

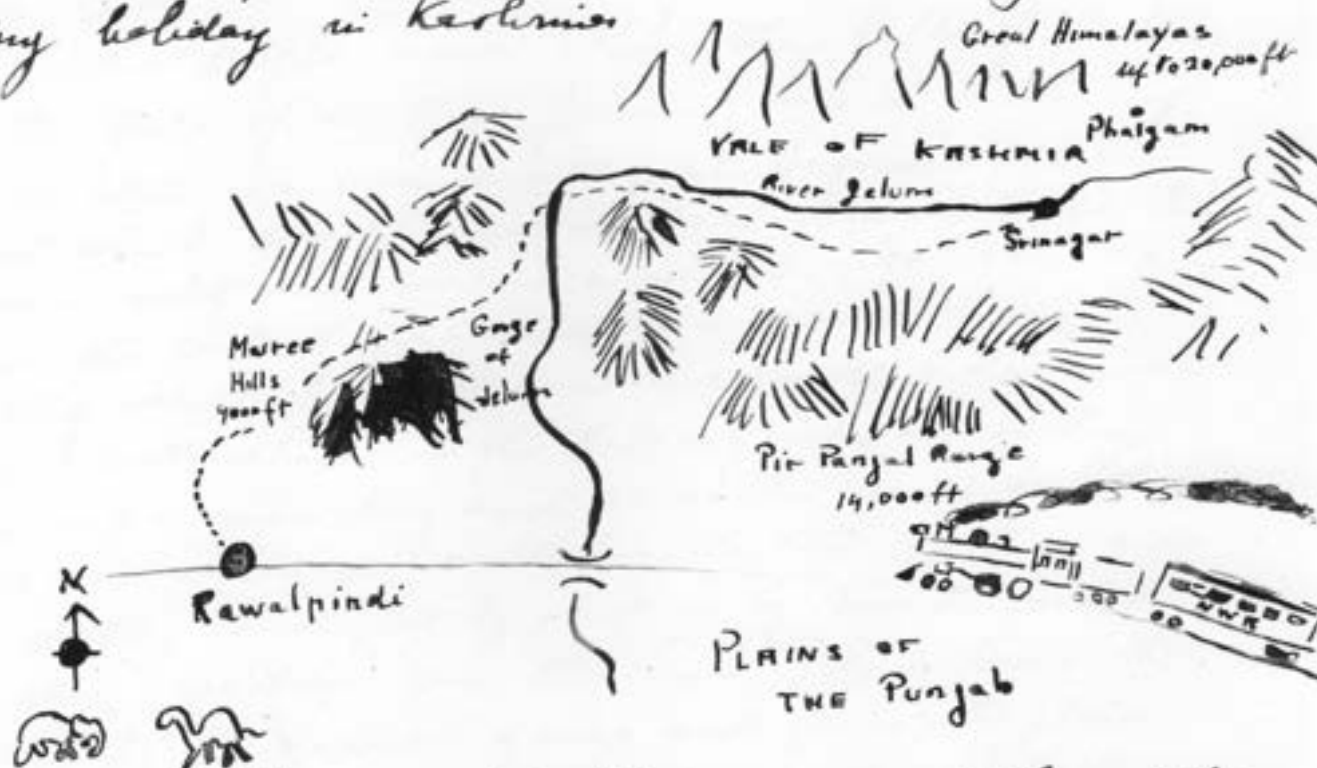
In July 1943 during an “*interlude in exile*”, my father Philip Norreys Coleman took a holiday in Kashmir. He kept a diary illustrated with his photographs and charming sketches. I was aware of this document, but until John had done his great work on our family history and Claire had made the tremendous effort to produce a transcript, I had not given Philip’s Kashmir diary the attention it deserves.

In addition to producing the transcript, Claire also prepared ***Kashmir Extras for Philip’s Journal*** and composed her own thoughts about Philip’s Kashmir Holiday in ***Grandpa’s Garden of Bliss***. I have appended these documents below; they are both a good read, the Garden of Bliss is excellent and perhaps the best introduction to Philip’s diary.

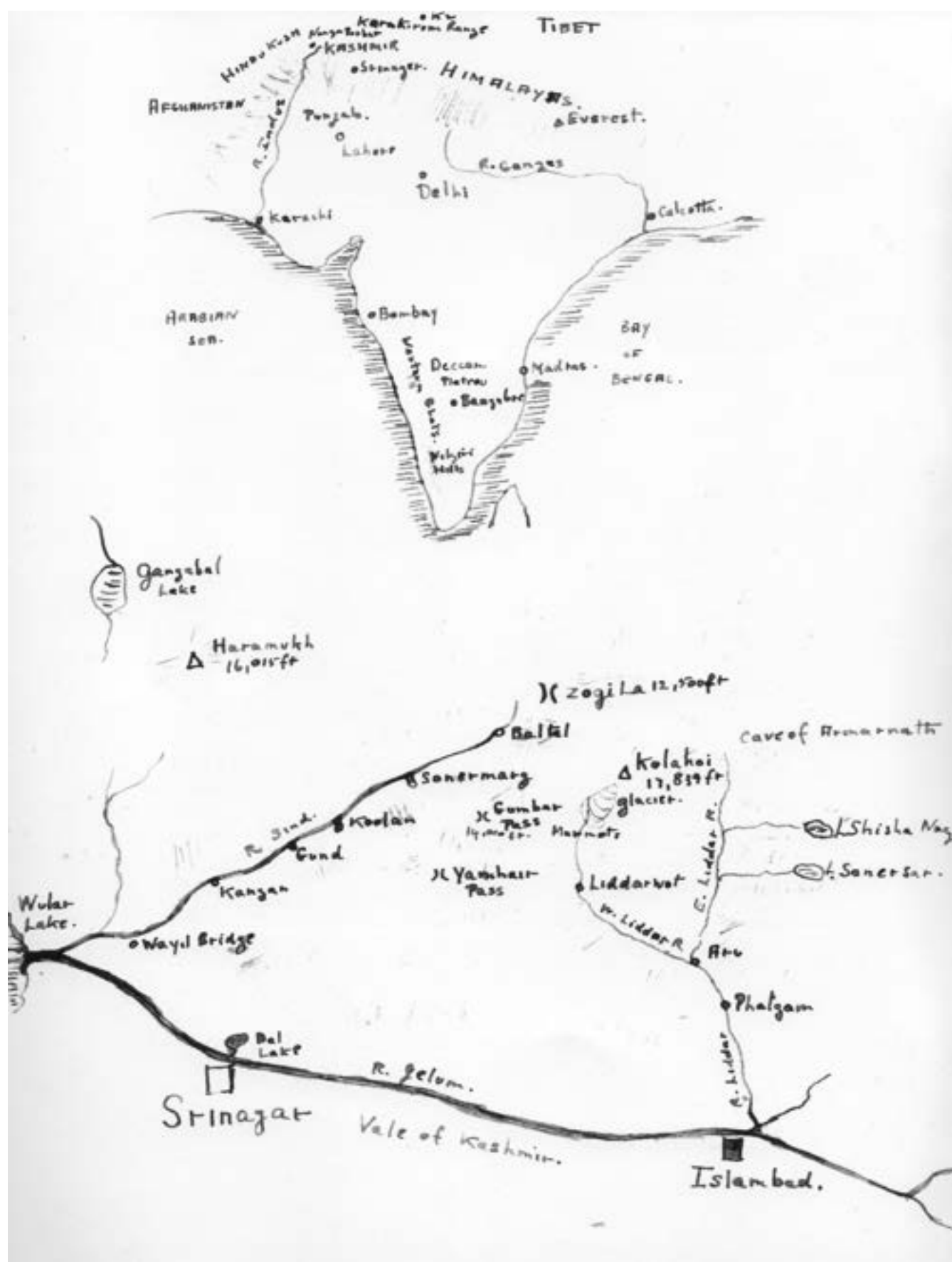
***Pete Coleman, 19/02/2025, Pembroke***

## Lahore Punjab. Kashmiri Holiday

28<sup>th</sup> July 1943 This is the introductory chapter to what I hope will be sheets and sheets of paper on an interlude in an exile. I am going to give you a very full account of the Kashmir Holiday in fact keep a diary. I hope it will amuse because it is the first chunk of writing you a real narrative of my doing without the interference of censorship. The war will have nothing to do with my holiday in Kashmir.



Well here's a blue print of the holiday as conceived here in the plains. I have found a lot more about it by a fortunate meeting with a chap here (i.e. Lahore) who has holiday in Kashmir as a hobby and who took to his hotel last Sunday showed wonderful photographs and supplied quantities of information and suggestions as to route. Then Jonah has just returned from a course a thousand miles from here bringing back from Calcutta



## Transcript of Philip's Kashmiri Journal

transcription by Claire Chambers, completed 14<sup>th</sup> July

Kashmir Holiday Lahore Punjab 28<sup>th</sup> July 1943

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Then Jonah has just returned from a course a thousand miles from here bringing back from Calcutta ...

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...quarter inch maps of the district. The blueprint may make interesting reading when you can compare the account with what really happens. This is an illustrated edition of our labours - look at the map on the first page.

You can see from the map the general lay of things. Kashmir state if you look on the Atlas is of course a huge area but what people mean when they talk of Kashmir is the Vale of the River Jhelum, which on the map of the state is a very small part but which is the only important part because all the rest is wild and barren mountain. You can see that the Vale of Kashmir is a sort of hanging valley shut in by mountains on all sides rather like Watendlath in the Lakes, only the valley here is 65 miles long and 25 miles wide, so it is on a bigger scale - On the Eastern side, the valley is completely shut

in by mountains but at the Western end the river Jhelum leaves the valley by a narrow gorge and gains the plain of Punjab. There is a way in and out of the valley by the river gorge. The valley is said to be fertile, full of every flower and fruit you could wish for. To get in you take a train from wherever you are to Rawalpindi and there you take a car, carefully booked some weeks beforehand and you go into Kashmir by the way the Jhelum gets out.

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Only the last two thirds of the gorge of the Jhelum are of use to you because for the first part near the plains the sides are too steep for a road. For the first part of the journey you climb the Murree Hills 9000 ft and then drop again into the gorge one third of the way in. The books say the road took many years to construct with forced labour and at the cost of many lives. It is frequently washed away.

Now what are we going to do when we get there? We are going to trek in the Lidder and Sind Valleys. These are valleys in the Great Himalayas and call for another map. On the first map the start of the Siddar Valley is a place called Phalgam



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The Sind and Lidder Valleys are in the great Himalayas and the map shows what we may do. We are almost certain to go to Phalgam, which I now find from the books is spelt Pahalgam. You go there by lorry at exorbitant cost. One suggestion is the we go up the West Lidder (the Lidder has East and West branches) and here the goal and object is the wild Kolahoi Glacier\* said to be most memorable. Then we could cross to the Sind Valley, but this way may be difficult for the path is readily washed away, and in the rain streams become unfordable and there are also a lot of mountains in the way. We could try East Lidder which is also very wonderful and has two beautiful lakes (Shishnag and another I can't remember the name of) The snag about East Lidder is that there

is a very sacred cave\* and if it is the proper sacred time (and this is said by the book to be in August) lots and lots of pilgrims and what goes with Pilgrims dirt and cholera are about and make the valley best avoided. So if there are Pilgrims the East Lidder is to be washed out.

