

# Mount Everest Foundation Notes 1981-82

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The following notes summarise the expeditions which have received the approval of the MEF, and this is in most cases accompanied by a grant. MEF approval is generally an essential first step to seeking assistance, financial or otherwise, from other organisations. It should be noted that the MEF itself only 'sponsors' expeditions in exceptional circumstances, eg the 1981 Mount Kongur expedition.

Copies of the full reports of these expeditions have been lodged in the Alpine Club Library, and with the Archives Section of the Royal Geographical Society, and may be consulted in these places. Some will already have been described in the *AJ* and other journals.

The expeditions covered in the following notes took place in the period from August 1980 to October 1982.

## Alaska

MEF ref. 82/20—*Bristol Devil's Thumb*—Steve Monks and Damian Carroll laid siege to the 1800m N face of the formidable Devil's Thumb (2767m), 30 miles inland from the sea-board of the Alaskan 'panhandle'. They planned it as a largely ice-climb in April-May but continuously bad weather made them abandon the attempt on the Thumb, and likewise a new route on the nearby Burkett Needle. Nonetheless, they were impressed with the climbing potential of this area. (April-May 1982.)

## Andes

—*The Cusichaca Project 1981*, approved by MEF for the 3rd year in succession, continued their successful reconnaissance of pre-Inca archaeological structures and of the Inca roads with 5 separate treks in the mountainous area between the Urubamba River and Salcantay, NW of Cuzco. (June-August 1981.)

MEF ref. 82/13—*British Taulliraju South Face 1982*—Christopher Watts and Michael Fowler succeeded at their second attempt on the first ascent of the E Pillar of the S face of Taulliraju in May 1982, with 5 bivouacs on the face which presented 'extremely sustained difficulties' on rock, ice and snow. Other members of the 7-person team made various ascents in the same area of the Cordillera Blanca. (May 1982.)

82/17—*British Alpine-style Andean Expedition 1982*—David Wilkinson and his 2 companions made various climbs in the Cordillera Vilcanota of

Peru, including what was believed to be a first ascent of the W face of Jatunhama I, and in the N Cordillera Real of Bolivia, including a solo traverse by Venables of Ancohuma from S to N.

82/16—*Rondoy West Face*—Jon Tinker, finding himself on his own, joined two Czech climbers in an attempt on the unclimbed W face of Rondoy. This failed and Tinker's fall at the last pitch prevented his joining the successful climb 2 days later. He also joined another party in an attempt on the W ridge of El Toro in the Huayhuash range. (May-June 1982.)

### Greenland

MEF ref. 82/19—*The Coventry (Lanchester) Polytechnic Research* 13-member team carried out successful glaciological research and mapping in the Hullet-Nordgletscher and Tasermiut Fjord areas of SW Greenland, from their base camp at Narssarssuaq. (August 1982.)

82/30—*The Sheffield University Expedition to NE Greenland* carried out glaciological studies on the Bersaerkerbrae glacier and some geological work at Antarcitics Haven. They were particularly pleased with the performance of their solar-powered data loggers which could be left unattended for long periods in rough weather conditions. (July-August 1982.)

82/35—*The Cambridge East Greenland Expedition*, who were prevented by the radio operators' strike from reaching Greenland in 1981, again had bad luck in 1982, because weather conditions put the Scoresbysund airstrip out of action until well into August. They substituted useful glaciological and ornithological studies in Iceland but, having failed to carry out their original objective, the expedition is returning its grant.

82/40—*The Edinburgh University East Greenland Expedition* met difficult conditions, too much pack-ice and heavy snowstorms, but nonetheless carried out glaciological work between the Pourquoi Pas glacier and the head of the Kruise Fjord, made five first ascents, and studied the effects of continuous daylight on sleep patterns. (late June to early September 1982.)

82/42—*British East Greenland Expedition 1982*—As a result of bad sea ice conditions and bad weather, this team failed to reach the base of their objective Point 3060m, 70 miles inland from the head of Kangertitivatsiaq Fjord, and retreated to climb several minor peaks, including 2 probable first ascents, round the Knud Rasmussen Glacier and Angmagssalik Island.

### Himalaya

MEF ref. 79/23—*British Padar Expedition 1980*—Their report, though late, is a fine tribute to the memory of Christopher Lloyd, who fell to his death on 23 August 1980 near the summit of Chiring Peak, at the head of the Hagshu Nullah in Kishtwar. Despite this disaster, the surviving members of the 4-man team made 2 attempts on Peak 6100 and on 16 September succeeded in the first ascent of the peak they named

Khogaya Dost (Hindi for 'Lost Friend')—5638m (August-September 1980.)

80/13—*Everest West ridge (winter)*—A strong team led by Al Rouse and including Joe Tasker, Paul Nunn and the Burgess twins encountered 'some of the most difficult, coldest, windiest conditions on earth' but found it 'an experience of the greatest extremity and unutterable beauty'. They established camps on the Lho La, at 6700m on the slopes of the West Shoulder, and at 7150m on the W Shoulder itself, but found it impossible to proceed further. They left the mountain in early February 1981, battered but all surviving. (December 1980-February 1981.)

