

July 15 a virgin peak of 21,400 feet was climbed by Walker, Pran Nath, Rikzen, and Holmes. The weather continued bad, so an attempt on the nearby 21,760-foot peak was abandoned. On July 19 Rikzen and I climbed virgin peaks of 21,200 feet and 21,410 feet from a new camp at 20,000 feet. On the same day we became the first mountaineers ever to penetrate into the Gyundi Valley. Because of heavy snow and Rikzen's damaged hand, a retreat was then made to Base Camp. On July 21 Walker and I, from Base Camp at 14,500 feet, climbed a new peak of 19,500 feet. We also crossed two important new passes of over 19,000 feet. On July 25 Rikzen and Holmes climbed a peak of 19,700 feet from a camp at 16,000 feet. The following day the same pair climbed the highest and by far the hardest peak successfully attempted. Starting from a camp at 18,500 feet, continuous difficulties and extreme exposure were encountered for nearly 3000 feet. The summit was 21,500 feet. Happily, the weather was perfect for almost the first time on the expedition and a view was obtained right into Tibet, Bashahr, Kulu, Lahul, and Ladakh—perhaps 70 miles in every direction.

Abandoning all but the most essential equipment and food, the expedition then began the return over the Main Himalayan Divide. The first pass was crossed with difficulty July 30. The second was reached August 4, but because of unexpected difficulties (bad weather, a 3000-foot precipice to negotiate with heavy loads), the crossing and descent took much longer than had been anticipated. For two days the fate of the whole expedition hung in balance; we were now without food and the weather had become impossible. The situation was saved by the appearance of a wild goat who was forthwith despatched. On August 14 we returned to Manali, exhausted and happy.

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*Deo Tibba, Lahul.* In June 1955 the German, Rudolf Rott, made the second ascent of the lower (19,687 feet) of Deo Tibba's two summits. He also climbed Malana Peak. In August and September 1956 the Frenchman André Guillemot and Sherpa Nima Tensing were in the same region. They climbed three 21,000- to 22,000-foot peaks in the Lahul Range from a 19,000-foot camp near the Kultu valley beyond the Rohtang Pass. After recrossing the pass, they climbed a fine rock tower in the Deo Tibba group.

*Baspa Valley.* J. M. T. Gibson again took a group of schoolboys into the central Himalaya in May and June 1956. They explored the Shaone Gad, a tributary of the Baspa, that flows into it just above Raksham. They made the first ascent of a 17,600-foot peak east of the Shaone Gad.