raging, brought home to him the lesson that 'high mountains are stern and unyielding, the more one goes among them the better one comes to know their dangers'. He also writes: 'I am afraid of mountains and it is because of this that I love them and return to them.'

After the Grepon came a fine ascent of the Badile in the Bregaglia and another of the Aiguille du Fou, Chamonix, the latter a most difficult climb on an almost unbelievable aiguille. Then winter ascents of the Dent du Requin and of the Grepon. Adventure on the north-east ridge of the Jungfrau, the Mittelegi ridge of the Eiger, and the north-east ridge of the Dom in 1928, preceded a fine traverse of the Aiguille du Diable. In 1931 came a first ascent of the Triolet, north face, and a first descent, much talked-of, of the north face of the Aiguille du Dru. The last chapters describe three first ascents in the Chamonix aiguilles.

All these climbs took place before André Roch was twenty-six and it is an under-statement to say that his descriptions are thrilling. The illustrations are excellent and in several cases, astounding. This book should rank among the finest yet produced on mountaineering and the price of it is surprisingly low. H. W. T.

TWO MOUNTAINS AND A RIVER. By H. W. Tilman. *London: Cambridge University Press.* 9×6 *inches*; 228 *pages*; 36 *plates*; 6 *maps.*

This fine contribution to the literature of mountaineering art, somewhat resembling a drama in three acts with a couple of *entr'actes*, tells the story of an adventurous year. It begins with an attempt, in June 1947, on Rakaposhi, that graceful mountain of 25,550 feet, which towers above the Hunza river about 25 miles from Gilgit. The party was bi-lingual, including Tilman and Campbell Secord, with Gyr and Kappeler, both experienced climbers who were visiting the Himalaya under the aegis of the Swiss Fondation for mountain exploration. They were a strong team but severe technical difficulties and bad weather ruined their chances of success—nor had they sufficient time at their disposal, and, in Tilman's view, 'to devote less than two months to a big unknown mountain is bordering on disrespect'.

Following this attempt, exploration was undertaken of a hitherto

untouched glacier area which lies south of the Batura range and west and north respectively of the Hunza and Gilgit rivers. The author sums up their achievements here with the remark: 'Our defeat was complete. We had explored the Kukuay from snout to source and it was unfortunate that we dispelled not only our own dreams but those also of the Survey of India draughtsmen.'

Crossing the Mintaka and the Taghdumbash Pamir Tilman went on to keep a long-arranged date at Tashkurghan with Shipton, who was at that time H.B.M. Consul at Kashgar. Together they launched an attack on Muztagh Ata, 24,388 feet, which Tilman describes in his usual graphic style, concluding by frankly ascribing their failure to 'inexcusable assumption of the probable snow conditions, over-confidence in our own powers, and the unexpected cold'—hardly to be expected in mid-August. Shipton's foot was badly frost-bitten and this was of course the actual deciding factor: 'failure with frost-bite thrown in was a tough bullet to chew'.

The author then tells of a happy prelude to the last phase of the year. He dallied in Kashgar at the Consulate for three restful and highly interesting weeks. After which, in the concluding act, we learn that 'preferring a reasonable alternative route' for his homeward journey he decided to diverge via Wakhan, the extreme north-east province of Afghanistan. This offered the attractive prospect of visiting the source of the Oxus and of seeing the high mountains adjacent to the Kukuay. He hoped to elude any stray Afghan official in that remote region; however, that was not to be. He tells the story, with quite excusable bitterness, of his arrest, imprisonment, and eventual expulsion via the Dorah pass on the Afghan-Chitral frontier, but this bitterness is tempered by a grateful recollection of surprising kindness and consideration at the hands of an Afghan General.

In his three previous books Tilman has climbed high in both actual and figurative sense—in this one, although he may not have conquered the summits he aimed at, he has, nevertheless, attained great literary altitude. It contains a good measure of the author's own special brand of humour and shows once again his particular aptitude for describing men and their ways of life. His similes hit the nail on the head every time, and a galaxy of quotations and proverbs from a seemingly unfailing store are always pungent and often most amusing. Truly a delicious book for all sorts and conditions of men.

H. W. Tobin

NOTES AND NEWS[1]

By THE PRESIDENT

AN Annual Report seems of necessity to be a somewhat formal document and the present one is probably no exception. The intention of these notes is to provide for members something more informative about their Club and its activities.

