

## BRITISH SHIVLING EXPEDITION

1988

OBJECTIVE

During September 1986, myself, Owain Jones, Scott Umpleby and Steve Wallis began to plan a climbing trip to the Garwhal Himalaya. At that stage our objective was unclear. Following the publication of several documents, we decided to apply for permission from the Indian Mountaineering Foundation to climb, by its ordinary route (W. ridge), Shivling (6543m), a mountain lying at the juncture of the Meru and Gangotri Glaciers in the Garwhal Himalaya.

Permission to climb the route was not granted, as it was fully booked. As an alternative, we decided to go out there anyway and climb small peaks of no great altitude or significance.

Several weeks later, I met up with Mike Searle's team, who were intending to go to Shivling at the same time. Their objective being to climb the N.W. ridge - a new route.

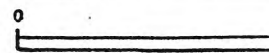
It was suggested to us that we should go out with them, thereby reducing costs and enabling us to use only one Liaison Officer. The arrangement being that we climb as <sup>w</sup>to autonomous groups, on arrival at the mountain.  
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After some thought - we agreed. The route would be quite a struggle but would allow us to gain some valuable knowledge, being in the company of climbers with so much valuable experience on big mountains.

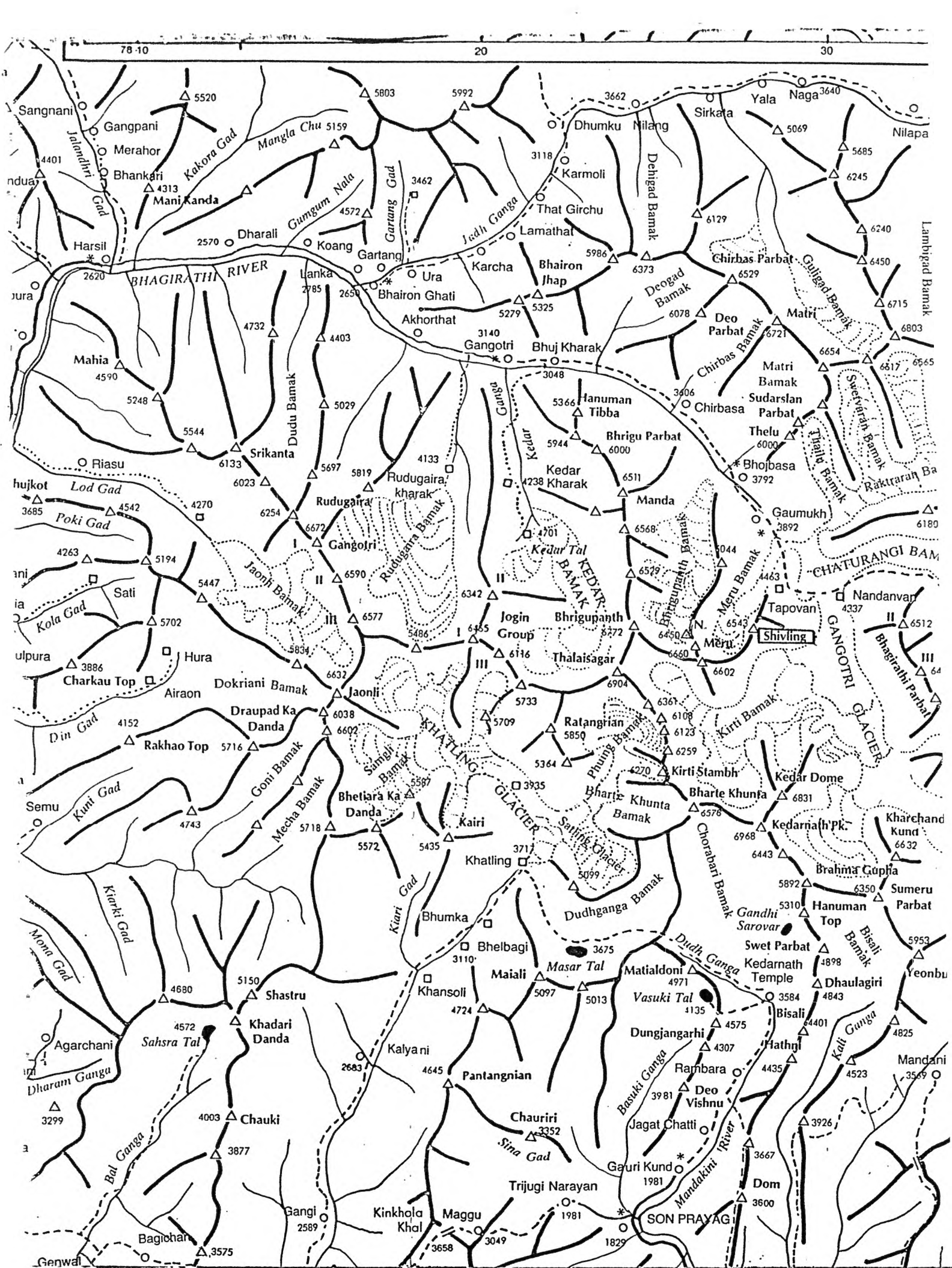
Dr Mike Searle then proceeded to book the peak and for organisational purposes, took up the role of overall leader of the joint teams.

