The 1960-61 Himalayan Scientific and Mountaineering Expedition, Mount Everest and Makalu region, Preliminary Report. This expedition, led by Sir Edmund Hillary, is one of the largest, longest and most diversified ever to enter the Himalayas. Although an attempt will be made to climb Makalu this spring (1961) without using oxygen, the primary objective is scientific research in high altitude physiology, meteorology and glaciology. The twenty-odd expedition members are from New Zealand, England, India, the United States and Australia. There are five journalists or photographers, eleven professional scientists, one radioman, one builder, and seven veterans of one or more Himalayan expeditions. The American members include John Dienhart, public relations director of the sponsor, World Book Encyclopedia; Larry Swan, Biologist, Marlin Perkins, director of Chicago's Lincoln Park Zoo; and American Alpine Club members Barry Bishop, Tom Nevison and Leigh Ortenburger. Only a few members will be present for all phases of the nine month expedition.

The first phase was carried out last fall by two separate parties. A group, led by Hillary, conducted an extensive and much publicized snowman hunt in the upper Rolwaling valley. The Ripimu Glacier area was thoroughly explored and several ascents were made of the surrounding peaks (ca. 19,000 feet). Briefly, we do not believe there is a snowman. Numerous sets of "snowman" tracks were photographed only a few miles from Shipton's famous discovery in the Menlung valley. In each case we could follow the man-like prints to a place where they were protected from the sun. Here the prints retained their original round shape, which resembled the paw marks of a small animal such as a fox. For years the evidence of the celebrated Thyangboche "Yeti scalp" has been a strong argument in favor of the existence of a snowman. This has been shown by scientists in this country and in Europe to be not a scalp at all but a bit of goat fur which had been stretched into a pointed shape while still fresh. Likewise the "Yeti fur" brought back by Hillary proved to be the skin of a Tibetan blue bear. Following the snowman search, Hillary's party and over 100 porters crossed the 19,000-foot Tesi Lapcha and joined Norman Hardie's hut building group, located on the southern slopes of Ama Dablam. By the end of November, the expedition had completed a small frame hut at 17,500 feet and a larger prefabricated hut at 18,900 feet. The latter is situated at the edge of a broad snowfield. It is roughly cylindrical in shape, made up of some 100 curved sections consisting of three inches of plastic foam insulation between sheets of thin plywood. The shell of the hut was assembled in just two days. The hut, ten by twenty-two feet, is now fitted with a heating stove, six bunks, electricity provided by a wind generator,
a laboratory section providing unbelievably good working conditions at an altitude of practically 19,000 feet. Just outside the door is a magnificent ski run.

During the fall period, the weather was excellent and a number of members made one or two-week trips exploring valleys and passes of the region. On October 31, Pat Barcham of New Zealand and I made the first ascent of an unnamed peak (20,240 feet), highest in the Chakri Range, a long snow and ice climb of moderate difficulty which started from Chola Col (ca. 18,800 feet). We had made an unsuccessful attempt the previous day along with the Sherpa Annallu. The summit afforded spectacular views of Everest, Lhotse, Makalu, and Cho Oyu. On November 18, Jim Millege of England and a Sherpa made the first ascent of a 21,083-foot peak one-half mile north of the expedition's upper hut. Two earlier attempts to make this extremely long ridge climb with ropes of three had failed for lack of time. Mike Gill of New Zealand and a Sherpa made an ascent of the highest peak of Island Peak (20,305 feet), south of Lhotse Shar. (As the Journal goes to press, news comes of the first ascent in March, 1961 of Ama Dablam by Barry Bishop,* the New Zealanders, M. B. Gill and M. Romanes, and the Englishman, Dr. Michael Ward.—Editor.)

During the winter, six to eight scientists are spending upwards of three months in the upper hut to study the physiological effects of prolonged exposure to high altitudes, under the direction of Dr. Griffiths Pugh. Six other doctors and one medical student are working on various aspects of high altitude physiology. Barry Bishop is conducting an extensive glaciological and meteorological program. In the spring, the physiologists will continue their studies at 22,000 feet and above on Makalu and, if possible, hope to carry out research on climbers on the summit itself.

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India

Chaukhamba, Garhwal. An Indian Air Force expedition under the leadership of Air Commodore S. N. Goyal made the second ascent of Chaukhamba in October of 1959.

* The following was contained in a letter to the editor from Barry Bishop written at Mingbo Base Camp on March 20, 1961. "The climbing news is that four of us climbed Ama Dablam on March 13 after a three-week siege . . . We experienced difficult climbing from 19,500 feet on and used 1400 feet of fixed ropes, 46 pitons, three étriers and 100 feet of wire ladders on overhangs. Four camps were installed, the last at 21,000 feet being an ice cave."