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# Mount Everest

## Foundation Notes 1988–89

EDWARD PECK

The following notes summarize reports from expeditions which have received the approval of the Mount Everest Foundation, and this is in most cases accompanied by a grant. MEF approval is generally an important first step to seeking assistance, financial or otherwise, from firms or other organizations. It should be noted that the MEF only 'sponsors' expeditions in exceptional circumstances, e.g. the 1981 Mount Kongur Expedition.

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

The expeditions summarized in the following notes took place between May 1988 and October 1989 (with one belated exception). These notes are based on reports received up to 1 December 1989.

### America, North and South, including Arctic

88/1 *Joint Services Expedition to Borup Fjord, Ellesmere Island (May–August 1988)*

This large mixed Services party aimed to carry out a wide-ranging biological survey of the Borup Fjord area. Groups investigated the arctic char, snow buntings, waders, entomology, vascular flora and did some geological and archaeological research, as well as climbing in the Blue and Krieger Mountains, in particular Mts Leith and Schuchert.

88/29 *Imperial College Expedition to Mount St Elias (June–July 1988)*

Continuous snowfall and avalanche conditions forced this four-man party to retreat on both the SW buttress and the NW spur of Mt St Elias (Alaska), likewise on the N ridge of Mt Newton.

89/3 *South-East Greenland Expedition (July–September 1989)*

From Base Camp on Tasermiut Fjord, this six-member party made the first British ascent of P2511M, but failed in their objective of climbing the two other highest peaks of SE Greenland, owing to the evacuation of one member

suffering from appendicitis. Some medical research was carried out into loss of body fluids in Arctic conditions.

*89/9 Milne Island (SE Greenland) (August 1989)*

This eight-member party explored the Korridoren glacier from its E snout up to the 800m contour and climbed seven unclimbed summits including P1867m.

*89/10 British Rye Expedition to Peru (June 1989)*

From camp at Laguna Jatun Pucacocha, all five members of this party climbed the NE ridge of Nevado Tacusiri, and also Ausengate (6372m). Various groups climbed the S faces of Points Linda, Karen and Nina (all 5300–5400m), also the N ridge of Central Sorimani Peak, and the S side of Tacirani.

*89/20 British Mount Foraker Expedition (May–June 1989)*

Abandoning their objective of a first British ascent of the SSE ('French') ridge of Mt Foraker, this two-man team made a successful first ascent of the S face of Mt Hunter to its junction with the SW ridge which, owing to storm, was descended without continuing to the summit.

*89/46 Sheffield Peruvian Expedition (July–August 1989)*

All five members succeeded in the first ascent of Colque Cruz V (5965m) in the Cordillera Vilcanota. Two also made a new direct route on the N face of Colque Cruz VI.

*89/48 Loughborough Students Andes Expedition (August 1989)*

This eight-member party made an extensive exploration of the little-visited Pupuya range in the Cordillera Apolobamba, making ascents of some 18 summits over 5000m. Four members also made the first British ascent (traverse W–N) of Huelanlloc (5805m). They are preparing a sketch map of the area.

*89/57 Patacancha (Peru) Expedition (April–September 1989)*

Teams from this nine-member expedition continued research projects begun in 1987 into the environmental (soil and flora) and settlement patterns, the ethnography, the agro-economic systems and trade routes in and out of the Patacancha valley, with a view to formulating a sustainable development programme. Lake core samples were taken from dry lake-beds at Qewnayoc and Marcacocha. Pre-Hispanic settlements at Tawasaywa and Juchuy Poques were investigated, as well as the main expedition's research into the trade-route to Occobamba. After one early setback they took precautions to avoid areas dominated by the Shining Path guerillas, and used their previous local contacts to good effect for the excavation programme.

### Central Asia (China and USSR)

88/18 *Shiwakte Scottish Mountaineering Club Centenary Expedition* (July–August 1988)

The Shiwakte peaks (first sighted by Aurel Stein in 1913 and reconnoitred from a distance by Skrine in 1922–24) lie E of Mt Kongur. This six-member party was obliged by Chinese bureaucracy to approach the E side of the range from the Karakul Lakes and over the Karatash Pass, instead of the more direct approach used by some on the return. One team succeeded in the first ascent of Shiwakte II (6150m) from the S. Others made separate attempts on Shiwakte IIIA and Shiwakte I from the col between the two, and reconnoitred more of this attractive range from the outlying peaks of Aghalistan III and IV.

