

the site of the Lac du Tacul (which itself is visible on Mr. Lloyd's print) is near the lower left-hand corner. The background of the Tacul basin is shut in (from left to right) by 'the three granite aiguilles' (Grand Flambeau, Aiguille de Toule, Aiguille d'Entrèves) and the Tour Ronde. The Aiguille Noire rises on the further edge of the massive rock slopes above and to the left of the Séraes du Géant. The route to the Col du Géant turns to the left between the Aiguille Noire and the Grand Flambeau. The Petit Rognon is the rock island above and to the right of the Séraes.

Of the two views from the summit of Mont Blanc, M. Bregeault's shows the main axis of the chain running to the Grandes Jorasses (the shaft of the 7), while Abraham's gives the continuation of this to the left, showing the Aiguille Verte—the cross piece of the 7 (§ 14).

Of the lower and upper Anciens Passages, there is an impressive view in Mathews, p. 104, and also another, somewhat heightened, in Whymper, p. 21.

My best thanks are due to Mr. R. W. Lloyd, Dr. H. Dübi, Sir Ernest Benn, M. Bregeault, and others, for permission to reproduce their illustrations.

E. H. S.

ON THE FRINGE OF THE PAMIRS.

BY W. RICKMER RICKMERS.

EVER since my first visit to Bokhara in 1894 the mountains of Western Turkestan have held me enthralled. Exploring the ranges of the Zarafshan, of Hazrat-Sultan, Peter the Great, and Darvaz, I moved further and further E., although



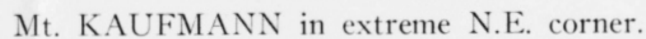
the Pamirs themselves remained closed to me. In 1913, my party penetrated into the western valleys of the Sel-tau, that long meridional chain forming the western fringe of the Pamirs. Here white spots on the Russian map—or rather nests of irresolute 'worms'—had fascinated me as long as I can remember. Here was the lure of legendary passes, of unknown glaciers, of peaks fabulously high.

Then the world stood still for a while, its activities being



Photo. W. Rickmers.

Mountain Group of SHILBE-MUZ-JILGA and SANDAL above ALTIN-MAZAR from TERS-AGAR Pass.



moved to another plane. But after fifteen years I was granted a resumption of the work where it had been left off. Metaphorically in the van, but actually in the rear, with spirits high, but flesh slightly deteriorated I led twenty-one Russians and Germans to the attack (see Dent, *Mountaineering*, Badminton Library, 1892, p. 114). This time I decided to tackle from the E., across the Pamirs, the 4000 square miles of mystery which by good luck had agreed to wait for me. On this side the roads are easier, and one starts climbing from a higher level, but the sparseness of the population, nomad as well as settled, makes it difficult to obtain porters or supplies. And oh! those never-ceasing winds, and the dust! The western face of the Sel-tau is steeper, more Alpine; the valleys are narrow, and the trails narrower still. But here a race of mountaineers lives in garden-villages, and thick jungle grows up to the snout of the Garmo Glacier.

The expedition—officially called the ‘Russo-German Alai-Pamir Expedition, 1928’—was mainly scientific. Although this sounds rather sedentary there was no mistake about the nimbleness of our high-brows. The sitting fell entirely to my lot, for I was maid-of-all-work in the base-camps. Needless to say the topographers and geologists were excellent climbers. Dr. Finsterwalder and his assistant Herr Biersack accounted between them for fifty photogrammetric viewpoints from 5000 to 5500 m. high. For geographical patrol work and voluptuary peak-bagging we had a crew of four, sifted from the pick of German mountaineers (Herren Borchers, Allwein, Wien, and Schneider), to whom must be added Dr. Kohlhaupt, a free-lance, and the first discoverer of the Tanimas Pass. If these men had all the accidents in the way of broken jaws, lacerated thighs, and frozen feet, they also had all the fun and no work; I mean work throwing an extra strain on grey hairs.

Coming from Osh our bulky caravan made its first long halt on the shores of the Great Karakul Lake. The season being early and cloudy (beginning of July), the giants of the Trans-Alai, Mts. Kaufmann and Kurumdi, had not shown us much beyond their lower slopes descending to the Great Alai valley (valley of the Kizil-su River). Short gullies lead up to precipices studded with icefalls. While preparing the further stages of the journey, I sent out a strong party to explore the southern approaches of Mt. Kaufmann. Before leaving for their base-camp in the Kara-jilga valley they ascended Koksukur-bashi, a dome-shaped hill near Hu Lake, 5700 m. high, using ski from

the snow-line to the top and afterwards enjoying an exhilarating run down on excellent snow. This was the first and last opportunity for an extensive use of the ski, some of which were afterwards made into sleighs for glacier transport. With the advance of summer all *névé* becomes furrowed and encrusted with a glassy foam.¹

From their Kara-jilga base the mountaineers explored the Kara-jilga Glacier and various side-valleys, climbing a number of fine peaks up to 6000 m. The lack of porters prevented them from getting near the foot of Mt. Kaufmann defended by a maze of glaciers. They saw enough, however, to warrant the belief that an easier way might be found from Altin-masar on the W. As only very few conspicuous peaks have native names, we christened our mountains after general features or familiar shapes: The 'Cone,' 'Limestone Cliff,' 'Trapeze,' 'Grandes Jorasses,' 'Breithorn,' 'Ushba.' These names were for private use only, the official writing on the map being the privilege of the U.S.S.R.

