CAMBRIDGE EXPEDITIONS JOURNAL

1976–77

The hospital has four doctors on its staff, two of whom are eye surgeons who last year between them performed just over 10,000 cataract operations. It was because of such large numbers of patients that we originally asked Dr E. Lall, the hospital administrator, if we might carry out our project at Taxila. Our work consisted of screening the cataract patients for galactosuria - especially amongst children, and glycosuria by means of simple dip-stick urine tests. The presence of urinary galactose was followed up by a blood test (Schwarz Red Cell test) to determine whether or not the patient was galactosaemic. In all 1,000 patients were seen and tested despite our early fears that unusually heavy rains and an ill-timed month of Ramzan would stop people from coming.

At one particularly slack period in early August three of us went to Kabur and combined some work at Noor Eye Institute with some travelling in Afghanistan, returning to Taxila after two weeks. Things began to pick up quickly during mid August and by September 9th we were able to stop running tests.

The hospital provided us with excellent air-conditioned accommodation and for the first few weeks we vainly tried to stay healthy by doing our own cooking but we soon found the local Chai Rhanas to be more convenient and extremely cheap.

The detailed results will be produced at a later stage and we should like to thank the following people for their help and advice in making this a most enjoyable and successful venture:-

In England	Dr P.H. Rubery	- Dept Biochemistry
	Dr C.B. Blakemore	- Dept Physiology
	Mr S.S. Humphreys	- Arnes Co. Ltd
In Pakistan	Dr E.C. Lall Dr & Mrs N.E. Christy	Taxila

The following sponsors made generous contributions to the cost of the expedition

M.R.C.	£250
Ministry for Overseas Development	£250
Sir Samuel Scott of Yews trust	£400
Westcroft trust	£ 75
Heinz	£ 50
Cambridge Consultants	£ 25
Fund for Human Need	£250
Arnes Co. Ltd - dip sticks and clinitest	

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CAMBRIDGE EAST GREENLAND EXPEDITION 1976

MEMBERS

Alan J. Colvill, Trinity Hall, (leader), Surveyor, Diploma in Polar Studies, Scott Polar Research Institute.

Edward R. Johnson, Trinity College, Research Student, Department of Applied Mathematics and Theoretical Physics.

David Harper, Jesus College, Research Student in Computer Studies.

Ian Steen, St John's College, Architect.

AIMS

The Roslin Glacier is a sub-polar glacier in the Central Staunings Alps, which lie at 70°N in East Greenland. Interest has been focussed on this glacier in recent years, since it is clearly of the surging type. The primary aim of the expedition was to survey a longitudinal profile of the glacier and to re-survey stake lines established by previous expeditions to measure ice flow. It is hoped that the results, which are at present being computed, will throw some light on which stage of the surge cycle has been reached. This should improve predictions of when the next surge may occur and therefore allow closer study of the mechanisms which cause the Roslin Glacier to surge.

A secondary aim was to relocate a food and equipment dump left from earlier expeditions, which was threatened by moraine movement.

THE EXPEDITION

On the 21st July, as we flew north across the Arctic Circle the cloud began to clear and the ice mottled expanse of the Denmark Strait came into view. Soon we saw the Greenland coast; snow capped mountains ranked along a dark shore behind the sea ice. Three hours after leaving Reykjavik in pouring rain our chartered Cessna 310 landed in clear weather at Mesters Vig. The long gravel air strip is an important link in the Greenland air communications network and is serviced by Danes living in a small cluster of cabins.

We had a long, long walk in front of us and very heavy loads. A stroke of luck came our way right at the outset when the pilot of a helicopter chartered by an American expedition agreed to drop our theodolite and tripod at the Roslin glacier, which happened to be on his route. Even so we staggered out of camp groaning under 65lb loads, and we were soon regretting our lack of fitness.