At the top of the East Lidder is the Zoji La Pass about 12,000 ft up which you might reach and regain the Sind Valley, the pass also leads to China and Tibet.

Note: This is not strictly correct, there is a lot of real mountaineering country between Zoji La and either branch of the Lidder. It could be reached but without ponies and would be difficult.

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And this is what I have found about the weather. Although it is the "wet monsoon" you don't get continuous rain in Kashmir in August although with bad luck we could get thoroughly rained out. The Lidder and Sind valleys are good from the point of rain because the Pir Panjal Himalayas take the rain as the monsoon clouds sweep up from the Indian Ocean and keep the rain from these more northern mountains. – But we must be prepared to get wet – Sometimes the rain can upset all your plans by sweeping away all the bridges and making the streams unfordable. – The Vale of Kashmir itself is quite hot in August in spite of its 5000 ft but nothing like these horrid plains and all the prickly heat will go, Gott sei dank (at the present moment I am both pouring with sweat and itching like scabies). About the rain we wrote to our agent in Srinagar who replies "August is an excellent month for trek, it seldom rains except when it does and that for some unknown reason".

This is how we shall travel about. All (we hope) will be arranged by the agent Mr. Bekah Shah (highly recommended by various people we have met). He will provide a cook-sirdar (spelling?) He will lead and boss the others, act as guide and will also be the cook. There will be about six pack ponies who will carry our camp kit hired from Mr. Bekah Shah and all our ...

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.....food for a fortnight; bought by the cook in Srinagar – I understand that the food will include half a sheep and live poultry which will be killed as required. Camp furniture includes all that comfort requires and we have had a great debate as to whether furniture shall include a commode.

The man who gave me all my information painted a vivid picture of one of his treks with his wife with the last pack pony crossing the top of some Himalayan pass the commode silhouetted against the setting sun and perched upon it a cockerel which had become such a pet with the children that they had not the heart to kill it but took it all the way round with them and back to Srinagar.



We have decided to leave the commode and squat behind a bush and hope not to lower the British prestige too much by this proceeding. We have also decided not to take Riding Ponies but trek on our own two feet.

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Jonah returned yesterday from a course looking incredibly fit and full of enthusiasm for the holiday. I think we shall fit in with one another perfectly. I have been fortunate in obtaining film and shall be able to photograph, on a pre-war scale, anything that takes my fancy.

To be continued. This tells how our heroes planned their holiday. Now read on to what really happened when they set out for those Himalayan altitudes where "mother nature has woven her intricate art for those past thousand years or more" – or was this in Jasper Park\*.

Lahore Punjab 28<sup>th</sup> July 1943

Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> August Hotel Regina Srinagar Kashmir

Here begineth the first of the Kashmiri letters, for the holiday has really commenced and I am writing this in Srinagar, Kashmir. It will be a sort of diary with bits added day by day and then sent to you when I get back. Well! We, Jonah Adam and I, arrived in Rawalpindi on the morning of the second (that's yesterday morning though it seems an age ago). It was drizzling with rain and Jonah said he was disappointed because he was looking forward to the road up and we might not see much. Picked up the good "full car" for which had paid Rupees 150 some weeks before to Thomas Cook in Lahore. Unlike some things out here it was really what it was said ....

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.....to be on big and comfortable. Packed our luggage in easily. Perhaps you would like to know what I have. Well I have one suitcase, my old faithful with lots of changes of clothing (Rain may fall, anyway you always have lots of changes in India) including Battledress for the colder parts of the tour, though sweltering in the plains this seemed an unbelievably silly thing to take. A valise with bedding (the three blankets and woollen sleeping bag also seemed rather silly when you have been sleeping naked on top of one sheet for months.) Provided with a chauffeur with a fur cap and whiskers who had little English and hardly spoke throughout the long days drive but who contrary to all expectations drove with great care and circumspection and took us round the hairpin bends with never a nasty moment.

We started and at once the rain gave way to white clouds and sunshine. We saw hills rising from the plain and beautiful green fields instead of the arid plain with the green only struggling where a laborious irrigation canal has brought water. Soon the car was climbing towards Murree. Well built road winding up the mountain gaining height by bending back on itself with numerous hairpin bends and below stretching far off like a distant sea the great plains of the Punjab. Murree is 37 miles from Pindi 6000 ft up and much cooler than we have been for some time. There the road starts to drop and after a further 27 miles we are at Kohala in the narrow gorge of the Jhelum the river of ...

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....Kashmir. It's down a deep valley and the river rushes by, it is a dirty brown colour from suspended mud, steep sides covered with pines rise on each side and go up a long way and it's very hot down here. Did you receive my other letter telling you about the Vale of Kashmir, how it is a wide flat valley, height 5,200 ft twenty miles broad and sixty miles long surprisingly set in the middle of the mountains and completely shut in on all sides. The way out and for us the way in, is by the gorge of the river Jehlum which cuts its way through the mountain walls to reach the plain.

So for the next one hundred miles the road goes up the gorge of Jehlum sometimes at river level, sometimes a little way up one side of the gorge. On each side rises a huge wall of mountain, below you the rushing muddy river. Many times you have to go up side gorges to bridge tributaries. It certainly is magnificent scenery but I would like to repeat it goes on for one hundred miles and after forty miles or so you begin to think you are going to be in this wild and narrow valley for ever and ever and in spite of all you have heard you cannot believe that somewhere in these mountains is a broad and green vale and a capital city of 200,000 people and that this certainly cannot be the way to it.

Then after a long time about six in the evening and you left Rawalpindi at nine in the morning the gorge opens out, the hills fall away on either side and you are travelling .....

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.....along a flat road lined with poplars in a flat plain of unbelievable and English greenness.. The big hills are all around but they are a long way back making a mountain wall to the plain. It is like England in the Summer time; big beautiful English trees, especially poplars, English flowers in the gardens, orchards with beautiful apples, English billowing white clouds in the sky and the river Jehlum is now a broad and placid stream looking like the Severn in Worcestershire. Even the villages look English from a distance because in Kashmir the houses are made of wood and two or three stories with high gable roofs While in the plains they are invariably of yellow mud, mostly one storey with a flat roof. It is only when you get near that you see that there is too much Eastern smell and dirt, too much mixing of horse and humans for this to be England. Twenty miles through the smiling vale through the evening sunshine and into Srinagar at 8 'O clock. Two hundred miles Pindi to Srinagar.

We went straight to our agent, Mr. Bekah Shah who seemed most courteous Indian Gentleman. We have heard from several independent sources a lot of good things about him. He directed us to the Regina Hotel and Adam left us to join some friends (and will not happen again in this narrative). The Hotel Regina is quite comfortable and built of wood, about five stories and very like a Swiss Chalet type of hotel – Ask Mother about the Hotel Baren\*

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...Wilderswil, it's just like that. One thing rather tickles me – Jonah and I are in a second storey room with a bathroom attached just like a European Hotel. But the bathroom is of course Indian pattern, that is one zinc bath, no taps, one jerry (enamel iron) one commode. Now how on earth is hot water to arrive and the jerry and commode to be emptied? Quite simple, there is a ladder on the roof outside and a little door into the bathroom through which the sweeper (Indian servant who does that sort of thing, a most important person in the sanitary scheme of things) brings up the garm panee (hot water) and takes away the contents of the jerry etc., - I have drawn him bringing up the bath water as it would not have been nice to show him emptying the commode.





“the garm paanee arrives for the sahib”

This morning we visited Bekah Shah and the trek was worked out. We wanted to start up the hidden valley from Pahalgum as I explained. Unfortunately for us there is a most sacred cave at the top end of the East Liddar Valley and August is the month when ...

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.....“?Longam folk to go on pilgrimages”\* in these parts and there is doubt as to whether the pilgrims won't have bespoken all the ponies in Pahalgam.- We go by bus to Wayul Bridge and there pick up ponies (not to ride but to carry our baggage, that's food for a fortnight etc.) and we go to look at the Zoji La Pass ( I should not have written Zoji La Pass because La is the Tibetan word for a pass and to write it thus is like putting “Bwlch Tryfan Pass”). The villages shown (mere two or three houses) are one day stages. Then back to Sonnermarg and if all goes well we try to cross the mountains into the West Liddar Valley by the Yamhair pass; but this is difficult and there may be snow (sounds incredible to me, snow in India at midsummer) unfordable streams and other obstacles. There is another side track we might take if we cannot cross the Yamhair



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This afternoon was spent in Srinagar, so here is something about the place. It is a beautiful setting and a beautiful old world city, seen at a distance and not noticing the details. Of course if you concentrate on these there are the usual abundance of smells, dirt and total lack of sanitation that are inevitable out here. Today has been a lovely day, sunshine and fleecy clouds all day. It's hot, not so hot as the plains but hot and I still have my prickly heat and it still prickles like ten thousand needles. Round the city are the great hills, quite near are two little ones (the local ?), one crowned by a temple and the other by a fort looking exactly like the sort of toy castle you always hoped your uncle would give you for your lead soldiers.\*



## New Page

There is the broad river Jhelum and many canals and two or three large lakes (not sure how many yet have only explored one). It is rather like I imagine Venice. Large numbers of people come here for their holidays and live in House Boats. You go about in a shikara. I have tried to draw it for you. You can see the shikara\* on the left of the picture on the page you have just turned over. It is a long narrow boat and the motor power consists of three or four Kashmiri who sit in the back and paddle and you lie under a canopy in the front. All of them advertise *Best Spring Cushions* and have wonderful names like "Rolls Royce" or "Margaretta the Best Flower in the World". The canopy is painted a gay colour. You can also see in the picture a wooden Kashmiri house by the side of the water like Venice and selling wood carving, a Kashmir Bridge and the hill with the temple on it and the Himalayas in the background.

## New Page

Sketch of "Swimming on Nageen Bagh"