The objective of the expedition being to climb Shivling (6543m) by a new route - the N.W. ridge.

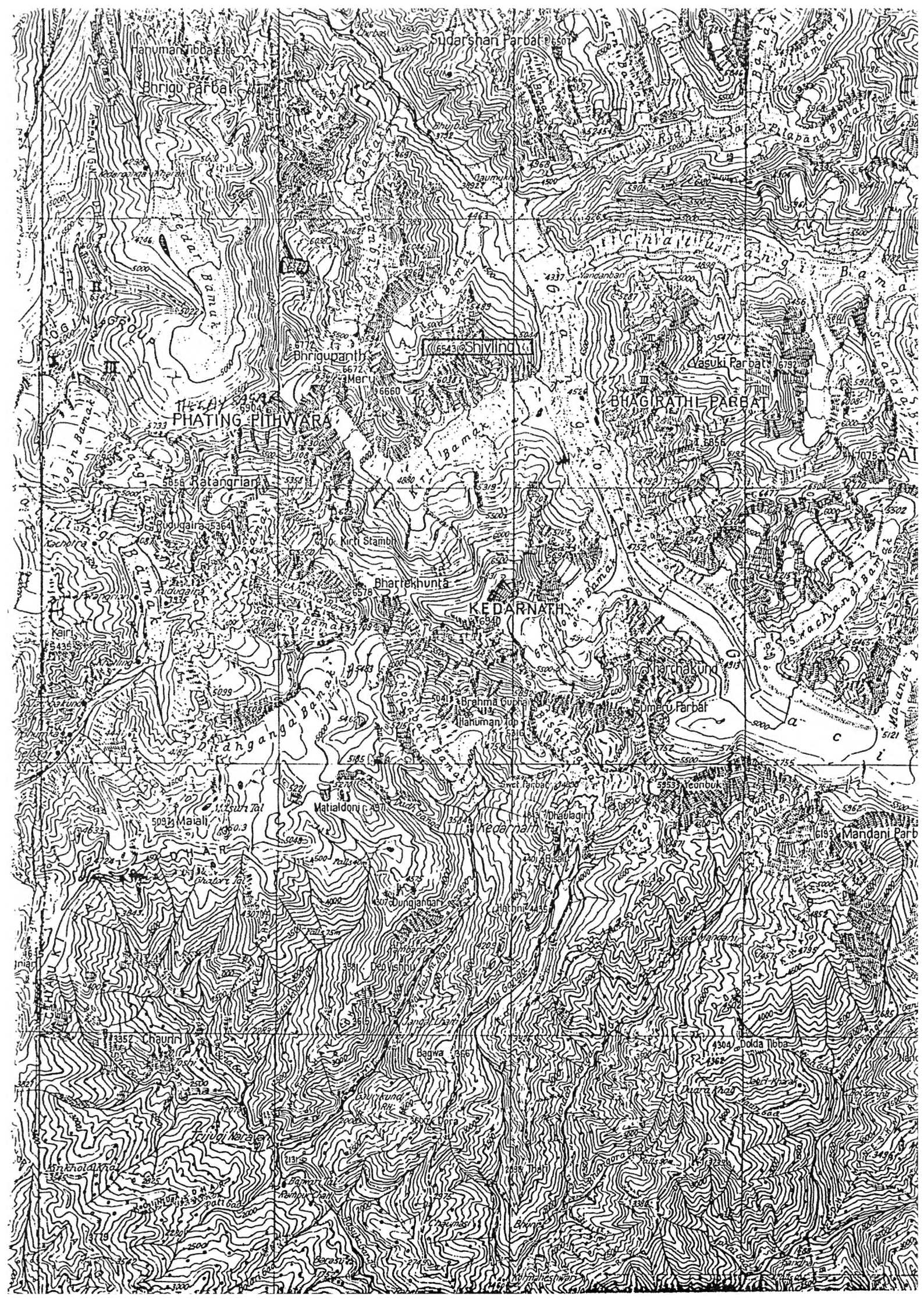
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s-w of Jaundhar Glacier.  
d by dense forest to the  
d (31°04'N, 78°11'E) and  
re are eating shops and  
of Kalanag. Best period:







