

MOUNT EVEREST EXPEDITION.

appointment to see nothing as we had been early enough for anything; still we felt we were a step further.

July. 14. Started late (6.0 a.m.) to explore glacier to west & south west. This walk became much more interesting than somehow I had anticipated; it was a fine morning & I stayed to take photos of the moraine quite near the "small peak" (see map); the shoulders of two great mountains, one south & one west of Everest appeared & I raced over the glacier to get better views of them, as they belong in some way to our mysterious cwm - a race with the clouds which were coming up. We were too late for the best but I got one or two good photos & I waited unsuccessfully about 3 hrs for more while B. went on along the flat glacier to see the pass saw. into Nepal.

July. 15. I started early (2.30) with 2 coolies & got up the "small peak" by 5.30. It was a clear dawn & the mountains were indescribably wonderful - and the best of it was I now saw over our col of the 13th into the cwm. It is an amazing cirque. The great rocky peak S. of Everest is joined by

separated ridge to the broken top of another huge crinkled mountain to the W. The W. facing slopes of Everest are a series of fierce rock ribs & all the other sides of the cwm which I saw are fearsomely steep. Everest itself blocked out all sun & the cwm remained a cold dark hollow behind the brightly lit snow. - I stayed till 6:45 taking photos all round.

Well, now the upshot^e of this is that though we know a good deal about the shape & position of the cwm, it remains to be explored; we haven't seen its bed; - we don't know how it runs up to the col between Everest and the peak to the S.

We have to get into it some way up it - it's an enormous area, about six miles from the col I just mentioned to the one we reached on the 12th. Our next plan is to force a way over ~~the~~ our col & down into the cwm. We intend to take Mummery tents to a camping ground near "the corner" & make a big expedition from there. It was arranged that we should start at 10 o'clock today.

MOUNT EVEREST EXPEDITION.

But the arrangements went wrong. We were short of rations for the coolies - I'm not sorry, as it has been snowing almost continually since midday & I've no hopes of the weather for to-morrow - it is too warm; the snow doesn't lie; however I do say more of it will lie to-night than we want.

So much for our story up to date.

You see how exciting this next expedition is going to be.

July 18. ~~18~~. The weather cleared partially, the snow held off during the night. Nevertheless the signs are far from good this morning. The haze has come up early thicker than usual & with more wind. Much depends in this life on fitting expeditions rightly with the weather. Not only is failure demoralising but the upsetting of plans, a forced inactivity. One completely idle day is well enough if one can look back on something accomplished the day before & has a definite aim ahead; and idleness is certainly more pleasant when the sun shines. But to be compelled to spend an idle day in the snow when one intended to be active is very trying. To-day we shall move unless the weather is very bad, because we must be ready for the

fine day when it comes, - but bad weather in the
Mummers tent this evening followed - a bad day
to-morrow will be a rather 'desolating' experience.
However my aims are very definite at the moment.
I want to finish the reconnaissance of the West
side of the mountain as soon as possible; it is very
unlikely to offer a possibility of ascent & assuming
it does not we shall then be able to confine our
attention to the North - East arêtes. This means
seeing both sides of the col between Everest and
the 1st peak to the N & the East arête. The near
side i.e. West, can be seen easily enough on a
fine day, perhaps in the course of to-morrow's
expedition if it comes off & the rest will
require a week or ten days' reconnaissance
east of the North arête & the ascent of a high
peak (over 23000) which will be of great interest
- which I'm very keen to accomplish. And
then we shall be ready to rub our noses
against the chosen line of ascent.

Time enters very much into all these plans.
The sooner we can launch our attack the
sooner I shall get back to you. When the
reconnaissance is complete we shall move
down to the new Headquarters for rest
& organization & if all goes well I hope we
shall be ready to start on the final campaign

MOUNT EVEREST EXPEDITION.

By the middle of August, September is supposed to be the finest month. I mean to have failed or succeeded by the middle of September at the latest. And then - to Darjeeling as rapidly as possible. Weather of course may put back all my plans; but on the other hand good fortune in that respect may advance them - if only we could have a real fine spell in the last half of August!

It does me good to write all this down - makes me realise more clearly an end before me & encourages me in the swing of days now

July 20. I must finish this in a hurry for a coohee to take to-day. Yesterday we failed to get into the great cwm because it is unapproachable from this side - so it is cut out as a possibility for attacking Everest. This finishes our reconnaissance on the west side & we have got down to the base camp to-day. I am organizing an expedition to the east which ought to be very

interesting. Puzos is moving on 24th & we shall start from here & try to get over the mountains, climbing a big peak on the way to join his new base camp in a valley to the east.

Great love to you my own dear sweet wife; you are constantly with me in the immaterial way & I know that I have you with me in carrying all this through.

Your loving
George.