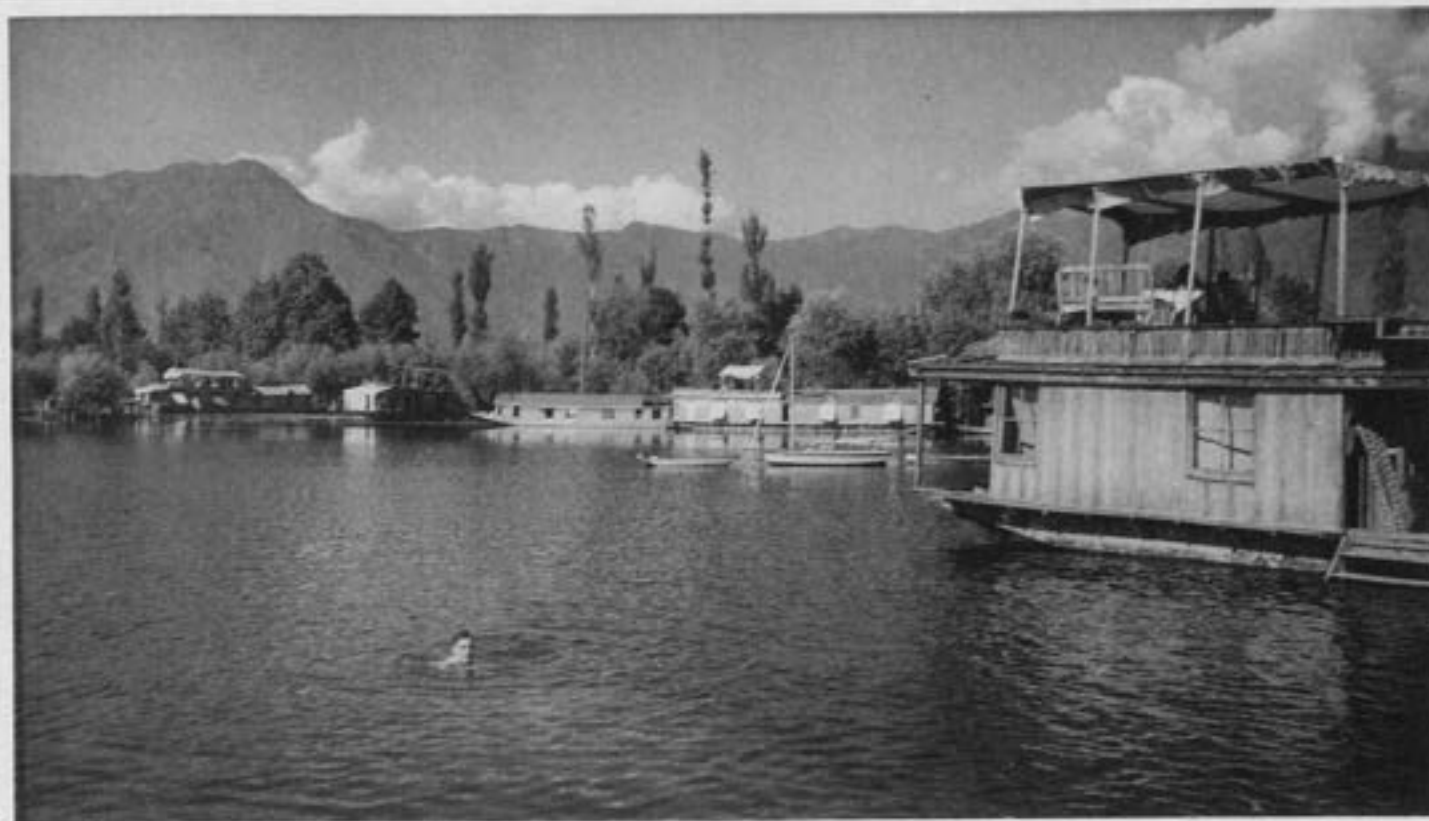
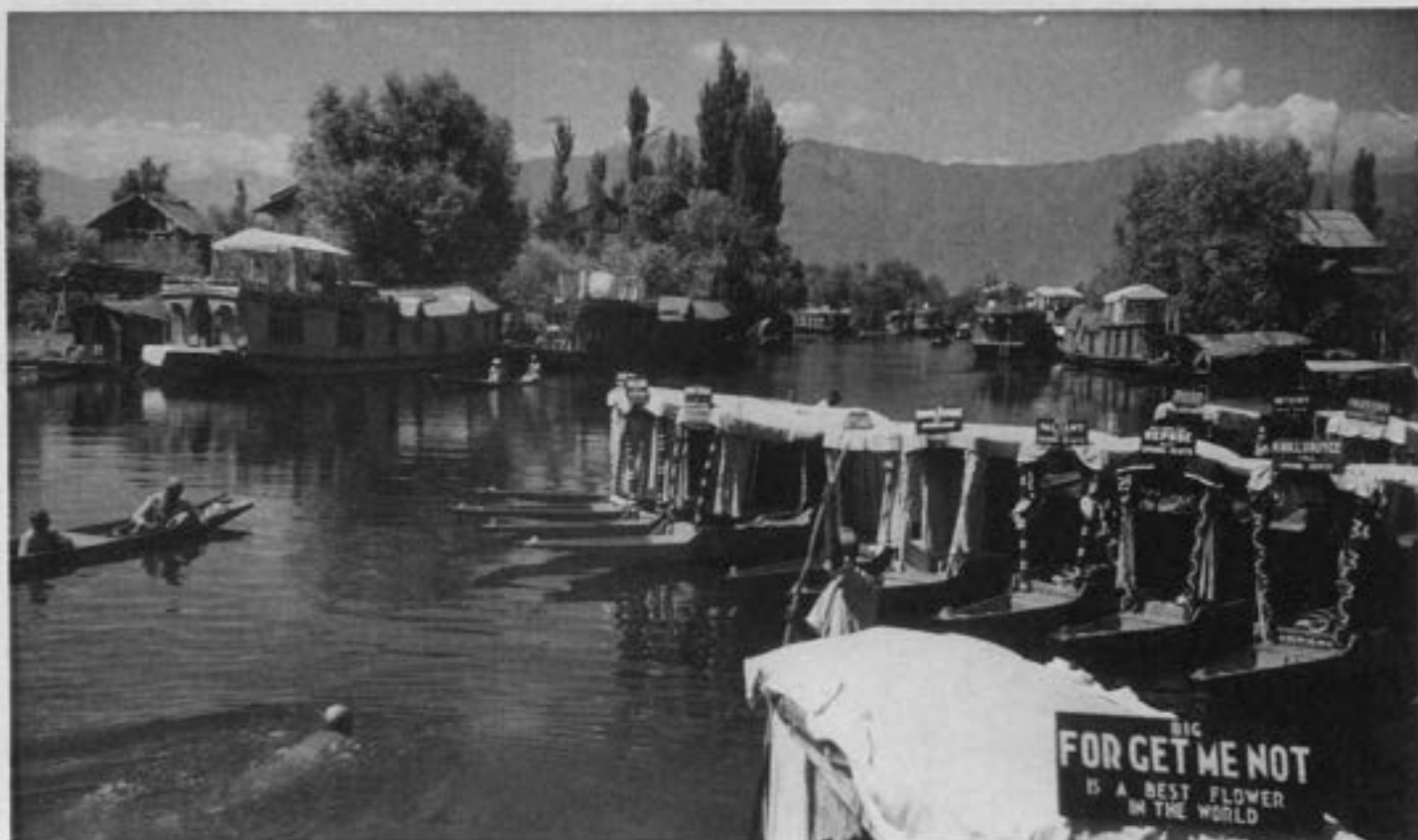
Today we went for a swim on Nageen Bagh (Naz = Lake, Bagh = Garden). It was a wonderful afternoon, beautiful weather, fleecy white clouds and blue sky. We took a shikara down the canal and into the lake and reached a houseboat specially set out for bathing with a changing room deck to sun yourself. The picture shows the scene. There is someone sunbathing on the top deck. In the background you can see the houseboats like Noah's Arks moored all-round the lake, the beautiful green shade with poplars and other trees, the little hill with the temple and the other with the fort and behind them the Himalayas. The weather was beautifully warm and you could go in again and again and never catch cold. We hope to have three days in Srinagar on the way home. Tomorrow Fresh Fields and Pastures New.

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The first photograph (*on the next page*) shows the Dal Gate – Srinagar. So called because it is the beginning to the canal which leads to the Del Lake. I was wrong when I said there are several lakes in Srinagar. There is only one, the Dal lake but it is rather cut into one large lake and several lakelets by headlands, vegetation and islands. And Nageen Bagh where we bathed is one such partly cut off part of Del Lake. You can see the Poplars and the high hills in the distance. Along the banks of the canal are moored the houseboats on which the Sahibs from India live for their holidays. The shikaras are moored waiting your custom. You see here the front end with cushion and canopy. The rowers sit behind. Look at the flamboyant names "Big Forget me not is best flower in the World", "R. Rolls Royce – Full Spring Seats", "Repose", "The Valiant", "Telescope" and "Hot Stuff" all with Full Spring Seats. The hire (much inflated because of the war) would be R.4 (6 shillings) for four river motive power for 4 hours.

The second picture (*on the next page*) "look at me swimming" is Nageen Bagh. The nearby boat is the special bathing boat. You can see some bathers having tea on the top deck. You can see some more houseboats moored to the bank, more poplars and mountains. The sky is blue, the hills are green and the water clear and warm.- (one should not, I feel, speculate on how the sweepers dispose of the contents of the chamber pots etc. on these houseboats)

It would surely be an ideal lazy holiday, if you had a large and friendly party, to spend it in a houseboat on Nageem.- But not in August, Srinagar is just then a shade too hot and the all year round European residents have departed for Gulmarg for the "hot weather" .



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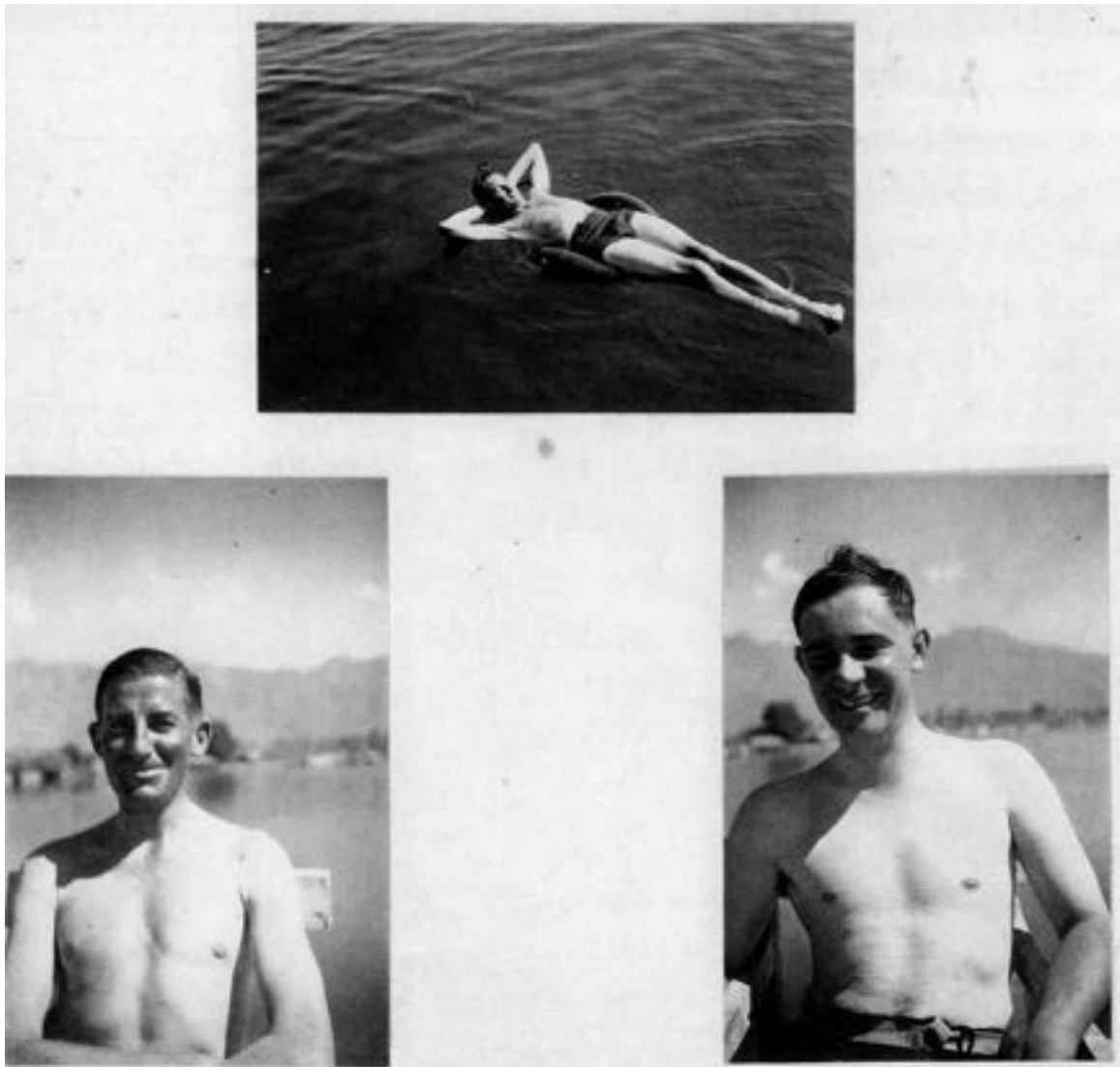


This is a shikara. Not the large type with several rowers behind that ply for European custom but a private one belonging to the Kashmiri gentleman you see under the canopy. But the arrangement is the same. The heart shaped paddle, is supposed to be characteristic of Kashmir.

