

Koyo Zom, 6889 m, first ascent, 1968 An O.A.V. expedition under the leadership of Dr Stamm, with five members, two of whom were women, achieved this, the first ascent of the highest peak in this area of the Hindu Raj (see *A.Ĵ.* 73. 60 for illustration). They also did three other virgin six-thousanders.

Hindu Raj: Pechus glacier, 1968 Second Frattero expedition. S. Karibe, T. Hashino, H. Kenmochi. From a Base Camp on the Pechus glacier, the party climbed Ishpel Dome, 5900 m, on 28 July. Karibe and Hashino climbed 'Frattero Zom', 6200 m. Both these peaks are east of Koyo Zom. Bad conditions prevented an attempt on Koyo Zom.

On 8 August Hashino and Kenmochi started up the Kotalkash glacier with provisions for seven days. They were never seen again.

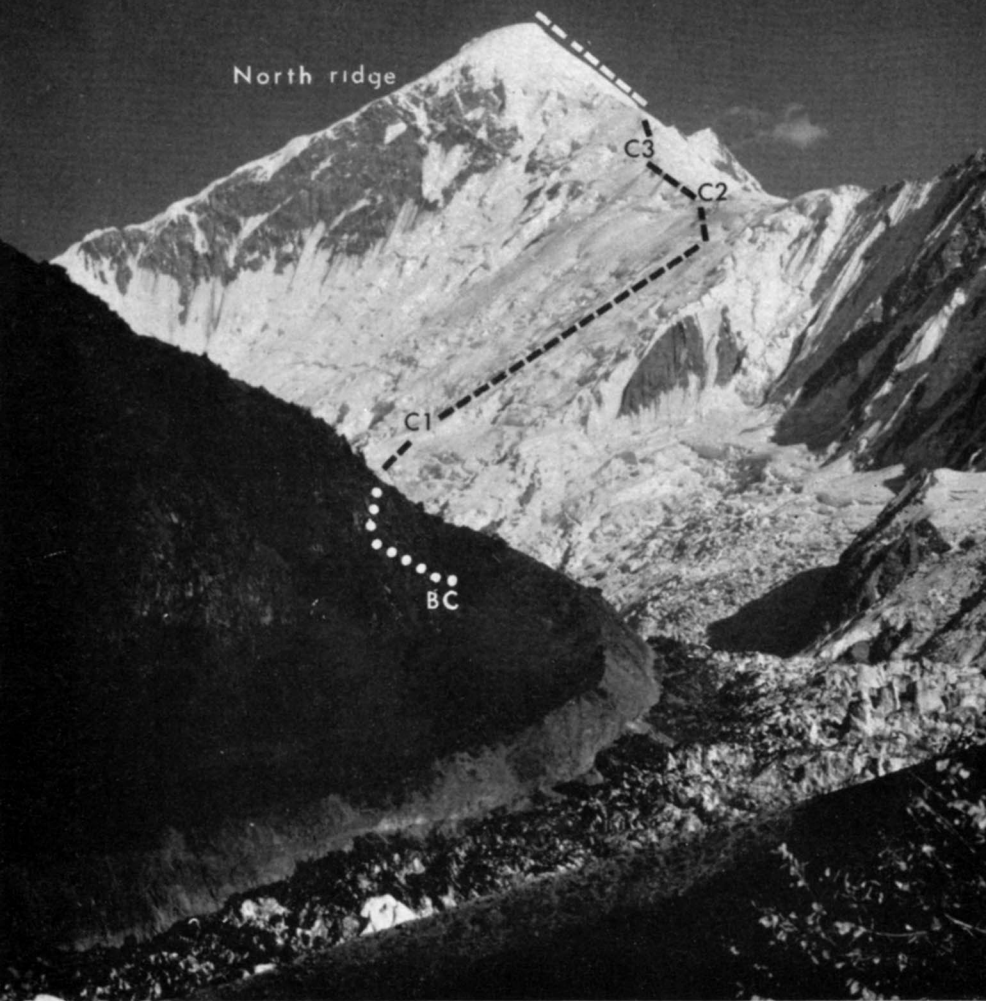
Karakoram

Minapin (Diran¹), 23,861 ft: First ascent, 17 August 1968 R. Göschl, R. Pischinger, H. Schell. Base Camp was set up in the Minapin valley on 3 August and in spite of unfavourable weather reconnaissance expeditions were carried out. On 17 August, in perfect weather, the three men reached the summit at 4.30pm. The party had originally intended to visit the Hindu Kush, and only at the last moment was the aim switched to the Karakoram.

