

**INDIA**

*Kamet and Abi Gamin.* An all-Indian expedition made a remarkable record in Garhwal in 1955, accomplishing the second ascent of Kamet (25,447 feet) and the third ascent of Abi Gamin (24,130 feet). The party under the direction of Major Narendra D. Jayal, who is the principal of the Himalayan Mountaineering Institute, Darjeeling, was made up of 10 climbers and five Sherpa Instructors. After an unsuccessful try on June 28, Jayal, Ang Tharkay, Da Namgyal, Ang Temba, and Hlakpa Dorje made the summit from Camp 5 (23,400 feet) near Meade's Col on July 6. The route differed from that used on Frank S. Smythe's first ascent up the northeast face; this year the climbers followed the ridge that links Abi Gamin with Kamet. On the same day a party under Gurdial Singh climbed Abi Gamin, using Jayal's 1953 route. The Anglo-Swiss first ascent of 1950 was from the Tibetan side.

*Banderpunch, Black Peak.* J. M. Gibson again led an expedition in 1955 into the Banderpunch Group in Tehri Garhwal, where he has climbed and explored so often. In 1950 he was with the party that climbed the 20,720-foot White Peak (Banderpunch II). In 1952 and 1953 he approached the group from the northwest and in the second year climbed to 100 feet below the summit of the Black Peak (20,956 feet), the highest peak in the range, before being turned back by storm. What makes Gibson's recent expeditions remarkable is that all his climbing companions are school boys from the Doon School, Debra Dun, or from Mayo College, Ajmer. Last summer they again approached the mountains past Oshla on the Tons River. Base camp was below the Banderpunch Glacier, which descends westward past the Banderpunch Peaks on the south and 20,545-foot Sugnalin on the north. Immediately Jagjit, fresh from the Himalayan Mountaineering Institute and restricted in time, attacked the Black Peak with Sherpas Passang and Cheten. On May 29 while the other boys acclimatized themselves skiing, they made a summit try but failed in deep snow 400 feet from the top. On June 7 Gibson and the two Sherpas left Camp 3 at 19,000 feet and made the first ascent of the mountain. Unfortunately, none of the boys was yet fit to accompany them from the high camp. In deteriorating weather and in cold powder snow covered with breakable wind crust, the three reached the summit after a three and a half hour climb. On June 11 two boys, identified by Gibson only as Chicky and Winston, with Sherpa Cheten climbed the 18,020-foot peak south of the point where the Banderpunch Glacier turns westward. The next day

Gibson, with a boy whom Gibson calls Don, climbed the 18,000-foot peak north of the pass to Harsil on the Sughalin ridge above the Banderpunch.

*Ronti.* Mr. Peter Aufschnaiter and I reached the summit of Ronti (19,895 feet) on June 15, 1955. [This was the first ascent. Editor.] Setting out from Nanda Prayag, we ascended the Nanda Kini valley, crossed the Humkum Gala (17,000 feet) and next ascended a pass separating Ronti from Nanda Ghunti. Just short of the summit of this pass we set up camp on the exposed rock of a moraine opposite a prominent snow couloir which showed avalanche tracks in the rocky south face of the ridge connecting Ronti with Point 19,345 feet to the east. The following day we ascended this couloir to a point about a third of the way to the top, where we turned to the left in a snow gully hidden from the pass below by a rocky buttress. We followed this gully and subsequent ledges up to a snow slope leading to the crest of the above-mentioned ridge, on which we remained for a brief distance. The climb up the snowy west slopes of the summit peak of Ronti was somewhat complicated by a number of small hidden crevasses. We followed a slight hump of wind-blown snow dividing the eastern from the southeastern snow slopes on this part of the route. The climb started at 6:00 A.M. The summit was reached at 1:03 P.M. and the return to camp was made at 5:15.

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*Central Lahul.* Under the leadership of Hamish McArthur, a small expedition consisting of Mrs. McArthur, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Solari, and Captain and Mrs. K. Goswami, entered Spiti on July 23, 1955. From a camp near Shitakar they made a plane table survey of the Lahul peaks and climbed an 18,000-foot peak on the Lahul-Spiti watershed southeast of the Kanzam La. They returned by the Balamo La to the Chandra valley. Up a tributary valley of the Chandra they established an advance base camp. They climbed a 19,000-foot peak north of the glacier in this valley. Their final ascent was Peak 20,430 shown on Map 52 H.

*Kulti Glacier Basin.* The R.A.F. Mountaineering Expedition to Kulu and Spiti led by Group Captain A. J. M. Smyth attempted in late May to reach the Bara Shigri Glacier, but heavy snows on the Rohtang Pass kept them from their objective. They crossed the Hamta Pass to the unexplored Kulti Glacier basin where they climbed all eight of the main peaks of the region, which range up to 21,000 feet, including 20,340-foot Shikar Beh.

*Spiti.* The Cambridge University Expedition to Spiti comprised Mr. and Mrs. P. F. Holmes, Mr. and Mrs. H. A. Lamb, Dr. R. W. Hey, geologist,