The small photographs opposite are Jonah and I bathing on Nageem. Do you see the bathers on the surfboard towed by a motor boat in the background of the top two photos. Very difficult to stay on long enough to have your money's worth so there were one or two experts. Jonah and I did not venture.

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4th of August 1943. A camp near Kangan Sind Valley

The track is started and we are now encamped near Kangan in the Sind valley. We came by bus (our own bus for R30) to a place called Wayul Bridge. The party then consisting of self, Jonah, a cook-sirdar who is our guide, cook and general foreman and chief negotiator. I did my best to remember his name which is in Kashmiri and is unpronounceable and it is something like "I since your" or "sez you" but I can't quite remember the pronunciation now. He speaks quite a lot of English which is a good thing. There was also the coolie who is odd job man and general labourer. There was a good deal of baggage mostly hired camp furniture and Jonah and I have as suitcase and bedding roll each. You will know what there is when I describe the camp. Also food; Bags of flour, 2 live hens, a wooden meat safe with about half a lamb in it (lamb chops tonight) lots of tinned things though we've decided that we've not brought enough jam and we ought to have brought a jar to put the butter in, after the tin had been opened.

At Wayul Bridge the ponies were engaged and after a lot of shouting, bargaining and prolonged negotiating all was arranged. We pay R1 for pony per day (equals one shilling and six pence) this includes the hire of the pony man, all his food and fodder for the pony on journey. It is just twice what the hire was last year as they've heard and taken advantage of the war in Kashmir also. Ponies were loaded and the cavalcade set off. I will describe it and then this will do for the rest of the trip. Ahead Sahib Jonah and Doctor Sahib. Sahib Jonah is wearing white tennis shirt flannels and large

brimmed floppy hat of pork-pie type bought in Srinagar. Doctor Sahib is wearing stockings shorts and bush shirt without starch which looks floppy and most unmilitary and has no badge of rank and floppy felt hat bought in Srinagar of cowboy type slightly too small but it shades the back of head and is most comfortable.

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The start of the trek. You can see the bus which brought us to Wayul Bridge. The piles of baggage. The negotiations for the ponies are in progress I am in the middle of the pool of the parliament but you cannot see me. Jonah who has a habit of leaving arrangement making to others, though retaining full freedom to criticise afterwards, remains aloof and took the photograph.

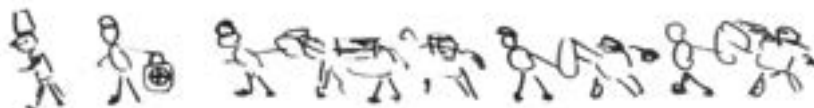


*Under left photo "Here is me to show my hat, the stick belongs to Jonah"*

*Under the right photo "Here are the ponies. The nearest one has two bedding rolls and the meat safe. The next to the left has our suitcases. You can also see some of the tent poles."*

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Then behind march at about 50 yards distance cook sirdar ??, coolie carrying medical haversack with first aid kit (this from regimental medical stores resplendent with Red Cross), 3 pony men and seven baggage ponies





Now you know how we shall arrange walking tours when I get home

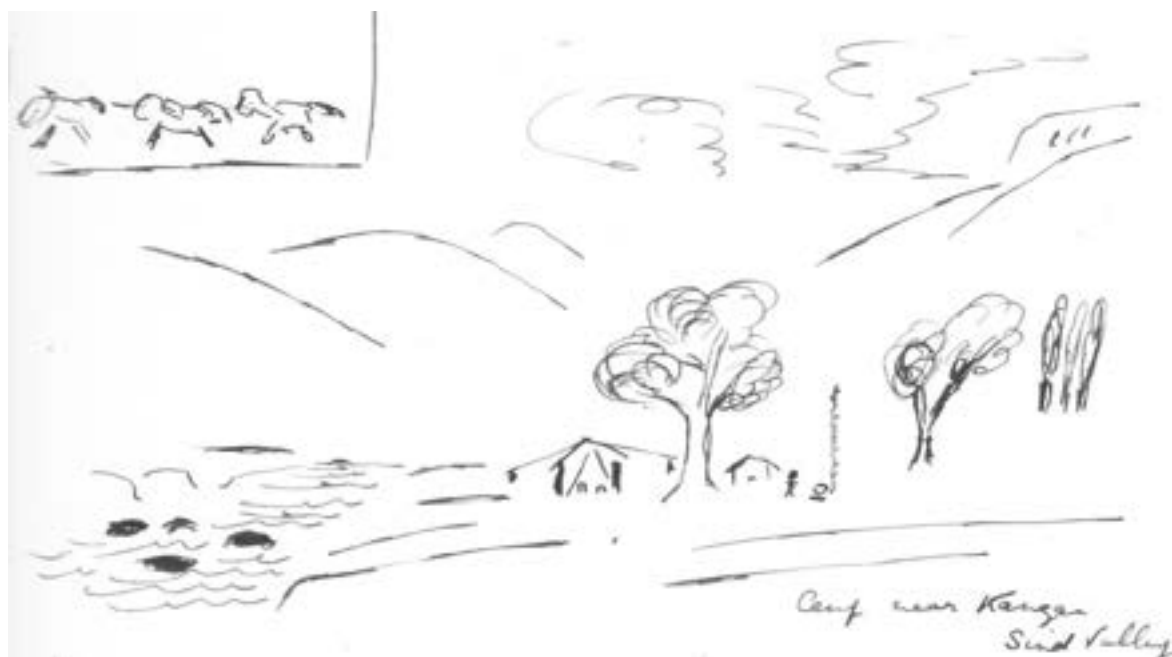
7 miles march to the first halting place above Kangan. It is a lovely sunny meadow with big English looking trees, then a stream quite wide but rushing like a torrent and tree clad hill slopes on either side of the valley. The hills go up to 13,000 feet but you would not think so from here. Up the valley we can just see some higher hills with streaks of snow on the tops. Now I'll describe the camp.

There's a very roomy tent for Jonah and I. You can stand up in the middle without hitting the roof and there is even a little alcove for washing. Two very solid beds that take to

pieces, table, we decided not to bring chairs, another tent for the rest of the party, wash stand, ewer and numerous cooking pots, crockery etcetera. And don't forget the meat save. The men have built a fire, there is plenty of wood about and our lamb chops are being cooked now (and I'm quite hungry). In the meadow our seven ponies are grazing. They are hobbled so that they do not escape, and our two hens are pecking away contentedly at the ground, little knowing the fate that awaits them when we have eaten all the lamb chops and I'm sure decide to put roast chicken on the menu for dinner.



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Lovely sunshine with billowy clouds all day, still a bit hot but nothing like the sweltering plains. Have still some prickly heat. Jonah and I bathed in the river, that is we went in and out several times because it was icy cold. After that we sunbathed and I felt very much at peace with the world. There is great physical pleasure in sunbathing xxxxxx home thoughts from abroad.





Jonah and I are wondering how long this sort of rain lasts in these parts because it is the sort of rain that looks as though it could rain for a long long time. We're also wondering how long this tent will remain waterproof if it does go on raining. However I don't think little things like that are worrying us, so far morale is excellent. But we do hope Ahada is a good wet weather cook.

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We don't see how more than a damp sandwich can be expected under these conditions, but we are hoping.

Now that will do for damp Kashmir, I'll finish the page with some more home thoughts from abroad.-

Still Gund, Sind valley

Friday August 6<sup>th</sup>

"Storm with thunder and lightning"

It rained all night and it rained all day. How the guide (hereinafter called Ahada) managed to keep cooking, bake bread and continued to produce hot meals at the appointed hour is a marvel, as marvellous as these mountains. The view disappeared in the clouds and all was wet. The first part of the morning I kept Jonah amused by reading him passages about the deluge (the Bible and guide book are our only literature, or have I said this before).



Then he got restless and insisted we ought to go out for a walk and get some exercise, and on my feeble protest that we should get our clothes wet and be unable to dry them. He said "oh that will be alright, we will only wear a pair of PT shorts and plimsolls". Well, I agreed but let him try the nudist method. I was cold as well as wet and wore my Burberry buttoned up to the neck and my largest pair of boots. It was very muddy. As well as wet. And your boots came up at each step with great reluctance and finally parted company with the mud with a tremendous squelch. And it rained all the time. And you could see nothing but wet and wretched Kashmiri cowering under blankets and looking at the two Sahib's. As they passed with a wild....

New Page.

....surmise. Then we came back and Jonah said. "Well anyway, we have an excellent appetite for lunch." - roast mutton. We finished the meal with a wee tot of our own. "purely medicinal", (some Canadian whiskey we carry round because you never know when you go out on these treks). After that having nothing else to do, we got on our own beds and slept an excellent sleep until teatime - "purely medicinal" may have had something to do with this. After that the talk came round to the plagues of Egypt, the tents had been full of flies the night before until the rains came and damped them down, but with the rain came a plague of frogs. So I looked them up and then read the story of Jacob right up to the Brethren, going for ?corn. I think you read the Old Testament with added interest when you've seen. primitive agriculture, people who travel about with flocks and loaded.