# CLIMBING TEAM

Leader	Dr Mike Searle:	(Did not arrive in Delhi until 11th Oct due to work commitments)
Dep Leader	James Robertson:	(Acted as leader for duration of expedition)
	Scott Umpleby	
	Steve Wallis	
	Owain Jones	
	Tony Rex	Withdrew
	Alan Newby	"
	Gill Peacegood	"
	Nick Groves	"
	Simon Yates	"
	Mary Rose Fowlie	"
	Mark Miller	"
	Sean Smith	"
	Mark Crawford	Trekking only. Financially autonomous

\* \* \* \* \*

ADDRESS OF TEAM LEADER:-

James Lewis Robertson  
5 Bond Street  
LANCASTER  
LA1 3ER

JIM ROBERTSON

AGE

25 Years. (Date of birth: 9/3/62).

ADDRESS

5 Bond Street, Lancaster, Tel: 0524 65202.

FATHER'S NAME

James Robertson.

NATIONALITY

British.

MOUNTAINEERING EXPERIENCE

8 years Rock-climbing in Great Britain and Europe.

5 years Ice-climbing in Great Britain and Europe.

2 years - member of Isle-of-Skye Mountain Rescue Team, Scotland.

Ascent of Walker Spur, Grande Jorasses.

Ascent of American Direct, Petit Drus.

2 ascents of Hornli Ridge, Matterhorn.

Ascent of S.E. Ridge Mt Blanc du Tacul.

1987- Verdon, Montserrat, Chamonix.

OCCUPATION

Operating Theatre Technician.

PASSPORT NUMBER

L 3672565.

EXPEDITION STATUS

Leader.



SCOTT UMPLEBY

AGE

22 years.

ADDRESS

8 Holbeck Avenue, Morecambe, Tel: 0524 417757.

FATHER'S NAME

Umpleby.

NATIONALITY

British.

MOUNTAINEERING EXPERIENCE

6 years Rock-climbing in Great Britain and Europe.

3 years Ice-climbing in Great Britain and Europe.

Numerous ascents in French/Swiss Alps.

Numerous Rock Climb 1st ascents.

1987 - Ecrin (Dauphiné) Chamonix.

OCCUPATION

Surveyor.

PASSPORT NUMBER

L 684758 D.

EXPEDITION STATUS

*climber*

STEVE WALLIS

AGE

27 years.

ADDRESS

95 Dale Street, Lancaster.

FATHER'S NAME

Bernard Wallis.

NATIONALITY

British.

MOUNTAINEERING EXPERIENCE

6 years Rock-climbing in Great Britain and Europe.

4 years Ice-climbing in Great Britain and Europe.

Ascent of Pic De Midi D'osseau (Normal Route).

Ascent of Chasengue Ridge on Vignemale.

Ascent of Pic de Anetto (Normal Route).

Ascent of Picos de Europa Torre Blanca.

Ascent of Matterhorn Hornli Ridge.

2 years experience Rock-climbing Instruction.

OCCUPATION

Student.

PASSPORT NUMBER

EXPEDITION STATUS

Climber.

OWAIN JONES

AGE

22 years.

