

ASCENT OF GORDAMAH PEAK,
NORTH SIKKIM

RETURNING from the Mt. Everest Expedition in 1936, Kempson, Warren, Wigram and I left the main party on July 1 after crossing the Kongra La from Tibet into Sikkim. We followed the valley running at the foot of the lovely N. face of Kangchenjau and camped on the S. shore of the Gordamah Lake. From here we took a light camp up the glacier coming down from the col between Kangchenjau and the Gordamah Peak. Our camp was at about 18,500 ft. At first sight the N. side of the col appeared to be an extremely difficult proposition, as it was guarded by formidable hanging glacier cliffs. But on rounding the corner of the glacier we found an easy ice terrace, and early on July 3 we reached the crest of the col. We were a bit too late for the clouds, however, and except for a glorious view of Chambo (to the S. of the Sebu La) standing above the clouds we saw very little. Below us on the S. side was a very steep icefall which could probably be descended if one were prepared to spend some time over it. We moved round a small peak dividing the col into two sections and reached the foot of the W. ridge of the Gordamah Peak. Kempson and I started up it while Warren and Wigram returned to camp. Parts of the ridge were very steep, but the snow and ice were in perfect condition and provided a most enjoyable climb. We reached the summit, 22,200 ft., at about 1 P.M. and got back to the col before the steep sections had become dangerously soft. A break in the clouds while we were on top gave us superb views. We assembled at the Gordamah Lake that evening.

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