Minapin had been the object of several previous expeditions, among them a British party in 1958. Two of its members did not return from a summit bid and were last seen about 300 ft below the top (*A.Ĵ.* 63. 261). A German expedition made two attempts from the north in 1959 and on the second of these Rudolf Bardodej and the porter Kabul, from a camp on the West ridge, reached a height of 23,000 ft when they were forced to return by the worsening weather and the sickness of Kabul, suffering from chest and throat trouble. A small party from Salzburg had no better success in 1964; three attempts on the summit were made, all defeated by bad weather and snow conditions. In 1965 a Japanese expedition of members of the Kyoto Mountaineering Federation made yet another attempt. From a camp at c. 22,000 ft two of the party reached a point only some 250 ft from the summit before being compelled by the violent wind and snowstorm to break off the attempt (*A.A.Ĵ.* 1966. 198).

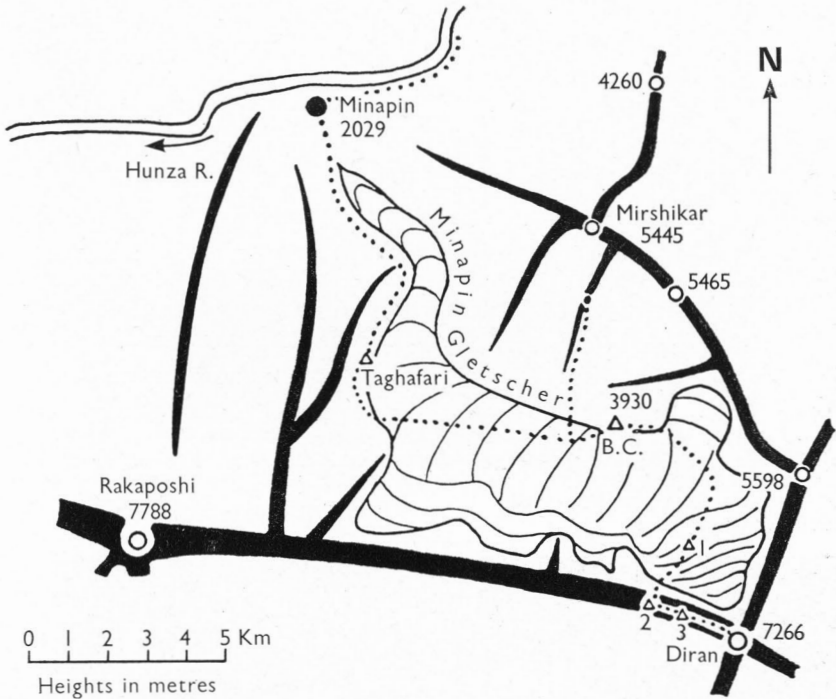
Minapin was the only 23,000 ft peak to be climbed in 1968

¹ The name Diran is derived from a shepherds' settlement in the Bagrot valley on the south side of the mountain.



106 *Minapin* showing the line of the first ascent, 1968. Photo: Hanns Schell

Malubiting, 24,451 ft: attempt from south, 1968 Manchester Karakoram expedition: John Allen (leader), Ian Bell, Arthur Clarke, Brian Cosby (deputy leader), Ian Grant, the late Brian Ripley (see p 393), Tom Waghorn, Oliver Woolcock, Husain Mahmud (Pakistan) and Major Mohamad Ashraf, Punjab Regt (liaison officer). Although we completed our application form in good time, submitting fifteen copies to the Pakistan authorities in June 1967, it was not until 25 April 1968, five weeks before departure, that we had any indication that permission would be granted; and then it was permission for Malubiting from the south (i.e. from Bunji/Sassli), a very steep approach, and not from the north as we had requested (our other choices, based on consultations with



107 *Minapin area* showing route of first ascent, 1968. Sketch map supplied by Hanns Schell

Eric Shipton, were Minapin Peak, Chogo Lungma peaks, Mango Gusor—an unclimbed peak near Skardu—and Swat/Chitral peaks, in that order). The only information available about the mountain was from Tony Streater, whose combined British Army–Pakistan Army team had snatched a quick ascent of Malubiting East from the east in 1959 (*A.Ĵ.* 65. 37), though there was also a photo from the north-east and an associated note in *A.Ĵ.* 67. 167. We would have been more sure of success on Minapin, since one of our team, Dennis Kemp, had been to within 2000 ft of the summit, but this was not permitted to us (see, however, p 217.) Dennis in any case had to resign from the expedition because, as an employee of Kodak Ltd, he would be obliged to use Kodak film, whereas the Pakistan Government insisted that we use only Agfa, for which there were processing facilities available there. The only maps available before we left were sketches from previous expeditions.

