

Mont Forel Expedition 1984

PRELIMINARY REPORT

OBJECTIVE

The objective of the expedition was to make a lightweight ski approach, using previously established air-dropped depots of food and fuel, to Mont Forel 3360m in the mountainous area north of Angmagssalik, East Greenland.

Having reached the mountain it was planned to attempt an ascent from the unclimbed north side before commencing the 135 km. ski journey to the coast.

The expedition had the support of the Mount Everest Foundation, The Gino Watkins Memorial Fund, The British Mountaineering Council, The Eagle Ski Club and The Alpine Ski Club.

MEMBERS

Derek Fordham	44	Architect, Leader
Graham Elson	47	Architect
Michael Esten	48	Physicist
Rupert Hoare	27	Geophysicist
David Waldron	25	Computer Analyst

The expedition left the U.K. for Iceland on May 4 at about the same time as a series of frontal weather systems commenced their inexorable progress northeastwards through the Denmark Strait.

Because of this continuing pattern of bad weather both between Iceland and Greenland and in East Greenland itself, the expedition was delayed for 5 frustrating days in Iceland until a narrow window in the weather permitted the expedition's

chartered Twin Otter to fly into Kulusuk air strip on the east coast of Greenland. Low cloud over the Mont Forel area however prevented the expedition from carrying out the planned air-drops and after a further 2 days delay at Kulusuk with the Twin Otter awaiting suitable air-drop weather delays had accrued to the extent that a revision of the expedition's original plan was essential.

Accordingly the Twin Otter was released on 12 May and arrangements made to charter the Greenlandair Bell 212 helicopter to move the expedition to the north side of Mont Forel, placing food and fuel depots at the air-drop locations en route. This flight was carried out on 15 May and having thus recovered the time which would have been spent on the ski journey inland the expedition was left with 5 days to spend at Mont Forel before commencing the journey out to the coast.

Two attempts were made on the mountain during the days following arrival. The first, on the south west ridge, was abandoned some 300m below the summit due to snow conditions and the second, on the north east flank, which reached to within about 200m of the summit was abandoned due to high winds and extreme cold. During the descent from this attempt one member of the party sustained secondary frostbite of two fingers.

These two attempts were made in the only periods of relatively fine weather enjoyed while the expedition was near the mountain, the remaining days being notable for high winds, estimated at up to 50 knots, vast quantities of wind-blown snow, and temperatures in the -20°C to -30°C range.

The Forel camp was evacuated on 20 May, one day early, when the wind slackened sufficiently to allow the tents to be struck and the return journey to be commenced. The first 3 days skiing were cloudy with poor visibility requiring navigation by compass at times but 2 days of good weather which followed permitted a pleasant approach to the Conniats Pass where 3 boxes of food and fuel were located without difficulty.

A further 2 days saw the expedition camped at the next depot some 50km away on the end of the Knud Rasmussen Glacier awaiting the helicopter which arrived some 36 hours late due to bad weather on the evening of 29 May.

The expedition reached Kulusuk, via Sermiligaaq, that evening, flew on to Reykjavik the following day by chartered Chieftain and reached London Heathrow on 1 June.

FINANCE

At present the expedition is estimated to have cost a total of £9,000. A more detailed and accurate budget will be included in the main report.

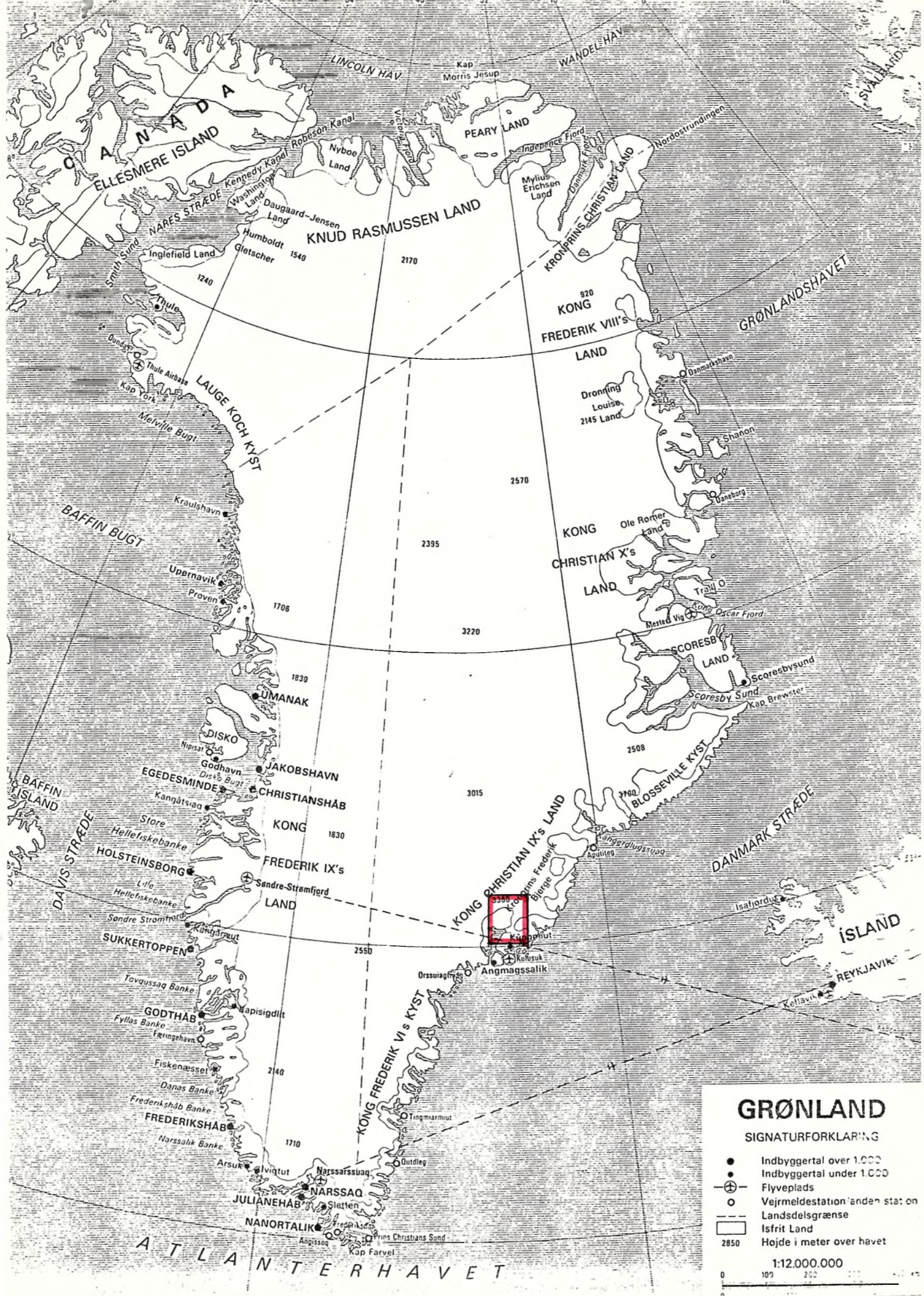
Derek Fordham

7 June 1984



CAMP ON KNUD RASMUSSEN GLACIER

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GRØNLAND

SIGNATURFORKLARING

- Indbyggertal over 1.000
- Indbyggertal under 1.000
- ✈ Flyveplads
- Vejrmedestation anden stat en
- Landsdelsgrænse
- Isfrit Land
- 2850 Højde i meter over havet

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