80/15—*the Gorhwysfa Himalayan Expedition*, a party of 10, mostly in their forties or fifties, led by John Jackson, attempted the S face of Mrigthuni (6850m) in the Nanda Devi Basin just E of Trisul, but were defeated at Camp 3 by bad snow conditions. Two members climbed Berthartoli S (6318m) and the Jacksons skied up to about 6100m on Trisul. (September-October 1981.)

80/21—*The Bristol Nun Kun Expedition*—This 7-man team was led by Steven Berry, whose father had made an early attempt on the E ridge of Nun, including (in the International Year of the Disabled) the indomitable Norman Croucher, who has two artificial legs below the knee. Six of the group, in two parties, succeeded in reaching the summit of Nun (7135m) on 19 and 22 June. Norman Croucher's outstanding achievement in climbing White Needle Peak and going on to a height of 6700m on Nun itself will be an encouragement to all disabled climbers. (May-July 1981.)

80/24—*Himalaya International '81*—The Anglo-Polish Makalu Expedition led by Alex McIntyre, with one British, one Polish and one Nepalese member, made two attempts on Makalu W face, one in May 1981, abandoned at 6800m in bad snow conditions, the other in September-October of the same year. At 7900m, the latter found itself up against formidable technical difficulties; McIntyre was hit on the head by a falling lump of ice and the attempt was abandoned. Remarkable solo ascents were made by Ghaley Padam, Nepalese, of Kangchuntse in May and by Kukczka, Polish, of Makalu by the unclimbed N ridge in October. (May 1981 and September-October 1981.)

—*Everest ENE ridge*—Chris Bonington's expedition and its tragic outcome with the loss of Peter Boardman and Joe Tasker need no further reporting, but is included as being an MEF 'approved' expedition.

81/5—*Oxford University Mountaineering Club Kishtwar 1981*—Despite bad weather which confined most of the party in Camp II for 6 days, four members of the 6-man Oxford team succeeded in 2 parties, at an interval of a week, in making the ascent of Agyasol (6203m), which had been left unclimbed by the Kingston Polytechnic party in 1980 (MEF ref. 79/83). Simon Richardson and Nicholas Barratt also made the first



66 Xixiapangma seen from Nepal

Photo: Doug Scott

ascent of Spire Peak (5000m). (August-September 1981.)

81/17—*The Kashmir Himalaya 1981* 5-man expedition led by Stuart Hepburn, basing itself at Tshringmad up the Cholong valley from Panikhar, climbed the E summit of Retsheriah (5180m), turned back at 5790m on the unclimbed E ridge of Pt 19590, but reached the summit of Bobang Peak (5600m). Two members later climbed N 9, a 6120m peak at the head of the Derung Drun Glacier. (August-September 1981.)

81/23—*British Annapurna III* (1981) SE Pillar—Timothy Leach and his 2 companions, after a difficult walk-in up the Seti Khola, made 2 attempts on the SE pillar of Annapurna III. Encountering climbing of Grade V standard at 6400m, they turned back some 760m short of the top of the pillar. (September-October 1981.)