After travelling from England to Rawalpindi by one-ton Bedford truck (see p 327 below) we had to go by air to Gilgit (severely pruning our equipment to do so) since the Babusar Pass road was too narrow and the new Indus valley



110 *Malubiting, from above Kutwal* East Peak is at extreme left. The col (18,000 ft) is the lowest point on the skyline. Base Camp is half way up the alp in foreground. The route took the snow covered buttress in the centre, with Camp 1 below, Camp 2 above buttress and between séracs, and Camp 3 at the col. This and next photo: John Allen

road incomplete—it probably wouldn't have taken our lorry anyway. Here we hired two high-altitude porters from Hunza, namely Hidayat and Shukrullah, and a cook named Zumrat, and bought food for them. We were also joined here by Husain Mahmud, a Pakistan climber, who was most helpful to us in the earlier part of the expedition, and invaluable at the time when we were full of sickness in August, as his wife was Lady Medical Officer at the Agency Hospital, Gilgit.

On 5 July we moved to Sassli in five jeeps, and on the following day to Dache, where we lived in extremely squalid conditions, in temperatures of 105°–110°F, amongst swarms of flies and excrement, probably the source of our later ill-health. From Dache we mounted reconnaissances, 7–13 July, half of us visiting the Iskere/Kutwal valley, the other half aiming for Juto Sar. In this way we doubled our views of the mountain, since originally we had thought that there was only one approach from the south to the mountain. As these first two reconnaissances produced no obvious route from a suitable Base Camp, we changed parties and more thoroughly examined the two approaches again. By the evening of 12 July we were all back at Dache, still unconvinced of a straightforward route, but thinking that an approach from the Baskai glacier would give us a high Base Camp at about 13,500 ft, a climb basically safe from falls of stones and avalanches, although it would involve a long climb over the East and Central peaks before reaching the West and highest peak of Malubiting.

Before leaving Dache, Hidayat and Shukrullah objected to the rates of pay (albeit previously laid down by the Pakistan Government), and were unable to come to a negotiated settlement with us. We therefore relieved them, and regretfully, because they were good. We hired two locals on the negotiated basis of Rs. 7 per head, and gave them all necessary clothing and food. The latter included meat on the hoof as required.

We now engaged about sixty-five coolies to carry from Dache to Kutwal in one day for Rs. 10 per man (same rate of pay as from Sassli to Dache). They took two days over the journey and demanded two days pay. No matter how both the headman and our liaison officer, Ashraf, implored them to keep to their agreement, they refused. These Dache coolies also ran into trouble with men from Kutwal who refused to let them carry any further, since paths higher than the village of Kutwal were for Kutwal coolies, not Dache coolies. We thus had a major strike; indeed Ashraf called it a mutiny, and personally returned all the way to Gilgit with the headman to summon a force of police. Whilst they were still away, but with the threat of imminent police action, the whole gathering of coolies settled their differences and arrived early on 16 July for work. When the police did eventually arrive, they threw the ringleaders into gaol.

Base Camp was established on 16 July, but at only 12,900 ft. The coolies had refused to continue without a bonus payment of an extra Rs. 5 per man for the last 600 ft of hillside. So we sacked them and paid them off.

Though it began to rain on pitching Base Camp and was wet and heavily overcast till the afternoon of 22 July, we established Camp 1 at 14,000 ft below a glacial section of the route. Allen, Clarke, Ripley and Woolcock spent the night of 22 July at Camp 1.

On 23 July we were up at 5.30am. The weather cleared perfectly and so we now needed a major lift by those who were fit and well. Camp 2 was established at 16,200 ft but Bell, Cosby, Grant and Waghorn were too ill to help. Woolcock was next to succumb. However, while Clarke and Ripley on 25 and 26 July forged ahead from Camp 2 to a site on the col at 18,000 ft for Camp 3, Allen and the two high-altitude porters ferried loads from Camp 1 to Camp 2. Allen then switched places with Clarke who returned to tend the sick at Base Camp and to organise further loads upwards. Only Cosby and Grant were able to move and struggled valiantly to Camp 2 with loads. Cosby stayed at Camp 2 to escape disease-infested Base.