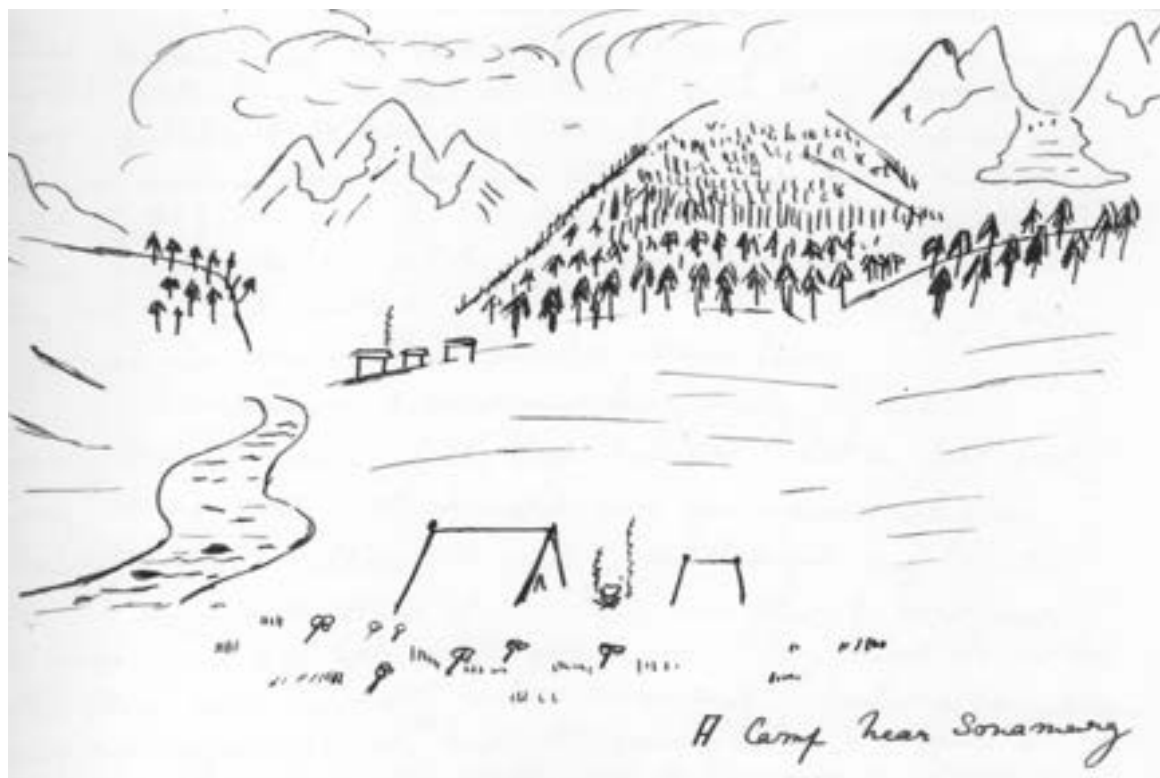
asses. Anyway, today I saw a patriarch who looked just like the picture of Jacob in the illustrated Old Testament for children, which I think mother still has (this may be useful now we have Susan.). The tent did not let in any water throughout 24 hours of rain and at nightfall the rain stopped.

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Saturday morning, when the rain had cleared away. The camp at Gund breakfast time. In a few minutes the camp was struck and we were on our way to Sonamarg.

Do you see the things all opened out in the sun to dry? The picture gives you a good idea of what a fine tent we had. Notice the porch in front and the little alcove at the bank. Here. If you were really Pukka or the company was mixed you would keep the Thunder box or the wash stand. In the foreground you can see the many marks left in the grass by the trenches of previous campers.



Sonamarg Sind Valley. Saturday, August 7th.

Marg = an open space in the mountains: This is one of the most beautiful places I have ever seen. Lovely morning, just a few white clouds and the sun appearing at 8:00 o'clock. Started on the walk from Gund to Sonamarg. At first the valley became more shut in and we were walking in quite a narrow gorge with steep pine slopes and rocks rising to a height of 15,000 ft on each side. Then quite suddenly the valley opened right out to a broad wide meadow about a couple of miles across surrounded by high and shapely peaks. This was Sonamarg\*. Look at the picture. In the foreground you can see many flowers that grow here in the meadow. I wish you could have been here because I am sure you could have identified them. The valleys of Kashmir are famous for the many English flowers you find there. The whole meadow was dotted blue with forget me nots, but there were a lot of others. Jonah found some wild strawberries. Then round the marg were fine slopes and then the first really good view we had of the peaks.

New Page

These peaks go up to 16,000 and 17,000 feet, which is higher than the Matterhorn. But at this time of year there is not much snow. Patches of it here and there, but we could see great glaciers coming down between the two high peaks on the right of the picture. On the way up to Sonamarg, we came across dirty patches of snow that were so thick they had not yet melted. So here in India in August, in high summer were snow patches at our feet.

Sonamarg\* is 8600 feet. And has a lovely climate. Bracing breezes, warm in the sun, but not hot. In fact, just lovely. It was quite cold at night and you needed all your blankets and a pullover. I wish I had brought my thick woollen pyjamas instead of the thin one that I don't wear because it's too hot in the plains. They tried to make this place into a health resort once and built a sanatorium and an English church. But the idea failed. I suppose it was too far and too difficult to get to here. And there is no trace of them now. There are a few Kashmir houses and a post office. Mail goes by runner. And on my way down, I'm going to try to send you an airmail letter card. To finish, Sonamarg is 50 miles from Srinagar and 27 miles from Wayul Bridge where we began our trek.

Note. Speaking of the past glories of the health resort, our dry as dust guide books said "the villagers will point out the ruins of the old church". Jonas seemed to expect some villagers to come forward and do so and seemed quite disappointed when this did not happen. You will remember how the guide book was the only alternative to the Bible, we got to know it quite well and certain phrases stuck in our minds and could be answered as a catechism long afterwards.

Q. What will the villagers of Sonamarg do for the traveller?

A. they will point out the ruins of the old church.

Q. What must ladies in jumpers be prepared to do?....

New Page

....A. Ladies and jumpers must be prepared to walk!

Q. What must we do when crossing the Yamahair pass

A. Give Rassad to all.

The book did not explain what a jampan was nor the meaning of rassad but we rather concluded that the first was a sort of sedan chair and the rassad was tips or extra wages.

Later we saw a lady riding in what we felt sure was a jampan and we looked at her wisely, knowing that should she wish to cross the higher passes she must be prepared to walk



Here is Jonah, soon after we left Gund. Though it has stopped raining he still likes walking without a shirt. Look at the mud on his boots, relic of yesterday's great squelch



Here is a Kashmir village between Gund and Sonamarg

New Page

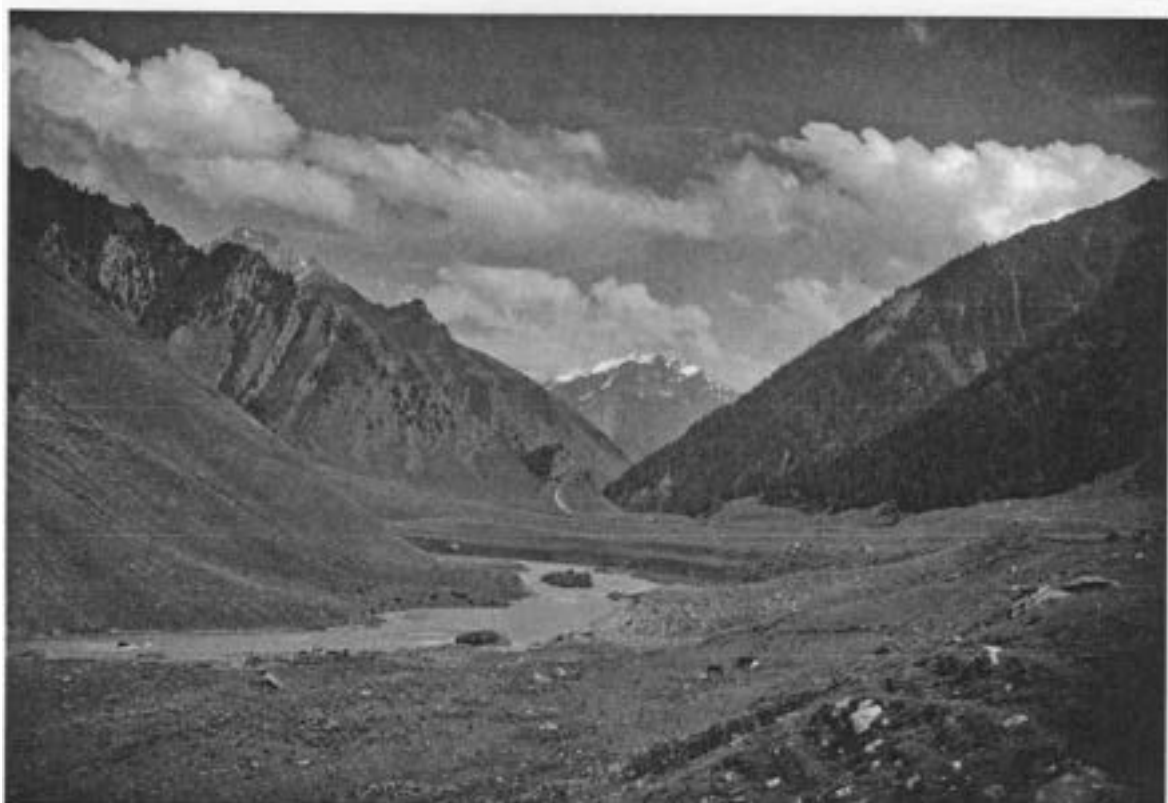


Previous Page:

Pictures in the gorge between Gund and Sonamarg - the logs you can see in the river, top right, have been cut down and dropped into the Sind on purpose. They will float down with the Jehlum and so through the great gorge by which we entered Kashmir to the plains of the Punjab. All the time you could see timber floating down on its way to British India.

Pictures below:

1. Mountains above Sonamarg glacier can be seen
2. Sonamarg- looking in the same direction as this drawing (bottom right) towards Baltal



New Page

### A camp near Baltal, Sind valley

August 8th Sunday

A short March today, 9 miles to Baltal which is the end of the Sind valley and further, then we shall pitch our tent. Now we are 9000 feet high. From here the road winds up the hillside to Zagi La. (La is the Tibet name for a pass). At the Zagi La the road leaves Kashmir proper and enters the province of Ladakh. About Ladakh the guide book says that there are hundreds of miles of it mostly very high hills and barren valleys. It is known as "little Tibet" and although in the political boundaries of Kashmir state is Tibetan in character. This road crosses the Zagi La to Leh capital of Ladak and 180 miles away. From Leh you can go onto Tibet China or Yarkand\*. (I don't know where Yarkand is, will look it up on the Atlas when I return, I think it is near Russia, and next door to that even more romantic sounding place Samarkand)

Tomorrow will walk to Zoji La and there stop. I have put in all these details to show you what a romantic and adventurous road this is. I wish we were going on further we are obviously higher up, for one thing it is colder and all the English looking deciduous trees of lower down the valley have given place to fir trees and even the fir and pine do not extend as high above us on the mountainside as they did and tomorrow at Zog La we shall be above the tree line. There are lots and lots of flowers. Forget me not, Columbine and buttercups and things that look like sunflowers. It's quite cold out of the sun and I'm wearing your beautiful and still as good as ever, long sleeved ? pullover- One other thing, something new coming along the road; animals looking like altered oxen laden with baggage. Ahada said they were Zo, a relative to the yak, a universal beast of burden in Tibet (so now you see where we are getting to) I took a photograph.

New Page



Camp near Baltal Sind Valley You can see the road winding up from the left to reach Zoji La somewhere near the point X

Of Zoji La the book says, in summer there is a fine made road which contours up the mountainside but in winter this is impossible and the traveller must struggle straight up the defile where the river runs. The passage must be made quickly and in the dark for fear of The Avalanches which thunder down the mount after the sun has got up.



And here is the photograph of the Zo's



New Page







Previous Page, Above. Here is the caravan of zos bringing the merchandise of Tibet to Srinagar

Previous Page Below Scene near Baltal



This page, above. The camp at Baltal. You are looking towards Sonamarg. The man standing up is Ahada. Three of the pony men are sitting in front of their tent.

This page, Upper small photo. Road to Zoji La from Baltal. This is roughly the same view that I have drawn. You can see the road on the slope on the left. Zoji is below the ?? in the centre.



This page, Lower small photo. The Sind river not far from Sonamarg on the way to Baltal.

