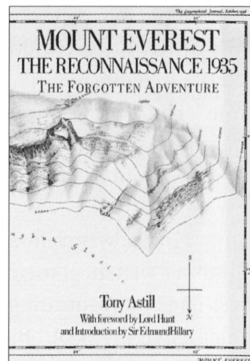


The Forgotten Adventure: Mount Everest, The Reconnaissance, 1935. TONY ASTILL. FOREWORD BY LORD HUNT. INTRODUCTION BY SIR EDMUND HILLARY. SOUTHAMPTON: LES ALPES LIVRE, 2005. 359 PAGES, NUMEROUS BLACK & WHITE PHOTOGRAPHS, AND 2 FOLDING MAPS PLUS A UNIQUE DOUBLE DUST-JACKET OF A 1935 COLOR TOPOGRAPHIC CONTOUR MAP OF MT. EVEREST'S NORTH FACE IN TIBET BY MICHAEL SPENDER. £30.



It was, claimed Eric Shipton famously, “a veritable orgy of mountain climbing.” In May 1935, Britain’s best mountaineers, including Shipton, longtime climbing partner Bill Tilman, plus 15 Sherpas, among them a 19-year-old novice, Tenzing Norgay, embarked from Darjeeling on the fourth-ever Mt. Everest expedition. In large part because no expedition book was later penned by Shipton, their 27-year-old leader, the 1935 Everest Reconnaissance Expedition has remained largely unknown and unlauded. No more! Seven decades later, *The Forgotten Adventure* reveals the never-before-told climbing adventures of three of the twentieth-century mountaineering’s most revered icons reveling in the Himalayan glory of their youth. By any yardstick its successes were stunning. Everest’s summit was not reached, yet in various combinations, Shipton, Tilman, Edwin Kempson, Dr. Charles Warren, Edmund Wigram, and New Zealander Dan Bryant ascended a staggering total of 26 peaks in the Everest region—all over 20,000 feet and all but two first ascents.

British mountaineering historian Tony Astill has finally published his heroic recounting of the 1935 Everest Expedition. Utilizing long-lost diaries, letters home, plus journal and book extracts, Astill has recreated in absorbing and fascinating detail the journey to and from the mountain and the climb-by-climb successes of Shipton’s team. *Forgotten Adventure* is an intimately told, romantic, seat-of-your-pants tale of 1930s exploratory mountaineering. The team accomplished the first ascent of virtually every major peak on Mt. Everest’s northern Tibetan side, then also made the grim discovery of the body of Maurice Wilson, the demented English non-climber who had perished the previous year while attempting Everest alone via the North Col.

Yet this team’s triumphs, planned “in half an hour on the back of an envelope,” traveling “lightly equipped and shorn of superfluous baggage,” cost a mere tenth of Britain’s previous military-style Everest expeditions. As Tilman rightly quipped: “An expedition is a party with too many people in it.” While the deep monsoon snows thwarted their efforts on Changtse—Everest’s north peak—no other Himalayan expedition in history has ever bagged so many virgin summits. Tilman and Wigram climbed an astounding 17 peaks each! Shipton and Bryant also obtained the first-ever photographs and views of the Khumbu Icefall, making Shipton think it would “go.”

And although Tilman and Bryant had difficulty acclimatizing, this 1935 expedition unknowingly set the stage for Everest’s first ascent eighteen years later. It was the first of Tenzing’s eventual seven Everest expeditions, and Shipton so enjoyed Bryant’s company that in 1951 he invited another Kiwi mountaineer, Edmund Hillary, to join his recon of the Khumbu Icefall in Nepal. Thanks to Astill’s monumental efforts, mountaineers can experience this “final chapter” in Everest’s history through the climbers’ own words and beautiful, never-published black and white photographs—and the rest is history. As this is a self-published book, please order directly from the author, at his email address: alpes@supanet.com.

ED WEBSTER