Meanwhile I was moving headquarters to the Tanimas valley. The Tanimas river runs at first due E. Then it bends S. and is now called the Bartang which flows into the Panj or Upper Oxus. According to the best of our knowledge—we know better now—the Tanimas was the only gate to the very heart of the Sel-tau range. Here I collected supplies and had porters drafted from the nearest Bartang villages 30 and 50 miles away. In this camp (3000 m.) buckthorn, horseflies, and dust-blizzards find their way into the innermost corners of the human frame. But I sat at the door of Revelations. The Tanimas Glacier was supposed to be the biggest in the Pamirs; the peaks at its head were supposed to be higher than Mt. Kaufmann; its uppermost saddle was supposed to be the mythical Kashal-ayak Pass. Kohlhaupt at once volunteered to reconnoitre; Perlin, a sporting young Russian, offered to accompany him. Those two set out quite alone and returned after four days of many hardships, having reached the top of the Tanimas Pass. Their greatest surprise was the absence of the Tanimas (main) Glacier. Instead of that they found three right side glaciers forming pinnacled barricades across the valley. Looking W. from the top of the pass they saw before them an expanse of snowfields so vast and so level that in the short time at their command they could not quite make out whence they flowed and whither they were bound.

¹ As on Mt. Everest.—*Editor.*



Photo. W. Rickmers.

SANDAL Mountain from TERS-AGAR Pass.



Photo. W. Rickmers.

The ALAI valley and the TRANS ALAI range with Mt. KAUFMANN.

Afterwards it took a long time to believe, and still longer to know for certain, that this was the Fedchenko Glacier which from Altin-mazar stretches for 44 miles along the eastern flank of the Sel-tau range.

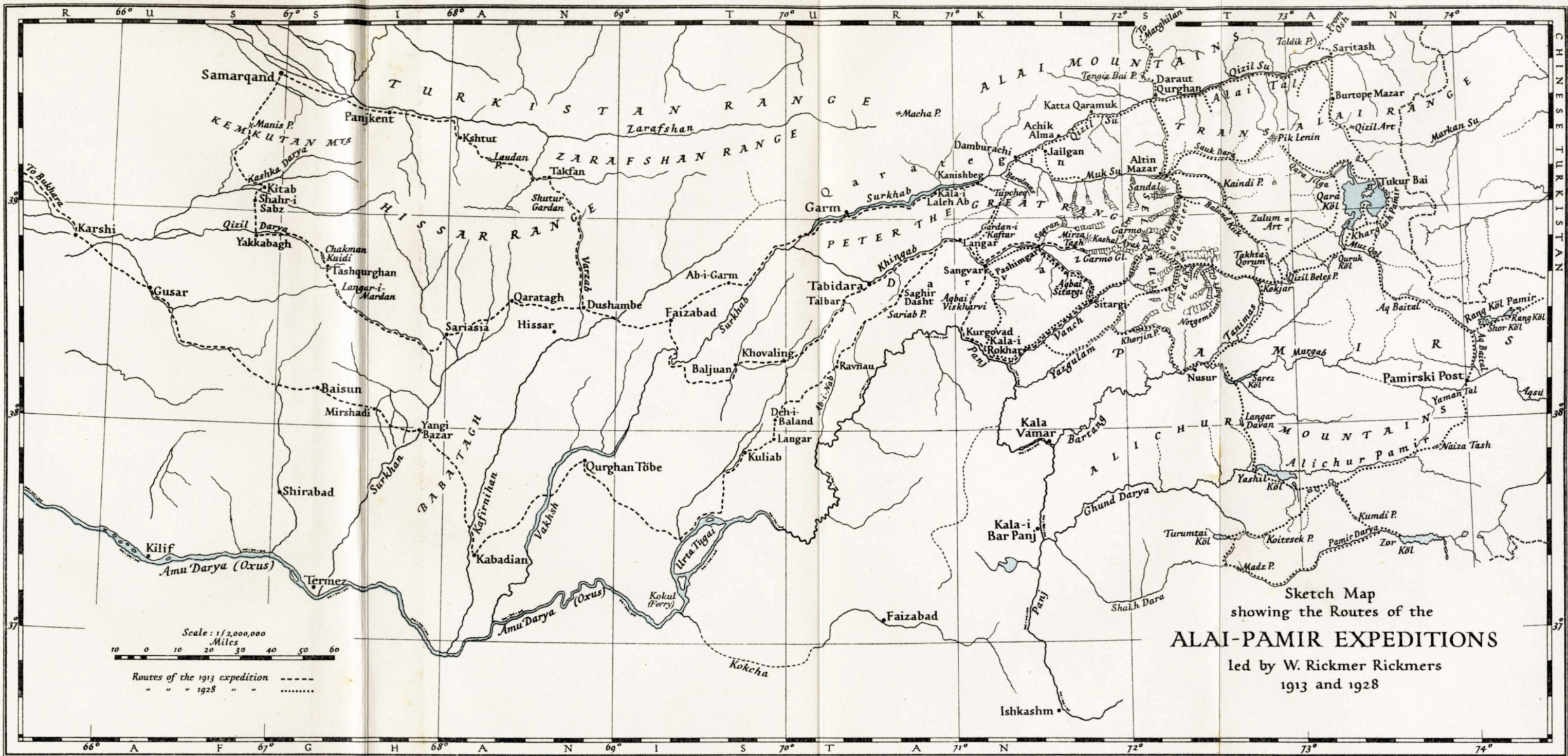
On July 24 I established a permanent camp just beyond the first glacier officially named *Notgemeinschaft Glacier* by the Soviet authorities. (The *Notgemeinschaft* is the German Society in Aid of Science.) It is almost as long as its name, 20 miles. In this camp, known as Dust Camp, I spent six weeks seeing more or less (generally less, praise be to them) of the staff for inorganic nature. The zoologist and the linguist remained invisible for months, preferring regions where bees buzz and humans hum. Porters came trickling in at irregular intervals, trickling out again to look after their miserable barley crops. I never had more than fifteen strong men, and sometimes only a few cripples. What with supplying the higher camps, and what with three parties ever on the move with instruments or sleeping kit, I often found it difficult to make both ends meet.