There has been a feeling, I think, particularly amongst Overseas Members that the Club has 'faded out'. I am glad to say categorically that the Club is not dead; it is not even dying; but it is understandable that members should be impatient for some visible signs of life and I trust they will sympathize with the reasons for the long silences now I hope to be broken. The unavoidable lapse of the *Journal* for five years may have contributed to this feeling though thanks to the efforts of the Committee in Delhi and particularly to its Honorary Secretary, Annual Reports were presented which covered the major activities of these years.

You all know, too, that during 1947 the growing shortage of members in Delhi made it impossible to continue with the work of the Club there and its headquarters was therefore transferred to Calcutta. The 1947 *Journal* gave hints on the impending change and the 1948 *Journal*, which is in active course of preparation, will I hope enlarge on subsequent events more fully. This is as it were an interim report as an earnest of better things to come.

To those of the 127 Founder Members who are still with us and who inaugurated the Club in February 1928, the change must have seemed a vital one. To them and to the many distinguished members who were associated with the Club in Simla or in Delhi until 1947 I would like to say that the present Committee are doing their utmost to continue the Club's traditions from a new headquarters and in changed circumstances.

Though nothing has appeared in print since the last Annual General Meeting a great deal of work has been done behind the scenes. The first and greatest difficulty to contend with appeared to be that of tracing members, and to judge from information received some members found equal difficulty in tracing the Club! It will be seen, however, from the Annual Report that the Club now has a permanent Calcutta address through which it can be reached. The Honorary Secretary, Bill Murphy, has had his hands full with the job of correcting addresses so please remember to send him

[1] From the Himalayan Club Report for the year ending 31st Dec. 1948.

details of any changes. The strength of the Club's membership is at present an unknown quantity, though it is believed to be not less than at the end of 1946 when it numbered 572. The exact number will only be known when the up-to-date Register is completed, which I hope will be by the end of this year for publication and issue with the next Annual Report.

The problem of finding accommodation for the Club in Calcutta has been a major one for a number of years. The Eastern Section equipment had to be moved from the offices of the Geological Survey of India during the war and has since, in turn, been housed in the Museum, in Fort William, and in a Boat House belonging to the Calcutta Rowing Club. In a state of sad deterioration, except for equipment brought personally from Delhi in 1948 by Brigadier Osmaston, it is now housed in a room which the Club has been able to rent from the Calcutta Light Horse Club in Park Street. The Library is also being installed there for the time being, at any rate this will be its headquarters.

The Committee have also had under active consideration a revision of the Club's Memorandum and Articles of Association to suit changed conditions. The need for this revision became clear when considering the necessity of applying through the High Court for transfer of the Club's Registered Office from Simla to Calcutta. The proposed revisions will, when ready, be put before members for their approval.

It is hoped by the end of this year to produce a *Journal* for 1948. Col. Tobin, who incidentally was the first Honorary Local Secretary of the Club in Darjeeling, has kindly consented again to undertake this arduous work in which he has the assistance of Mrs. Townend, another old member of the Club and a one time Vice-President. I regret the delay in publication of this volume for which the transfer of the Club's centre has largely been responsible. But the Editor has also to contend with a serious shortage of copy and he would be most grateful for any articles and photographs which members can produce, if not for the 1948 then for the 1949 *Journal*. Let it not be thought that articles must be long and of a technical nature to be of interest. In the editorial to the 1946 *Journal* the Editor expressed regret that there were so few articles of general or non-climbing interest about Himalayan matters, and notes on treks and expeditions, however brief, are of great value to the Club which endeavours to act as a clearing house for information of this sort. The Honorary Secretary would be glad to receive these, and also, with conditions changed as they have, information on regulations regarding access to any part of the Himalayas.

We have unfortunately lost touch as a club with many of the

porters who at one time or another have accompanied members on treks and climbs, and the porters' register needs to be revived and brought up to date. Individual members have, however, I am fairly sure kept in contact with certain Sherpas and information about them and their capabilities is greatly wanted.

We have recently bidden adieu to Rex Fawcus, our first President in Calcutta, and now we learn with regret that A. F. Clark, who for ten years was Assistant Treasurer and then Secretary of the Club for all but a year since 1941, is leaving India in September. We shall be most sorry to lose him and I must record what a help he has been in assisting the new Committee to take over. We have also lost the services of J. L. Bhatnagar who has looked after the Club's library since its foundation. The careful way in which the Club's valuable books have been looked after is due to him; and his final work for the Club was the supervision of packing up the books for transfer to Calcutta where they arrived in excellent shape.