New Page

A Camp near Baltal Sind valley Monday August 9<sup>th</sup>

Today Jonah and I walked up the Zoji La pass to Ladakh Tibet China and Yarkand \*(I must find out where Yarkand is). It has been the best day yet. And now if it rains for the whole of the rest of the tour (which I devoutly hope it won't) all the money we have spent in coming here is worthwhile. The weather has been perfect sunshine all day with high white clouds which just caught now and again the tops of the highest mountains. I do not think the description of the day will be a success because I seem to have used up already all the superlatives and you must be tired by this time of the adjectives marvellous and wonderful as applied to scenery. I was wrong about the height of Zoji La in yesterday's letter, the figure came from the guide book and was qualified by the word about. Our survey map of India marks it as 11,578 feet

Started about nine up the road to the pass. This road, which is for summer use only, climbs steadily high up on the side of the valley.

Looking back there were wonderful views down the Sind Valley (there's that word wonderful again, but I can't help it). Immediately below was the gorge also leading up to the pass, and this is the way the traffic toils up in winter time when our path has disappeared under snow. The disadvantage being that this way you have a hell of a climb up to the pass in the last mile and a half instead of the steadily graded five mile of the summer route.

Near the summit of the pass we crossed the river by a snow bridge. I will try and give you an idea of the nature of a snow bridge. All the side valleys here above 10,000 feet are filled with snow and the stream running down them tunnels under the snow.



Looking back over Sind Valley- Zoji La



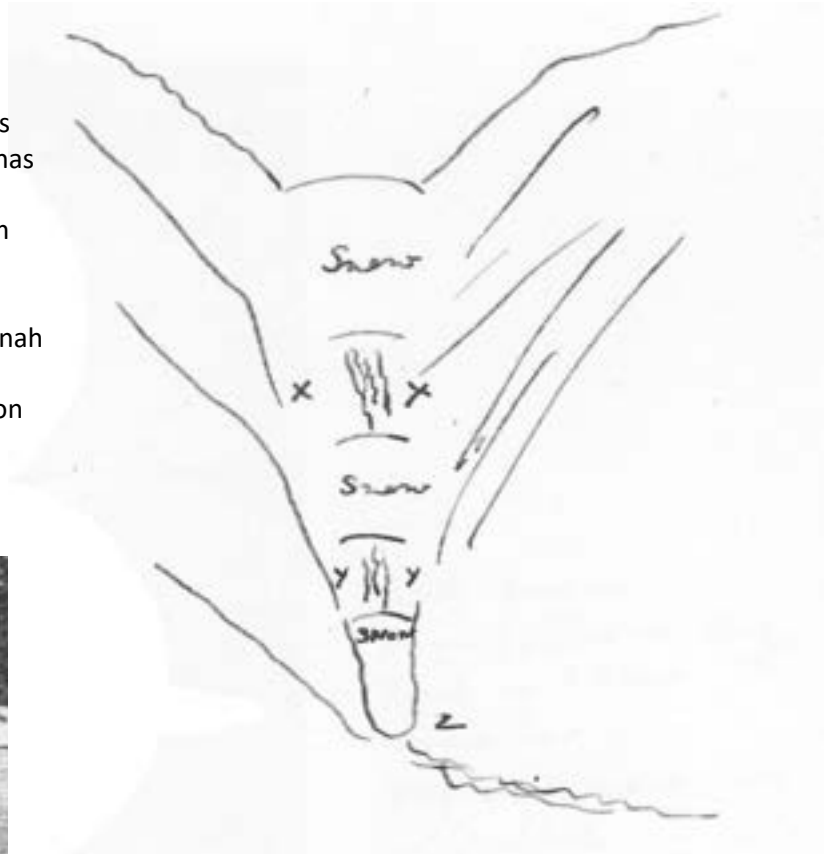
Civil engineering - a cutting through rock Zoji La

## New Page

The drawing shows a side valley in August. It is nearly full of snow but at xx and yy the snow has gone and the stream appears from under the snow at z, the end of the snow and the stream makes its appearance for good.

There are two photographs below, you see Jonah crossing the snow bridge, and Jonah and I in a posed effect taken with a self timer seated on our first really good bit of Indian snow.

2 small photographs



New Page



And here is a snow filled valley such as I have described. The local word here is Nullah

The top of the pass was broad open meadow grass with patches of snow here and there, though there was plenty of snow to be seen in the nullahs on the hillsides. Coming up we had gradually come above the trees and on the top there were no trees as the place is well above the tree line. The highest growing tree of all (by this I mean snow in the highest places) was the silver birch, strange this, I would have thought it would be pine or firs.

New Page.



"The last of the trees- silver Birch, high up on Zoji La.



Traveller on the Zoji La"

But it was a warm cheerful place and there was an encampment of shepherds and many sheep. It must be a very different place in winter when the book talks about people rushing across the pass before day break in order to avoid the rock falls and avalanches which the melting of the snow by the morning sun will bring. You could tell you were on a trade route because we passed many cavalcades with laden ponies and zos. The meadow was carpeted with flowers. Forget me nots still very plentiful and lots of different Alpine flowers which we had not seen before. And I'm sure at the very highest level I found an edelweiss\*, because it looked just like the pictures I have seen and grew only at the highest places. And I know that there is a Himalayan variety of edelweiss growing in these parts. Anyway I have collected some and it is pressing in the middle of Zachariah in my Holy Bible and I hope to be able to send you some.



New Page

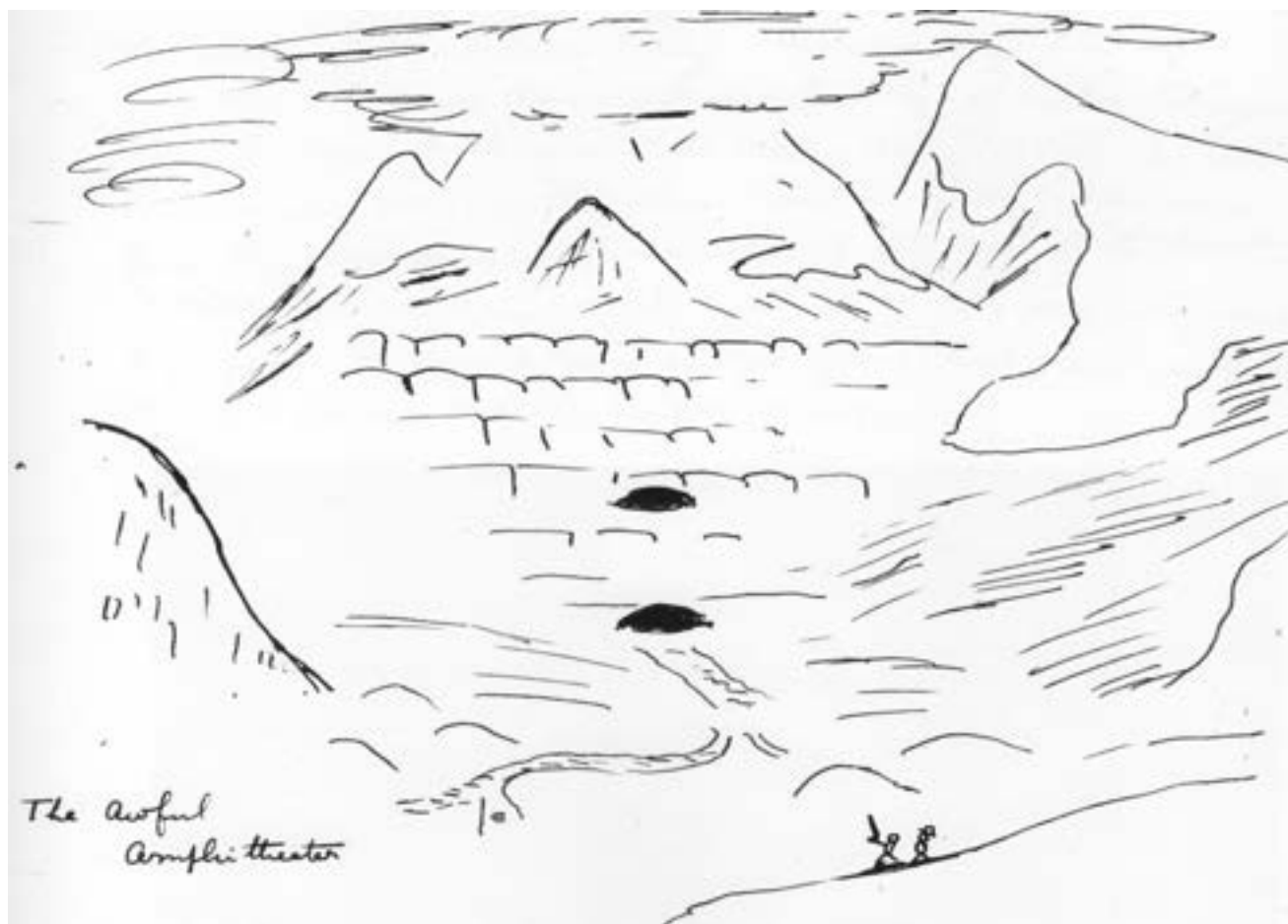


The summit of Zoji La

As you can see, the scenes were truly pastoral



New Page



### The awful Amphitheatre

After some time we scrambled up a side nullah, full another 1000 feet, so our highest yet, must be something round about 12,600 feet. This was most exciting and we soon found ourselves walking on snow and presently after about 1000 feet reached a weird desolate amphitheatre in the mountains. It was filled with the terminal moraine heaps of a huge glacier which was just in front coming down from a real snow mountain which the map placed about 17,000 feet high. The picture shows the scene. You can see 2 snow covered mountains on the terraces of the glacier. There are two ice caves and from the lower one the stream is issuing. You can see the moraine heaps and Jonah is standing on a snow patch indicating the view with his stick.

So down to Zoji La and down the road to camp. Ahada the cook had seen us while yet a far off so arriving at camp cups of tea and scones were waiting for us. Tonight there is to be a conference because tomorrow either we go back along the valley to a place between Sonamarg and Gund called Koolan there to camp and then attempt to get the ponies and the whole party over the Yamhair ...