ADDRESS

3 Locka Lane, Off Slyne Road, Lancaster  
Tel: 0524 35710.

FATHER'S NAME

Jones

NATIONALITY

British.

MOUNTAINEERING EXPERIENCE

6 years Rock-climbing in Great Britain and Europe.

3 years Ice-climbing in Great Britain and Europe.

Ascent of Walker Spur, Grande Jorasses.

Ascent of S. Pillar of the Ecrin.

Ascent of Mont Blanc.

Diploma in Outdoor Education.

Numerous Extreme Rock Climb 1st ascents.

1987 Summer Season in Verdon Buoux and Chamonix

OCCUPATION

Student.

PASSPORT NUMBER

L 563044 F.

EXPEDITION STATUS

Climber.

## ITINERARY

16th September 1988:	Arrive in Delhi.
17th-21st September 1988:	Purchasing of Expedition Provisions in Delhi.
23rd September 1988:	Meet L.O. Briefing at I.M.F. H.Q.
24th September 1988:	Bus from Delhi to Rishikesh.
25th September:	Bus from Rishikesh to Uttarkachi.
26th + 27th September:	Truck from Uttarkachi to Gangotri - Delays through Truck breakdown.
28th September:	Approach march.
29th September:	Approach march. Arrive at Tapovan Base Camp.
30th September:	Base Camp.
1st October:	Exploratory Trek on Meru Glacier.
2nd October:	Exploratory Trek around to S. side of Shivling - across Kirti Bamak Glacier to Base of Kedarnath Dome.
3rd October:	Trek up Meru Glacier.
4th October:	Base Camp.
5th October:	10.00 am. Set off up Meru Glacier. S Wallis returning to Base Camp after 1,500 ft of ascent through chest pain.  J Robertson, S Umpleby and O Jones continue to start of N.W. ridge. Arrive at approx 16.30 hours (18,000 ft).  Cold, uncomfortable bivvy in open. J Robertson suffering from what at the time appeared to be quite serious altitude problems: Severe headache nausea, dizziness, chestpain, cheyne stokes breathing. S Umpleby suffered similar problems.
6th October:	4.00 am J Robertson descended at first hint of light. Followed a couple of hours later by S Umpleby and O Jones.
7th October:	Decision made to retreat from mountain due to J Robertson's unhappiness with his medical condition and also the unconsolidated snow on the ridge combined with our overall lack of experience on big mountains. Unanimous decision to walk out from mountain.



ITINERARY cont'd

8th October:	March out.
9th October:	Bus from Gangotri to Uttarkachi.
10th October:	Bus from Uttarkachi to Delhi.
15th October:	Return to U.K.

## WEATHER CONDITIONS

Immediately prior to our arrival at Tapovan (Base Camp), there was a period of considerable precipitation, presumably the tail end of the Monsoon. This led to considerable floods in the villages on our approach. At Tapovan, the precipitation manifested itself as snow. Immediately following this period came a ridge of high pressure, giving crystal clear skies, but very low temperatures. At Tapovan we recorded temperatures of  $-15^{\circ}\text{C}$  during the evening. At our high point of around 18,000ft, we recorded a temperature of  $-25^{\circ}\text{C}$  at 0200 hours.

The extreme low temperatures meant that the snow that had fallen during the period of precipitation remained unconsolidated, rendering the route, which we hoped would consist of mixed climbing, to be particularly dangerous. We witnessed several avalanches from our intended route.

For these reasons stated, combined with our general lack of experience at this altitude, we came to the conclusion that a retreat was our safest option.