Of visitors this year we record the arrival of H. W. Tilman and Peter Lloyd who are at present in Nepal. Frank Smythe was with us for a few days before leaving for Darjeeling where he became ill; his untimely death which occurred later in England is deeply regretted by the Club and by mountaineers throughout the world.

We have met members of the Swiss party who have just concluded a three months' sojourn in Sikkim and Nepal during which, having crossed from Sikkim into Nepal by the Kang La, they were successful in climbing Pyramid Peak from the Nepal side over the Sphinx. They were good enough on 13th August to show to the Club some excellent colour films of the 1947 expedition to Garhwal under the leadership of André Roch, and it is hoped that a fuller account of their recent climbs will be available for the *Journal*.

Looking through back numbers of the *Journal* one appreciates how much has been lost in contacts throughout this continent both in the official world and in the way of liaison on scientific subjects. I hope and believe that such contacts can be revived. We look forward also to a revival of expeditions from other countries who wish to visit the Himalayas. The Club will always be glad to assist them in any way possible and would welcome their advising us beforehand of their intention.

Reviewing the scene in this year of the coming-of-age of the Club I think we may fairly say that its vitality remains undiminished. Though at times it may have seemed to those connected with the Club here that necessary attention to administrative details was obscuring the wider objects of the Club, our aim still remains 'to encourage and assist Himalayan travel and exploration, and to

extend knowledge of the Himalaya and adjoining mountain ranges through Science, Art, Literature, and Sport'.

THE YORKSHIRE RAMBLERS CLUB JOURNAL, Vol. vii, No. 25, 1949

THIS is the first number of the *Journal* to appear since 1947. It is still under the editorship of E. E. Roberts who this year took part in further exploration of Irish caves notwithstanding a severe operation last summer.

H. G. Watts describes a ski-ing holiday at Wengernalp, R. E. Chadwick 'A First Visit to the Alps' (Zermatt District), and A. W. A. Matheson 'A Summer Camp in Lewis'. There are three articles on 'caving'. H. E. Stringers in 'Cyrene Underground' describes the extraordinary underground water-caverns (containing a Temple and Oracle of Apollo) in the Tocra-Derna area of North Africa, while Stembridge and Holmes each contribute an article on the explorations of the Irish Caverns. For Gritstone Crag climbers Stembridge provides an article, illustrated with route-diagrams, of Almscliff near Harrogate.

The editor's summary of efforts by various parties in Mere Gill puts into a form convenient for future reference the story of a complicated series of explorations. The idea is worth following up with further articles both on mountains and on caves, now that so many more people are interested in such matters: it is not easy to obtain a full series of back numbers of climbing journals for personal possession.

By the courtesy of the Craven Pot-Hole Club there is a very full story of 'Car Pot Break-through' in this journal of a kindred club.

The editor's well-known feature 'Chippings' contains, as always, notes on odd but useful items. His article on Cave Exploration summarizes recent underground work, and does not confine itself to the Pennine area: brief mention is made of two caves near Cherrapunji in Assam, India.

W. ALLSUP

CLUB PROCEEDINGS

Report for the year ended 31st December 1948

MEMBERS will recall that by the end of 1947 the headquarters of the Himalayan Club had been transferred to Calcutta, and it would be fitting here to record a tribute to the many members of the Club who, as Committee Members or in other capacities, guided the Club's activities so successfully for the nineteen years during which its headquarters were in Simla and Delhi. Members will be glad to learn that there is still an active nucleus of Himalayan enthusiasts left in Delhi.

Though there were no climbs or expeditions which the Club can record during 1948, much useful work was done during the year which might be regarded as rehabilitation after the war period. The *de facto* Committee which took over in Calcutta had many difficulties to contend with, not the least being that of keeping in touch with members, many of whom were registered under service addresses through which they cannot now be traced. While the Honorary Secretary has made every effort to get in touch with members where their addresses were known, there are many obscurities still to be cleared up, and if any member has been inadvertently omitted from circulation of Club notices, &c., his indulgence is asked for.

During the year most of the equipment held in Delhi was transferred to Calcutta, a small portion being sent to Bombay for use of members there. Arrangements were also initiated for the removal of the Club's Library to Calcutta where it has since arrived. Our thanks are due to the Honorary Local Secretary in Delhi and to the Honorary Librarian for the efficient way in which the equipment and books were transferred. For most of the year the equipment was stored in one of the Boat Houses belonging to the Calcutta Rowing Club, and the Committee wish to express their appreciation of the great assistance which this arrangement afforded.