New Page

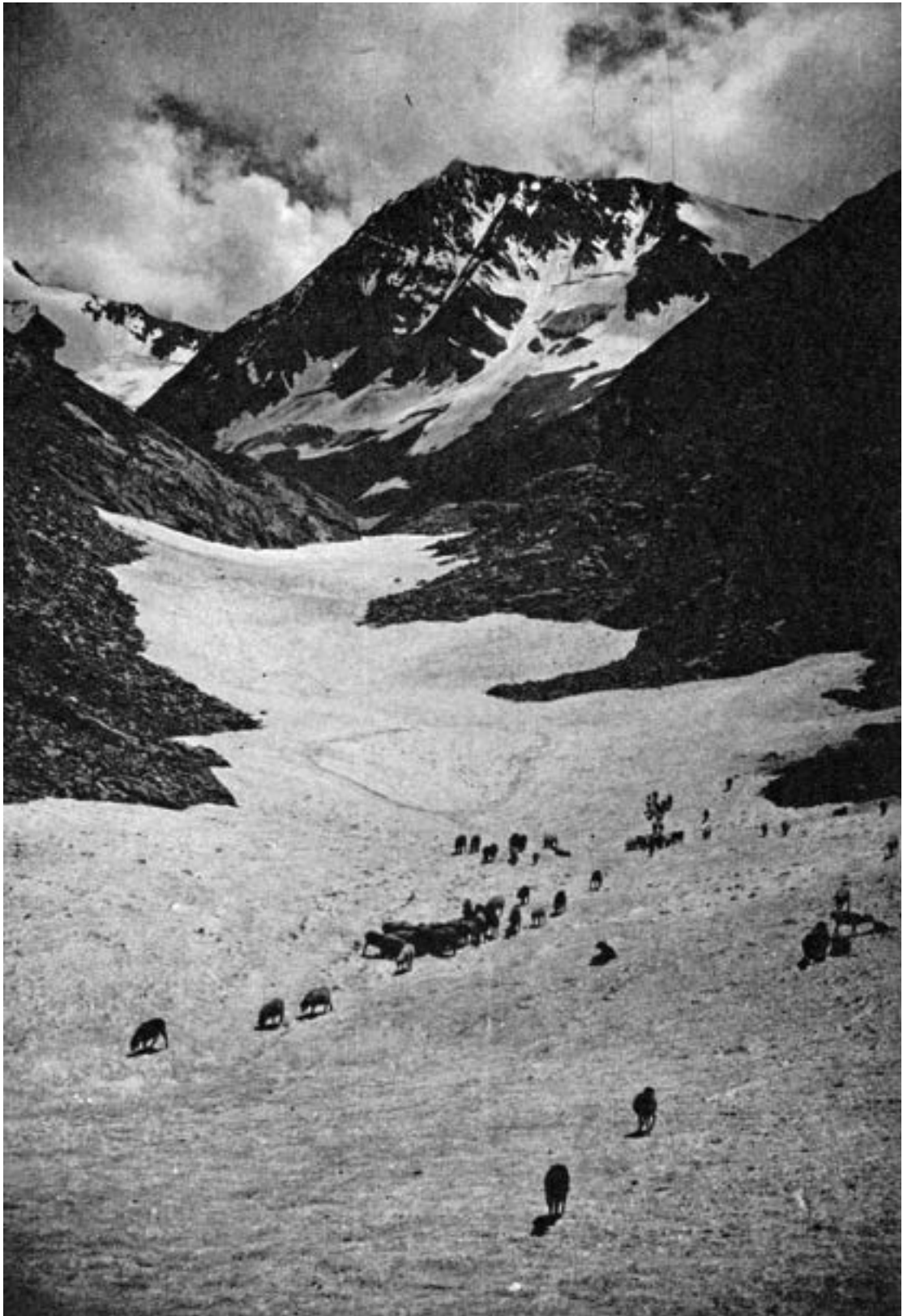
..to Lidarwat Lidder Valley. Disadvantage - this will take some doing and there might be difficulties of motor transport from Pahalgam at the mouth of the Lidder Valley. to take us back to Srinagar because the place will be full of pilgrims from the sacred cave Aramath at the head of the East Lidder, , as we turn roughly north at Sonarmarg over some high passes to visit a lake called Gangahal, and so back to Wayul Bridge to take bus for Srinagar.



"The picture above is taken back from the entrance to the awful Amphitheatre and the small one on the left is the Amphitheatre itself- not too awful in a photograph as in the drawing but photographs often give a poor representation of the awfulness of mountain scenery



New Page



The valley, leading up towards the awful Amphitheatre about above Zoji La. The mountain looks very like Snowden as seen from ?.

New Page

A camp on an upland Meadow above Koolan Sind valley

Wednesday August 11<sup>th</sup>

You will notice that I wrote nothing yesterday. There was very little to record, we return down the valley to Koolan which is between Gund and Sonermarg, 4 miles from Gund. Passing Sonermarg I posted an airmail letter card to you. It seemed unbelievable that a letter posted in this remote place could ever reach England. It starts its journey on foot by mail runner.- The day's March was 19 miles but all downhill.

Photograph

"The Camp Above Koolan "

missing

At night a most important conference was held with Ahada - It was decided that ponies could not be taken over the Yamhair. So they were paid off. Ahada has engaged 13 coolies who will carry all our baggage over to Pahalgam. We have contracted with him for a lump sum of ₹80 which is an exorbitant price by any anything but war standards though considering that the pass is a climb of 7000 feet to 14,000 feet and the march 15 miles and the baggage much and heavy, considering that no food or shelter will be provided on the way, to my secret English small town mind, it seems very cheap (10 shillings per man for five days of hardest work and by the time Ahada and the coolie boss have had their cuts it will probably be even less than this.)

We started off this morning in rain, and we have had rain most of the day. Most of the way has been through pine forest which dripped water in a manner most reminiscent of the Walking tour Richard and I took in the Harz Mountains in 1936. At the top of the first pull we sheltered in a log cabin, a rest house on the route and there had speech with two Englishmen, brothers, whom we had passed the time of day with the day before. They are also on the way to Lidarwat.

New Page

They have come from Gurais, further north than the Sind valley and away from Srinagar three weeks. They wanted news of the war but ours was a week old. We parted company as they left for Yamhair. We are to use a variant on this route as having now no ponies we are not tied to the easiest route.

Soon after we had camped here, I held a sick parade. Apparently it is the custom when the Burra Sahib passes in these remote districts to bring out the sick to see if he would help. Any Burra Sahib will do, the visitation had nothing to do with my fame as a physician spreading even to Kashmir. The cases were all various kinds of septic sores. The treatment was simple. You will remember the medicinal haversack complete with Red Cross which the coolie carried at the start of the trek. Well most of its contents have by now either dropped out or become so soaked with rain as to be useless. There remains a bottle of Milton. This we rationed out to our sick in various dilutions into jars and pots which were produced. According to the paper that comes with a bottle of Milton it will cure many things and has 1000 uses. So no doubt the inhabitants of Over Koolan will bless the passing of the white man.

The picture (not a good one as it was raining and I was precariously balanced) show three of the coolies crossing a bridge on the start of the route up to the Yamhair Pass. This "bridge" is one the obstacles that make it impossible to cross the paths with ponies.

Photograph

missing

New Page

#### A Camp near Kolahoi Glacier- Lidder Valley

Thursday Aug 12

Today we crossed the pass into the Lidder valley. We didn't cross by the Yamhair as Ahada said that as we have not taken ponies we might as well cross by another pass he knew. That would take us down into the Lidder valley higher up and nearer to the Kolahoi glacier\* which we wish to see, than would the Yamhair. The Yamhair is 13,400 feet high, this one which he calls the Gumbar Pass was 14,000 feet

Well we set off about 9:00 and soon found ourselves climbing a dreadful steep snow slope which seemed to go on and on and on. It was about as steep as that climb you and I did from Backhead onto Gable. You had to watch where you put every step or else you slipped. And another trouble appeared, after about 10,000 feet you became very breathless on exertion and Jonah and I found we could do about 10 steps and then would have to pause for breath. After a long time on snow we came onto scree and after what seemed an age we reached the top. A most satisfactory top too. No up and down and then up again but just straight up to the top and then down again. I'll say something about the view from the top

New Page

Considering what it might have been this was most disappointing. It had been one of these fine days, but fine with plenty of clouds and all the tops were hidden. Where we were, we were not often in mist and the sun would keep coming out and going in again. Sometimes you would look down upon a sea of cloud, sometimes you would see this mountain or that in a suddenly appearing tunnel in the mist. The views were wonderful but Ahada said that on a clear day you could imagine you could see all India

from this pass with Nanga Parbat\*, one of the Himalayan giants, appearing above all the lower heights. We are quite near Nanga Parbat (about 50 miles) but you cannot see him except from the heights because he is shut off by these lower hills.- Still it was magnificent day and you cannot have everything in one holiday.

The climb up to the pass and the breathlessness that came with it is I'm sure the hardest pull up a hill I've ever done. Jonah and I felt we just made it. Now note this. Following us and reaching the top just as successfully were those 14 coolies with all our luggage. I would not have believed it possible yet they seem to make no great thing of it. Imagine lugging my valise (one coolie load consists of four blankets, my Burberry, a pair of heavy boots and a pair of shoes) from 10,000 to 14,000 feet up a steep snow slope where Jonah and I were slipping without loads- Shows what training for a particular job will do. While on the subject of coolies who are all the natives of these valleys, it was interesting to notice what a high population of them had goitres. One in particular had a large goitre. I've read about the high incidence of goitres among the natives of the Upper Indus



Morning on the hills from the camp above Koolan

Photograph missing

Start of the march to cross the Gumbar Pass. Jonah in white shirts on the extreme left. Ahada next to him



The coolies crossing the Gumbar Pass

valley and we are not far from there. The same thing occurs in the Alps and the Derbyshire hills (Derbyshire neck). It is said to be due to lack of iodine in the soil and drinking water.\*

The...

New Page

....thyroid gland needs iodine in order to manufacture its active principle and when this is deficient it becomes enlarged in a vain attempt to make bricks without straw.

At the top we waited for about 3/4 of an hour for the coolies to catch up and ate our own lunch, mutton sandwich, hardboiled egg, sardines, apples and pears. The guide pointed out a far shape looking as if it were a cat very far away. It appeared for a moment on a patch of snow and was gone. The guide assured us that it was a leopard and that he was after sheep.

Coming down was sweetness and rest. We walked for a long time down a valley that I would like to call the valley of marmots for we saw a number of these strange creatures. The marmot is a strange animal, it looks rather like a seal and is about the size of a small one. the fur is yellowish brown.\* They had a most engaging habit of sitting up on their hind legs on a boulder as if begging and made a most peculiar whistling noise. They're trapped for their fur- I have often heard about marmots because you prove some most important points in experiment Physiology (I quite forget what the point is) by reference to the habits of the hibernating marmot. But nobody ever told you what a marmot was, or where you could find one. - Now I know. They always seemed to be sitting on rocks so that is the way I have drawn one.- In the sky we saw an eagle- a most zoological day.



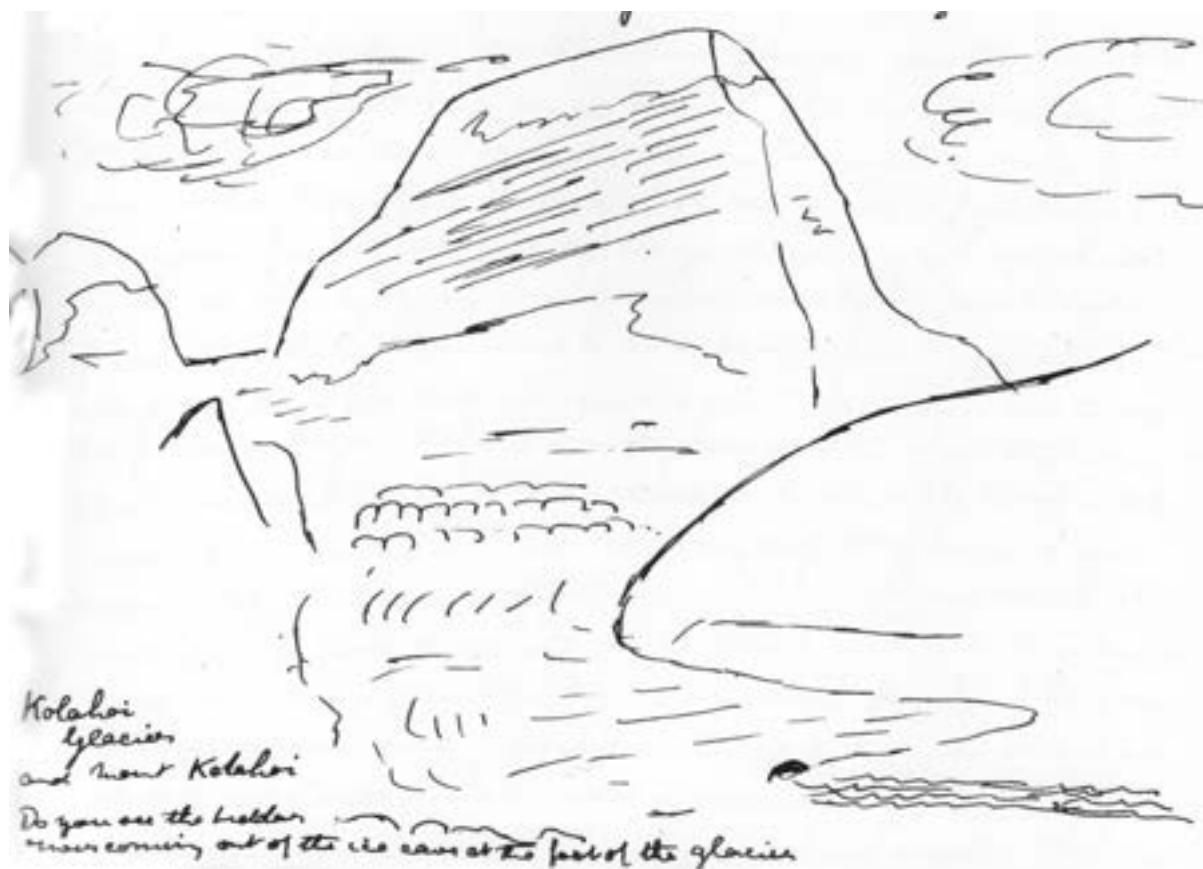
Ahada has been most excellent these last four days. Engaged the coolies, bosses them about and keeps them happy. Fed us over the pass without a moments hesitation as to the way, and there was no path to be seen. We finished the long ....