The 80km trek to the Roslin snout took us by way of Blyklippen, Sortehjorne, the Mellem Pass, Malmbjerg and Schuchert Dal. On the tundra mosquitos were very active. Expeditions to the Arctic are advised to follow our method of combating these pests - to include one tasty individual in the party and the rest will have quite a comfortable time. We were able to spend some nights in guest huts owned by the Nord Mine Company, but had to bivouac half way up the Mellem glacier in a bitterly cold wind, before tackling the pass which we crossed at 5.00 a.m. in order to get the best snow conditions. There were no Nord Mine personnel at Malmbjerg as in previous years and we became acutely aware of how isolated we would be at the Roslin. Indeed, apart from a brief encounter with a helicopter the day after we left Mesters Vig, we saw no one until we returned there a month later.

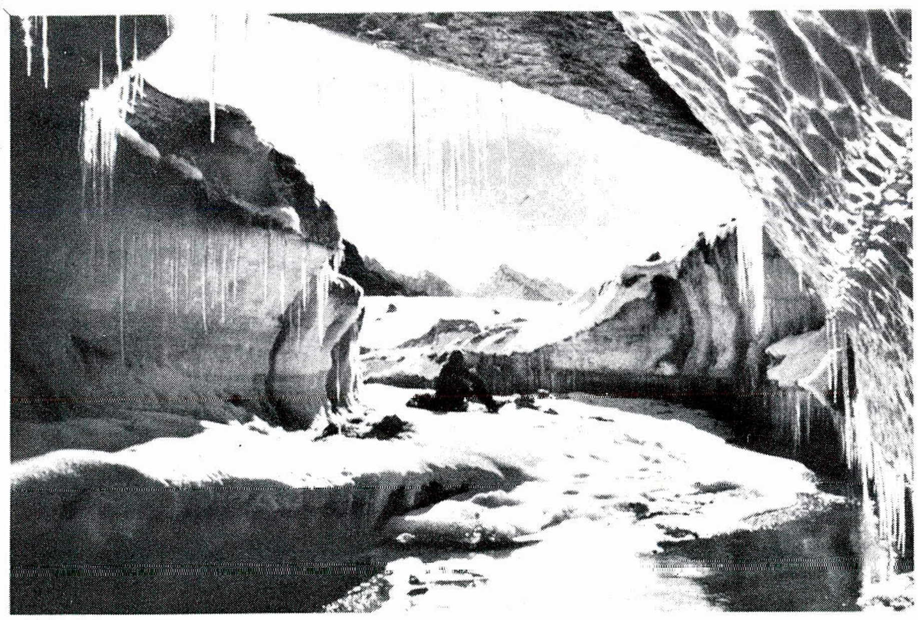
We made another bivouac among the Lang glacier moraines, surely one of the Seven Horrors of the world. Light relief was found by leaping across, and into, freezing melt streams. We were relieved to arrive at the Roslin snout five days after leaving Mesters Vig. Here we found the dump left by earlier expeditions. We erected an eight man tent and made ourselves at home - this was the Tundra Camp.

On the snout itself we could only find one of the nine stakes left two years previously. We surveyed this stake along with eight of our own, intending to re-survey them all before we left for home.

Next day we set off on the 20km walk up the glacier to Base Camp, the second parachute dump left near the junction of the Dalmore and Roslin glaciers. This was another really hard day, as our destination was in view most of the way and appeared deceptively close in the clear air.

We found the dump intact and pitched two small sleeping tents and a large mess tent of parachutes and survey poles to the non-standard design of our resident non-standard architect. The camp is surrounded by beautiful snow covered mountains. Across the glacier Diamond Peak was flanked by a steep ice fall swept by impressive and noisy avalanches, up the glacier the mountains formed an amphitheatre and just by the camp there were large ice caves. Up to this point we had good weather but it now deteriorated. Few days were completely clear and bright sunshine would change to dense mist in a matter of hours. A fair amount of snow fell during our stay and latterly it became very cold at night, apparently much colder than previous years.

We were able to find the complete Dalmore and Upper Roslin stake lines but the lower Roslin stake line had disappeared. Finding a safer place for the dump proved to be a difficult problem and we eventually chose a platform on the moraine some 500 metres downstream from the existing site. Several days work were needed to move the food and equipment. The physical effort expended by each of us on the expedition so far had exceeded our worst fears, so we decided to reward ourselves with two days climbing.



View from ice cave onto the
Roslin Glacier, East Greenland.