At the Annual General Meeting held in December 1948, the Club was fortunate in being shown colour films by Dr. West illustrating a Geological Expedition to Afghanistan and by Capt. R. B. Bakewell depicting ski-ing in Kashmir, both of which were much appreciated by the meeting which was well attended.

Members are aware that hitherto Messrs. A. F. Ferguson & Co. have acted as Auditors of the Club. With the transfer of the Club's headquarters from Delhi to Calcutta it is preferable that a firm of Calcutta Auditors be appointed. Messrs. Price, Waterhouse,

Peat & Co. have been approached and they have confirmed that they would be willing to act as Auditors if appointed.

As will be seen from the Balance Sheet and Accounts which accompany this report the finances of the old Central and Eastern Sections of the Club are now shown under one head. The financial position of the Club, with fairly substantial reserves, continues to be satisfactory, and it is intended now to utilize a portion of these reserves in the purchase of new equipment for the use of members in replacement of deteriorated stocks mostly of pre-war origin. Against this expenditure, which has long been foreseen, a reserve fund was started during the war.

As indicated in the last Annual Report a start was made last year in compiling an up-to-date Register of Members and work on this has proceeded steadily. At the end of December 1948, a year in which twelve new members were elected and four resignations recorded, there were 608 names on the Club's Register, but this number almost certainly exaggerates the true strength of the Club at present, for the membership of many has unfortunately lapsed under Rule 19 owing to non-payment of subscription. Considerable latitude has been allowed over this because of the unsettled period through which the Club has passed but any member whose subscription has inadvertently fallen in arrears or who has paid a subscription which has not been acknowledged by the Club is asked to communicate immediately with the Honorary Treasurer. It should be noted that subscriptions for Overseas Members should be paid to the Club's account with the Imperial Bank of India, London; those for Resident Members should be paid NOT as formerly into the Imperial Bank of India, Delhi, but into Lloyds Bank Ltd., Calcutta. It is proposed for the convenience of members at the beginning of 1950 to send a Banker's Order Form to all those on the Register at their last recorded addresses.

Checking the addresses on the Register has been a difficult job. It is still not known whether all addresses as recorded in the Club's Register, and to which this report is being sent, are correct, and it is hoped that all members will keep the Honorary Secretary up to date with any changes.

The Club have now obtained a P.O. Box No., which will be its permanent address and it would be appreciated if in future letters are sent to the Committee Member concerned c/o The Himalayan Club, P.O. Box No. 9049, Park Street P.O., Calcutta, 16.

For the Committee

W. E. MURPHY
Honorary Secretary

CALCUTTA, *19th August 1949*

THE HIMALAYAN CLUB

Balance Sheet as at 31st December 1948

LIABILITIES	Rs.	As.	P.	Rs.	As.	P.
EQUIPMENT RESERVE						
As per last Balance Sheet				1,047	13	0
HUTS CONSTRUCTION RESERVE						
As per last Balance Sheet				1,500	0	0
SUNDRY LIABILITIES						
Expenses	704	10	0			
Subscriptions in advance .	59	8	8			
				764	2	8
ACCUMULATED FUNDS						
As per last Balance Sheet .	47,603	11	6			
Add: Life Membership Subscriptions received during year .	492	3	8			
	48,095	15	2			
Less: Deficit for year . .	1,625	0	10			
				46,470	14	4

ASSETS	Rs.	As.	P.	Rs.	As.	P.
HUTS ACCOUNT						
At cost less Depreciation						
As per last Balance Sheet				3,097	9	0
FURNITURE AND EQUIPMENT						
At cost less Depreciation						
As per last Balance Sheet .	4,190	10	0			
Less: Sale during year . .	4	8	0			
				4,186	2	0
LIBRARY—						
As per last Balance Sheet				100	0	0
INVESTMENTS—At cost						
Rs. 19,000 3% Loan 1951/54	19,900	0	0			
,, 9,000 3% Victory Loan 1957	9,191	14	0			
,, 4,000 2½% Loan 1961	4,000	0	0			
£100 3% Defence Bonds .	1,333	5	4			
				34,425	3	4
SUNDRY DEBTORS						
Accrued Interest and Miscellaneous	366	2	0			
Subscriptions at estimated value	500	0	0			
				866	2	0
CASH						
With Imperial Bank of India, London	2,354	12	5			
With Lloyds Bank, Ltd., Calcutta	3,182	8	3			
In hand	1,570	9	0			
				7,107	13	8

PRINTED IN
GREAT BRITAIN
AT THE
UNIVERSITY PRESS
OXFORD
BY
CHARLES BATEY
PRINTER
TO THE
UNIVERSITY