88/25 *Lancashire Polytechnic Tien Shan Caving Expedition* (July–September 1988)

This reconnaissance expedition was disappointed to find no obvious evidence of karst limestone caves in the Chinese Tien Shan, though there are plenty in the Russian Tien Shan. They investigated the limestone geology of the area and negotiated for a later Sino-British karst cave expedition to the E Kun Lun, described as an 'Alpine Guilin'. (See also 87/4 and 88/12, *AJ*94, 274, 1989/90.)

88/26 *London Mountaineering Club Expedition to Altai* (July–August 1988)

This two-man team failed in their objective of traversing the three peaks of Heroic Korea, Sapoznikov and Sukhov, but instead climbed the N face of Ak Ayuk (3650m) and also, by the normal route, E Bielukha (4506m), the highest peak in the range.

### Himalaya

88/19 *British Joint Services Everest W Ridge Expedition* (April–May 1988)

This very large party of 36 officers and men approached Everest by the Rongbuk glacier, intending to climb the mountain by the W ridge. They made three bids for the summit, one group of two reaching c8600m, the other climbers, 25 in all, turning back at c7800m after the crux of the Hornbein Couloir.

88/24 *International Gangotri Expedition* (August–October 1988)

Half of the 17 climbers (Australian, US, South African and four British) succeeded in climbing Kedarnath Dome (6831m), but bad weather caused them to abandon attempts on the S pillar of Shivling.

88/39 *Anglo-Indian Jitchu Drake (6790m) (May 1988)*

Two British men and one Indian woman followed a variation of the 1984 Japanese route up the SE ridge to the S summit of Jitchu Drake (NW Bhutan) and continued to make the first ascent of the N peak.

88/40 *British Makalu Expedition (August–September 1988)*

After discarding their main objective of the W face of Makalu, and also their secondary objective of the Baxter-Jones Couloir, the climbing members of this large party reached the Makalu La at 7000m. Two members attempted the NW ridge reaching 8000m, when an avalanche carried away one man who suffered non-fatal head injuries.

88/50 *British Shivling Expedition (September–October 1988)*

This five-member team's attempt on the NW ridge of Shivling from the Meru glacier was abandoned at 5600m, after two members suffered acute mountain sickness symptoms.

89/1 *Jaonli (Garhwal) Expedition (June 1989)*

This British–Irish–Indian party explored the relatively unvisited Khatling Cirque, were turned back at 5850m on the unclimbed S ridge of Jaonli, but made the first ascent of P5450m (by E face and SE ridge) which they named Saga Parbat.

89/12 *British Kedar Dome Expedition (August–September 1989)*

After the establishment of camps at 5000m for both E and N faces of Kedar Dome (6831m) both attempts were abandoned, the E face 'steepening and becoming blank in sections', the N face as a result of poor snow conditions and broken ankle by leader.

89/22 *East Face Kedarnath Dome Expedition (August 1989)*

This three-man team altered their objective from a pillar in the middle of the unclimbed E face of the Dome to the Polish route leading to the left ridge of the E face. This was abandoned after severe storm about 350m and two days up.

89/30A *Annapurna III Expedition (September–October 1989)*

Owing to prolonged difficulties – delay in arrival of kit, under-equipped porters, difficult approach march and illness including death of Sherpa cook – this strong five-man team only reached 6100m on the E ridge of Annapurna III.

89/40 *British Baruntse Expedition* (April–May 1989)

This six-member party took the long approach route from Dharan up the Barun valley past Makalu Base Camp to attempt the SE ridge of Baruntse (7104m) from the lower Barun glacier. Some members had acclimatization problems, but two reached 6880m on the ridge before snow conditions forced retreat.

89/53 *Polish International Everest W Ridge Spring Expedition* (May–June 1989)

The British member of this disastrous Polish expedition reports that five of the six members who reached the summit of Everest by the W ridge and the Hornbein Couloir were killed by a massive avalanche on the W shoulder. He adds that they made the long but safer approach to the Lo La by traversing Khumbutse instead of the direct line from the Khumbu glacier.