Our first conquest was Dalmore Junior (1700 metres) a pleasant snow plod starting with spectacular views of expanding horizons but soon becoming like the mist covered mountains of home. The team was entertained during the descent by an impromptu demonstration of crevasse jumping, which was cruelly mocked when the demonstrator's feet slid into the crevasse.

Our second excursion was an attempt on Diamond Peak. Once again early morning sunshine turned to mist which coupled with an underestimate of the time needed to climb a long snow slope, forced a retreat. A full scale blizzard developed, obliterating our footsteps and visibility alike. The Arctic isolation was never more real.

THE LONGITUDINAL SURVEY

We allowed two weeks for the longitudinal survey. In five previous expeditions this survey had not been attempted; it proved to be a difficult task. Our intention was to survey 20km of glacier, triangulating 40 points on the glacier in relation to points on the side of the glacier, some existing, but most to be established by us. Intermediate points were to enable us to obtain an extremely detailed accurate profile.

Initially we set up eleven of the points and started to survey them together with the existing upper Roslin and Dalmore stake lines. The weather now unfortunately deteriorated and we lost four days. It became clear that we would be unable to complete the survey by this method in the remaining time. Our team was not big enough to set up the side stations and continue to work on the glacier. Also we anticipated and got further bad weather. Consequently we resorted to a traversing survey, leaving out the side stations, enabling us to complete the project. The possible errors in this method were minimised by triangulating into existing survey networks at the Dalmore junction and the terminal moraine.

As much of the work as possible was conducted from Base and Tundra camps, but three nights were spent camped on the glacier at points down our traversing line. The lower end of our survey was tied into our snout stake array, but due to lack of time only two of the snout stakes were surveyed again.

Our tasks now completed it only remained to return to Mesters Vig where a reward of Glenfiddich awaited us. Our fitness made the return much easier than the walk-in. We also saved nearly a day as the melt was now over, the lower rivers allowed us to avoid most of the Lang moraines by crossing the washout plain below them. The weather improved and we had a very pleasant walk, particularly on the last day over the Heste pass, with icebergs floating in the calm blue water of Kong Oscar's Fjord below.

After a delay due to yet another blizzard, we flew out of Mesters Vig on 29 August.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are particularly grateful to those who gave us financial support without which we could not have gone to the Roslin glacier. They are listed in the financial statement below.

Mr G. Petrie of the Department of Geography at the University of Glasgow kindly arranged for the loan of the theodolite for us.

The following firms generously supplied goods free of charge:

Sinclair Radionics Ltd	-	calculators
Wm. Grant and Sons Ltd	-	whisky
John Dewar and Sons Ltd	-	whisky

Finally we would like to thank Miss Kristin Hollick and Dr Patricia Benison who performed sterling service in the hectic weeks before departure.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

INCOME	£	EXPENDITURE	£
Royal Society	850	Travel	1531
Cambridge Expeditions Fund	200	Administration	27
Gino Watkins Memorial Fund	100	Food	80
World Expeditionary Association	100	Film	60
Trinity Hall	75	Equipment	242
Other smaller contributions totalled	105	Post Card Scheme	57
Personal Contributions	600	Insurance	141
Post Card Scheme (Expected)	100	Report (Estimated)	120
	2130		2258
Deficit	128		

This statement is provisional in that we do not know the final income from the post card scheme or whether we will receive further financial support.

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CAMBRIDGE KUMAON HIMALAYA EXPEDITION

PATRON

E.E. Shipton CBE.

MEMBERS

A.S. Cohen, Natural Sciences, Peterhouse.

Miss R.J. Scott, Natural Sciences, Newnham.

ACCOUNT OF THE EXPEDITION

The objective of the expedition was to reach the village of Lata, in the Garwhal Himalaya, (U.P. India), and there carry out two projects. Rosemary Scott was to carry out a nutrition project, and Anthony Cohen was to do some geological mapping. The reason we had chosen this village, rather than any other in the area, was because John and Pat Prosser, who had used porters from Lata on their 1974 Kalanka expedition, gave us presents and photographs to give to some people. These gifts helped our acceptance in the village.