But all hands worked with a will, and gradually the topography began to clear up. Two of the 'die-hards' found and crossed the Kashal-ayak, the only easy pass over the main range. It connects the Fedchenko Glacier with the Vanch valley. One can go down the Fedchenko to Altin-masar or over the Tanimas to the Pamirs. A party of Russian mountaineers discovered and crossed the pass from the Yazgulum valley. In future times the best base will be at Altin-masar where food, fodder, and men are easily obtainable. From there the Fedchenko Glacier forms an ideal highroad.

It would take too long (other editors besides the Editor 'A.J.' are at this very moment feeling the urge of honouring me) to enumerate all the long glaciers tramped and all the towering summits scaled. But I trust our Editor will give me another opportunity, in spite of this scraggy paper which I feel is an insult.² Well, my comrades did a lot of fine work while I wrote *chits* in camp or swallowed good food (mutton with rice on Monday; rice with mutton on Tuesday) and dust. The condensed result will be seen best in the shape of the new photogrammetric map.

Towards the end of my stay I managed at last to do a little mountain of my own, having abstracted two porters from a fresh draft. A steady grind of 7 hours up interminable scree-

² We regard this as a promise on Herr Rickmers's part.—*Editor*.



Sketch Map
showing the Routes of the
ALAI-PAMIR EXPEDITIONS
led by W. Rickmer Rickmers
1913 and 1928

slopes brought me to a fine viewpoint 5300 m. above sea-level. Near the top I panted a little, but felt that with proper training I might qualify for 6000 m. or even higher.

After that I shifted the heavy kit to Altin-masar by devious ways, while the mountaineers walked down the Fedchenko Glacier. Now came the second attack on Mt. Kaufmann³ (7130 m.) by the Sauk-sai valley and glacier. This glacier proved another surprise. It runs E. along and *past* the southern flank of the big mountain. Only then does it curve northward tapping the eastern shoulder of Kaufmann. From a camp on this saddle (5700 m.) Allwein, Wien, and Schneider climbed the culminating point of Soviet Russia on September 25. All came down with frozen feet now fortunately cured. During the last stages of the climb they had to rest every 10 yards.

Anyway, I have learnt something new on this trip. I shall take a secretary. She will do the writing, and I shall do at least some climbing and not only hear about the climbs that the others have done. Fortunately there is still a lot to be accomplished in and around the Pamirs.

[We are indebted to the Council of the R.G.S. for the use of the two maps.]

'MYSTERY MOUNTAIN' (MT. WADDINGTON), 13,260 FT.

By W. A. DON MUNDAY.

(Reprinted from the *Vancouver Sunday Province*.)

THE year 1928 saw three of the original 1926 party united to tackle 'Mystery Mountain,' the trio being my wife, my brother, A. R. Munday, and I. Our good friends, the officers and crew of the Union s.s. *Venture*, landed us on June 12 at the Knight Inlet Cannery, where we received a hospitable

³ The mountain is so named after the celebrated Russian General, Constantine Petrovitch Kaufmann, conqueror and Governor-General of Russian Turkestan from 1867 till his death at Tashkend in 1882. He took Samarkand in 1868, also Khiva, Bokhara and Khokand. His advance was the main cause of the British-Afghan war of 1877-8.—T. G. L.

The mountain has been rechristened lately in honour of a notorious assassin who died in a lunatic asylum. In these pages the name of Mount KAUFMANN will be maintained.—EDITOR, *A.J.*