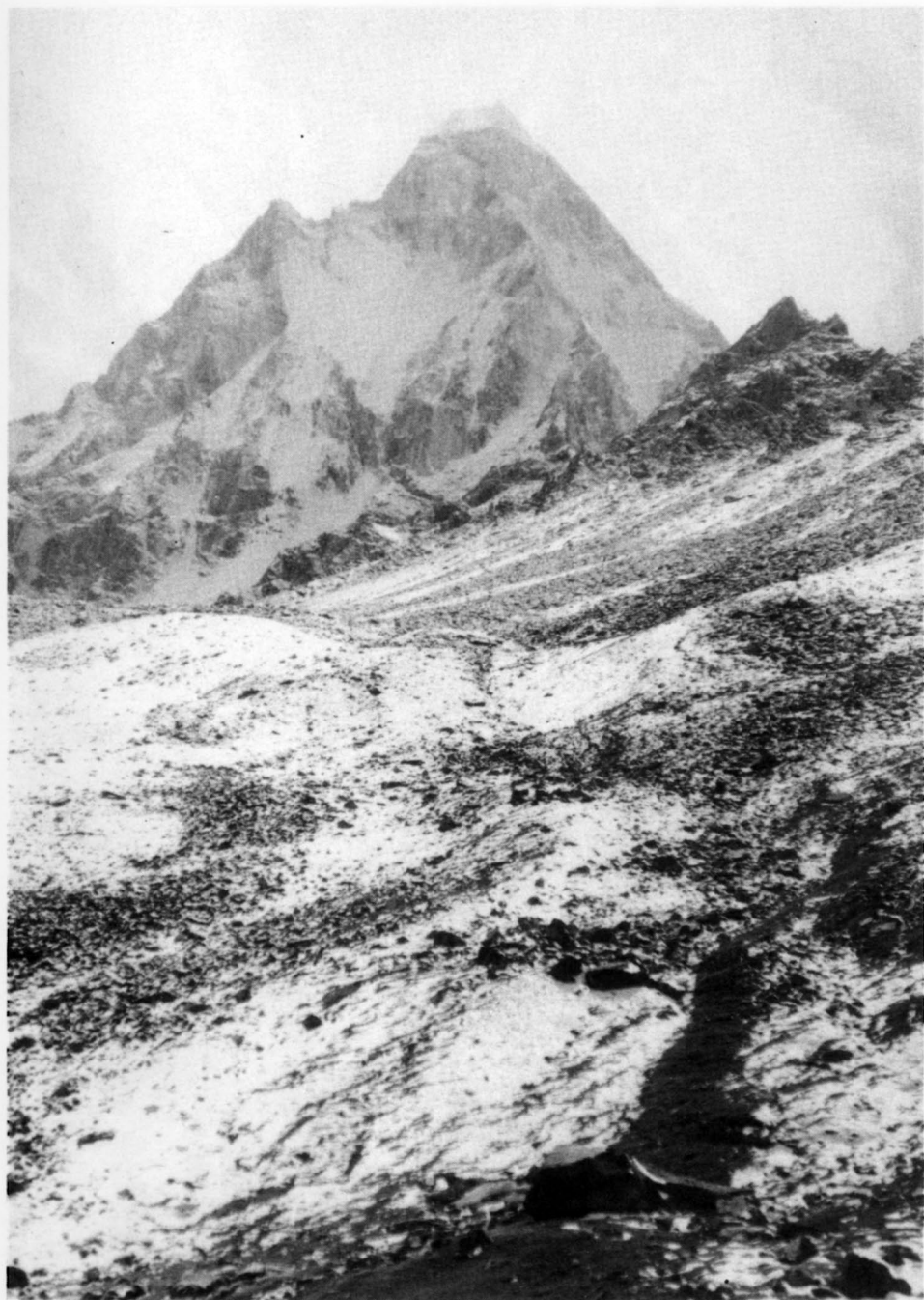
82/1—*British Xixabangma (Shishapangma) 1982*—Shishapangma (Sanskrit name Gosainthan) was first climbed by the Chinese in 1964 and by four expeditions in 1980/81. Alex McIntyre, Roger Baxter-Jones, Doug Scott and Nick Prescott succeeded in their objective of the unclimbed and virtually unknown SW face. Though they found it somewhat easier than expected, and not so long (about 2600 vertical metres) it proved a most satisfying climb—'a classic line up varied terrain on a major face, isolated and unexplored'. They reached both the W and E summits of Shishapangma (8046m); the latter may not have previously been climbed. The party also claims the first ascent of Pungpa Ri (7445m), really the SW shoulder of Shishapangma. (April-June 1981.)

—*The British Garwhal Expedition '81*, a 3-man team in association with 3 French and 2 Italian companions, finally attempted the W ridge of Kalanka (6913m), sister peak to Changabang. Highly unstable snow conditions caused the 3-man climbing party of Nick Kekus, one French and one Italian to turn back 100m or so below the summit.

82/14—*British Gangotri Gal Expedition '82*—Nick Kekus and Richard Cox made a bold attempt on Shivling (6543m). After some Grade V rock climbing, on 22 September they reached the top of the ice field. At 6100m Cox fell when an anchor failed while hauling sacks. His injuries made him incapable of descending himself and in the course of being lowered down the face he was killed. (Aug./Oct. 1982.)

82/2—*1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards Expedition to KR4*—(a 12-man party led by Capt. Charles Hookey, with the doctor Lt. Col. Hardie as lead climber). Hardie and Davies succeeded in reaching the hitherto unclimbed summit of KR4 (6370m) on 8 September and in the next 3 days 5 more of the party reached the top. (August-September 1982.) (The peak had been attempted by Austrians in 1939, Swiss in 1976 and Poles in 1978.)

82/31—*Scottish Bhagirathi III Expedition*—Allen Fyffe and Bob Barton succeeded in their objective—the unclimbed SW Pillar of Bhagirathi III (6454m). They took 11 days on the climb from the Brown Tower, bivouacking on inadequate ledges for the 44 lower pitches, 30 of them on



67 Shiviling (6543m) N wall

Photo: Nick Kekus

superb granite, and completing the climb Alpine-style, over shale and black ice overlaid with powder snow. Descent was by N ridge and E face, involving long walk back to base. (September-October 1982.)

### **Karakoram**

MEF ref. 82/34—*British Ogre 2 Expedition 1982—Baintha Brakk 2—6960m.* A strong four-man team, including Paul Nunn and Al Rouse, reached 6350m on the NW ridge of the W peak of Ogre 2, but then had to retreat. They investigated the S face in the hope of finding a faster way to the central summit, and later tried the S ridge of the W peak, but retreated after 12 hours of 'extremely threatened' climbing and a bivouac in an exposed position. A serious attempt on a difficult and extremely dangerous peak—Death Valley between the two Ogres is well named.