## ILLNESS

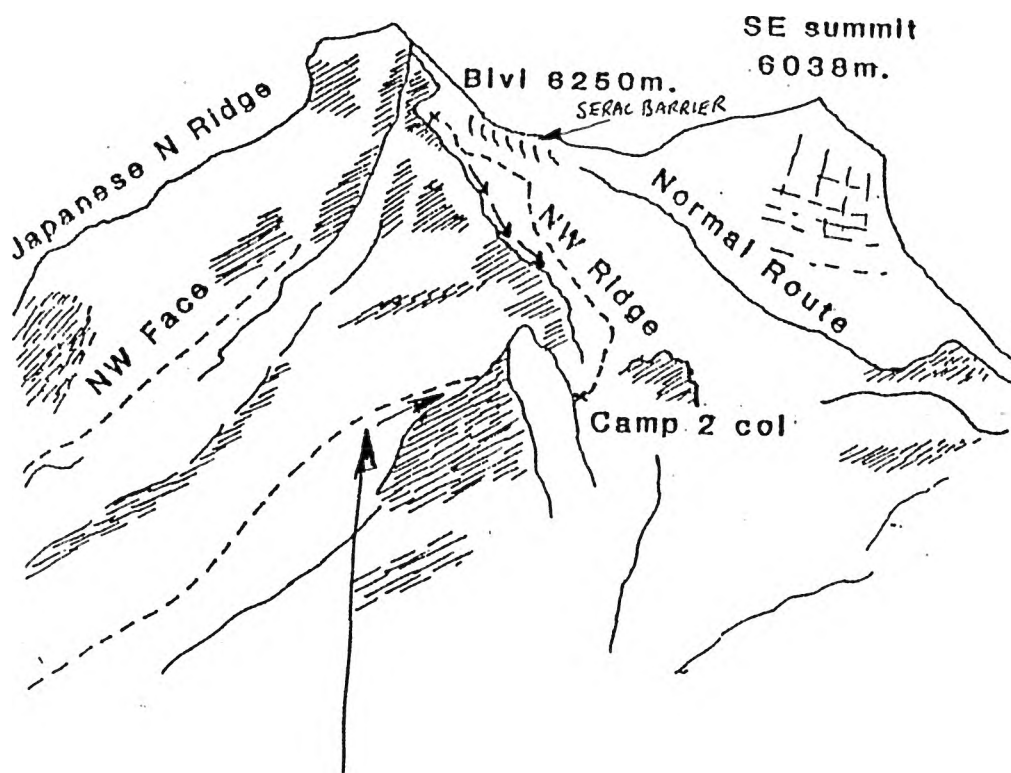
Everyone in the team showed symptoms of sub-acute mountain sickness at Tapovan. For approximately three days, Jim Robertson complained of a pain in the region of his liver. After five days acclimatization, most people's symptoms had virtually disappeared.

A decision was made to attempt an ascent of the peak. At around 16,000ft Steve Wallis had to retreat, complaining of chest pain. The remaining three climbers continued up the Meru Glacier for another four hours to an altitude of around 18,000ft. A bivvy site was excavated and they settled down for the night. At about 2200 hours, Jim Robertson developed a severe headache, by around midnight, this headache had worsened and he was showing signs of cheyne stokes breathing and also, complaining of chest pain. At around 0400 hours, he packed away his sleeping bag and retreated. Scott Umpleby complained of similar problems and was forced to retreat along with Owain Jones. On arrival at Tapovan, Jim Robertson's symptoms improved dramatically, as did Scott Umpleby's.

On the team's return to the U.K., a medical examination of Jim Robertson revealed a considerable quantity of fluid in his lungs, and also the medical opinion was that his pain experienced at Tapovan, could have been a minor pulmonary embolus.

## SHIVLING NORTH & WEST FACES

Main summit 6543m.



Proposed Route of 1988 trip follows  
the N.W. ridge - indicated



## FINANCES

### Costs

Peak Fee	£500
Liaison Officer Equipment	£300
Administration	£50
Porter Hire	£300
Truck Hire	£85
Food at Base Camp	£150
Fuel ie: petrol, gas	£70
Base Camp Stoves x 2	£15
Medical First Aid	£25
Flights x 4 at £389 each	£1556
Liaison Officer Subsistence	£25
Team Subsistence in Delhi	£180
Equipment	£960
Insurance	£140

<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£4356</b>
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### Income

B.M.C. Grant	£600
M.E.F. Grant	£700
Personal Contributions	£3056 (£764 each)

<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£4356</b>
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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The team would like to thank the following companies and organisations for their help:-

Rock and Run: Ambleside - Equipment Retailers

Berghaus

H Robinson: Equipment Retailers

British Mountaineering Council

Mount Everest Foundation

Bayer U.K. Ltd: for donation of drugs for medical purposes

May and Baker Ltd: for donation of drugs for medical purposes

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