89/55 *London Nilkantha Expedition* (September–October 1989)

This eight-member party approached Nilkantha from the S by the Panapatia-Bamak valley to attempt the unclimbed SE ridge but turned back at 5400m owing to snow conditions. They also reached 5500m on Parvati Parbat and explored the upper reaches of the Panapatia-Bamak valley.

## Karakoram

87/34 *Karakoram Traverse* (July 1987)

To mark the 50th anniversary of Shipton's *Blank on the Map* and to continue his interrupted exploration of 1939, this strong three-man team succeeded in their aim of going up the Biafo glacier to Snow Lake, and pushing on over the Kurdopin pass, where Shipton turned back, to descend the Kurdopin glacier to Shimshal. *En route* they made the first ascent of the Solu Tower near the Hispar pass.

88/21 *Charakusa Spires (Hushe Valley)* (August 1988)

This six-member group succeeded in four first ascents: TDK Spire, Mt Beatrice, Mt Poro and Nasa, all between 5350m and 5850m. Detailed climbing directions have been provided for all four.

88/31 *British Malubiting Expedition* (August 1988)

This four-man team was frustrated by bad weather in their attempt on Malubiting (7432m) from its hitherto unclimbed S side. Their approach via Dassu and the Baskal glacier was chosen for its proximity to Gilgit (rather than the long way round via Skardu).

89/14 *New Zealand Uli Biaho Spire* (May–June 1989)

The six-member New Zealand party climbed the magnificent granite tower Uli Biaho (S of the Trango glacier), despite difficult snow conditions, by a route differing slightly from previous Italian and American ascents.

89/15 *British Women's Gasherbrum II Expedition* (July–August 1989)

Two members of this seven-women team reached the summit of Gasherbrum II (8034m) by the SW ridge on 12 July. Others reached c7500m.

89/18 *British Shani Expedition* (August 1989)

Abandoning their original objective of a NE–W traverse, this party made a second ascent of Shani (5800m) from the Naltar valley. (See also 88/46, *AJ*94, 278, 1989/90.)

89/19 *Hushe Valley Expedition* (June–July 1989)

This determined two-man team, despite bad weather, climbed Parantha Peak (5300m), the Dru (6000m) twice (once by the W, once by the S couloir), the N face of Tower Peak (5800m) and the S face of Paisa Peak, all in the Chogolisa glacier area.

89/23 *Indo-British Rimo Group Expedition* (June–July 1989)

Two teams (one mixed, the other Indian) obtained permission to climb the Rimo group in the Upper Siachen glacier 'war zone'. Two members (one British, one American) succeeded in the first ascent of Rimo II, but, instead of a joint attempt on Rimo III, the Indian team diverged to make the second ascent of Rimo IV.

89/27 *British Hushe Valley Expedition* (July–August 1989)

This four-man team climbed Rona Peak (5800m), Fiona Peak (5900m), Ibex Hill (5200m) and Patika Peak (6000m) on the N side of the Charakusa glacier, but failed on two attempts on Ripple Ridge.

89/29 *Snow Lake Expedition* (July–August 1989)

This seven-member party attempted seven peaks from a Base Camp at Shigambarisch in the Snow Lake area at the head of the Hispar glacier. All were abandoned owing to bad snow conditions, though one minor summit was reached and one ascent stopped just below an unstable summit block.

89/49 *Anglo-Irish Shimshal Expedition* (June 1989)

In face of snow conditions this two-man party substituted for their objective of

a first ascent of Shiftikin Sar the first ascent of a lower peak (P5200m) to the N. They did not carry out their other objective of exploring the area to the W of the Malangutti glacier.

*89/52 British Masherbrum Expedition (June–September 1989)*

This 12-member party aimed to make the first ascent of Masherbrum by the E ridge and also to climb Masherbrum East (7821m) and to paraglide from the summit. Their highest camp was established on the snow-dome at about 6500m, close to the base of Masherbrum East and just below the SE ridge of Masherbrum. Several attempts on the S face of Masherbrum East were forced back at 6700m by heavy snowfalls. Paragliding was only possible at lower levels.