On 27–28 July, Allen and Ripley sited and established Camp 3 on the col in



111 *The ridge to Malubiting East from the Laila side of the col, site of Camp 3*



112 *Rakaposhi (left) and Phuparash Peaks from Jutial Peak, during Malubiting expedition. Photo: Brian Cosby*

perfect weather. Fixed ropes were now in place for about 800 ft between Camps 2 and 3, and about 350 ft between Camps 1 and 2. On 28 July Bell slithered about 250 ft when attempting to reach Camp 2 and injured his back, thus rendering him unable to be of further practical assistance to the expedition.

29 July: accident. Brian Ripley and I were lighting the breakfast primus at 3.25am and were off on a recce at 5.25am. We made a fair height, variously on rock (loose) and snow-ice. At 8.40am we turned back for the day because hot sun was affecting the slope and large areas of high cloud were coming up. We unroped to avoid dislodging stones onto a party below and descended the loose rocky section. A block as big as a dinner table moved from above Brian and he was unable to avoid it before being knocked down the south side of the mountain into a dangerous gully between Camps 1 and 2. Being alone I had to descend from above Camp 3 to people at Camp 2. The radio transmitter came into its own. Brian Cosby came out to meet me from Camp 2. We searched for a few hours, eventually in a gully tumbling with lumps of ice and stones every few minutes. At about 3pm we came upon Brian Ripley's body, found from a close inspection to be quite lifeless. We moved him to a slightly better spot, and then descended straight to Base Camp. We strongly recommended that no one should return to that dangerous gully. We had built a cairn there, and we inscribed his name at Base Camp on a suitable rock. It was important as soon as possible to send accurate information of the accident back to England and to Brian's parents. We had to decide whether to continue the attempt on the mountain and whether someone should return home by air immediately.

As I was probably the fittest of those remaining (Ian Bell was completely incapacitated because of his slip, Ian Grant, Tom Waghorn and Oliver Woolcock were still too ill to progress) the decision was almost forced upon us. I would have to return to Gilgit with the news, while Arthur Clarke and Brian Cosby would try to push on up the mountain with the help of the two high-altitude porters. I hoped to return shortly from Gilgit to continue the attempt.

Unfortunately the weather became uncertain and morale was understandably low. Ian Grant joined me for the scorching walk back to Gilgit (the jeep-able road to Alum Bridge had been destroyed in a storm), and we both suffered extreme dehydration. However, we did reach Gilgit by late on 1 August after two long and gruelling days. First Ian and then I became very ill for several days.

Back on the mountain Arthur Clarke and Brian Cosby reached Camp 3 but confirmed my impression that our party was not now strong enough to overcome the continuing technical problems. They began the withdrawal previously agreed if these were their findings.

By 10 August the whole expedition had returned to Gilgit. We waited seven days before an aeroplane landed to take us back to Rawalpindi, and another seven days before our equipment was flown out. Bad weather was very restrictive to flights between 8 and 23 August, there being only two.

The overland expedition set off back to England on 24 August, and the two members who had to return by air to fulfil earlier commitments to employers could try to follow up the sad news by a personal visit to Brian's parents by the end of August. The overlanders eventually reached Manchester on 20 September.

On arrival home we learned that a party of three Austrians had gained access as 'tourists', and had climbed Minapin, one of the peaks included in our first choice. They had succeeded on 17 August, and without any of the formalities with which we had to contend by our official and correct approach. Whereas we offer them our congratulations as mountaineers, we consider their unofficial approach to be daring but unfair for the rest of the mountaineering world. Their abuse of the regulations which apply internationally can only cause bad relations between mountaineers themselves and between mountaineers and government bodies. It was particularly distressing to us since we had been obliged to buy high-altitude equipment and food for a Pakistan liaison officer whom the Government insist must accompany expeditions. We had also put in a tremendous effort to satisfy the Pakistan authorities of our honourable intentions, and had welcomed a Pakistan climber as one of the expedition in the Karakoram.

A full report on the expedition is available from me direct (15b Lawngreen Avenue, Manchester 21), price 10s.

John Allen

Kashmir, 1968¹

Nanga Parbat, 1968 A German expedition, consisting of eleven men and the leader's niece, and once again led by Dr Karl M. Herrligkoffer, made an unsuccessful attempt on the Rupal face last summer. This great face rises nearly 15,000 ft from the Rupal nullah at a mean angle of 38°, but the last 7000 ft are considerably steeper, averaging around 50°. Base Camp was established on 7 June at 3560 m Camp IV was at 6600 m and from here W. Scholz and P. Scholz, on the night of 9–10 July, attained the highest point reached, *c.* 7100 m,

¹ We are indebted to Jagdish Nanavati and colleagues for the majority of this and the following information on India.