New Page

.....day much later than usual, about 6:00 in the evening. At once while Jonah and I rested he was setting up his cooking fire. By 6:45 afternoon tea and scones had appeared. By 8:00 o'clock supper, tomato soup, chicken stew with carrots and cabbage, apple fritters and coffee. Chicken now features a lot in the daily menu because we carry them round alive (they are quite comfortable and peck most contentedly at the ground when we camp) and it is a very good way of keeping the meat course fresh.

We are now encamped in the Lidder Valley, in the West Branch high up near the termination. It is getting wild here and there are few trees. Tomorrow Jonah and I follow up the last few miles of the valley to its termination at the Kolahoi Glacier. We view the famous glacier. Then we trek down the

Lidder to Pahalgam where on Wednesday next we hope to meet again the two English acquaintances of the Yamhair and return by bus to Srinagar.



Kolahoi Glacier and Mount Kolahoi

Do you see the Little River out of the ice cave at the foot of the glacier?

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#### A camp at Lidarwat Lidder valley

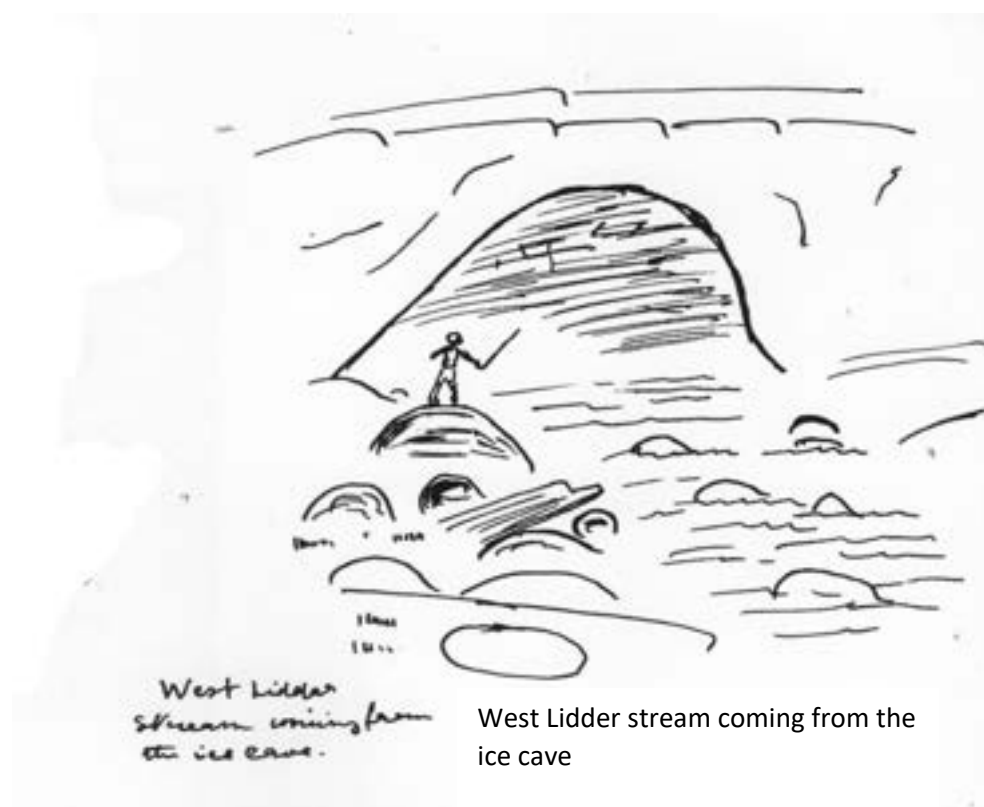
Saturday August 14<sup>th</sup> (Happy Birthday)

There are two days to be told because I wrote no chronicle last night. Yesterday was one of these double star days, a visit to Kolahoi Glacier. Lovely weather, blue sky, sunshine and a little high cloud which added to, and did not obscure the view. Jonah and I carried out the trip alone returning to camp at night. The glacier is dominated by Mount Kolahoi ( 17,500 feet). This is a magnificent rock pyramid not unlike the Matterhorn\*. We first climbed well up at the opposite side of the valley to get a general view; another of these puffy climbs which took us up to 12,500 feet. The view, which I have drawn, was the most magnificent single view that we have had on this trip. You can see in the picture the rocky pyramid capped with snow and below the long sweep of the glacier. Halfway up the glacier are huge ice cliffs. At the bottom you can see the West Lidder river issuing forth from an ice cave. Then we descended out of the glacier, and walked on the ice for quite a mile. In some lights the surface of the glacier was quite a pink colour. We were finally stopped by large crevasses, huge chasms in the ice and by quite unclimbable ice cliffs. Jonah had a fixed idea that there would be a magnificent view across the ice above the cliffs and we spent the most strenuous two and a half hours trying to find a way round them but this was quite impossible. Then a descent to view the West Lidder issuing from the ice cave at the snout of the glacier. I was reminded of the source of the Aire at Malham Cove (why can't you be here to see all these things with me it would have been twice no 10 times as much fun). I have never walked over so many boulders, large and small stones,

as we did yesterday. It is characteristic of glaciers to litter the place with boulders great and small. This...

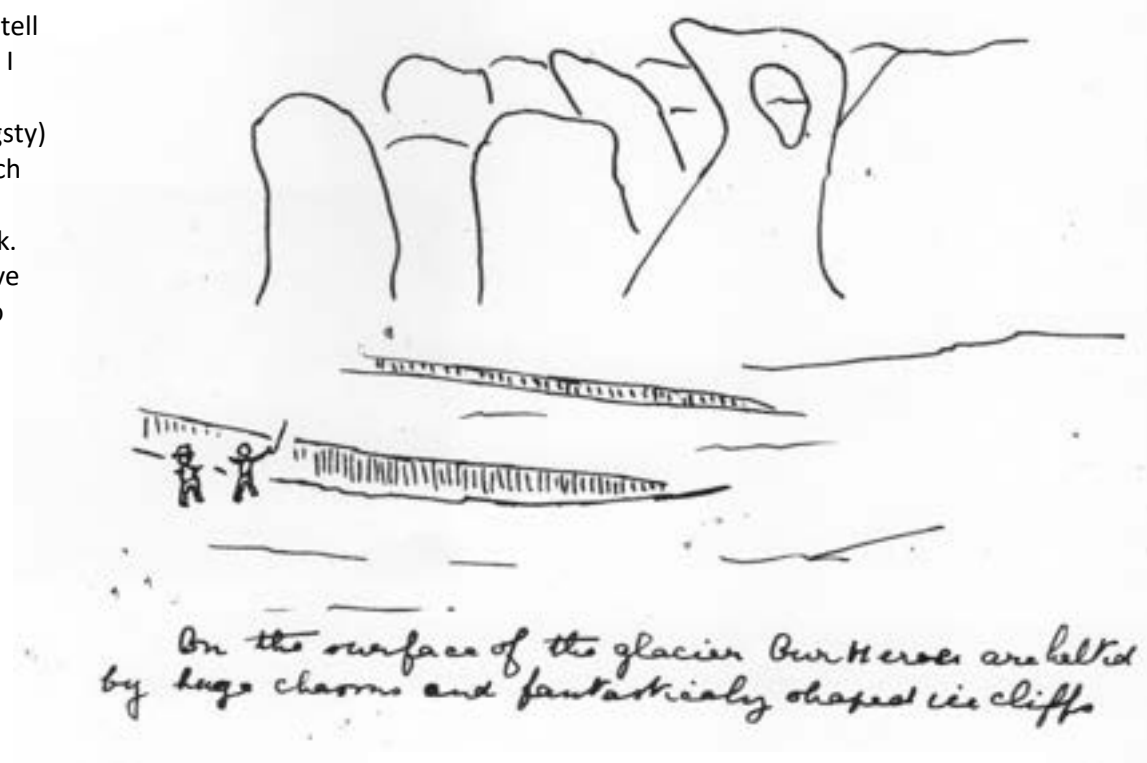
New Page

....one proved no exception. By the end of the day our knees were sore from being jolted about from rock to rock. And we hated the sight of boulders. And because this is Kashmir all among the boulders grew the most beautiful flowers.



West Lidder stream coming from the ice cave

Note on the illustrations. In all the illustrations you can tell which is me because I have a hat on. (like father in the pigsty) and you can tell which is Jonah because he brandishes a stick. The next 4 pages have photographs with no titles



On the surface of a glacier our heroes are halted by huge chasms and fantastically shaped ice cliffs.

New Page









Today we started for Srinagar. That is, today we started to descend the West Lidder Valley. It is very beautiful and on a smaller scale and wider than most of the Sind valley. A seven mile march brought us by midday to Lidarwat. The tent was in position just in time, and it is now 9:00 o'clock and we are inside watching the rain and writing letters. I can see an extensive study of Holy Scripture is about to be made by me. Jonah has only the Kodak magazine which he has read, and the guide to Kashmir which is badly written and very poor literature. I think we may presently play "hanging".

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#### A Camp at Aru- Lidder Valley

Monday August 16<sup>th</sup>

The sun has deserted us these three days and I wrote no chronicle yesterday. Yesterday was spent in camp at Lidarwat; today or rather this morning we walked down to Aru and here we camped at 2:00 o'clock in the afternoon. There is one more short stage tomorrow to Pahalgam and then on Wednesday we get motor transport for a 60 mile run back to Srinagar. Saturday morning we set off back to the unit at Lahore.

My letter ended at two o'clock the day before yesterday when it had started to rain. Well it rained all the afternoon and most of the evening. Jonah and I played hanging and later I read the whole of the story of Samuel, Saul and David (pause while I fetch all the clothes I have drying back into the tent because it looks like rain again.) I think Jonah envies me my Bible these wet days. In the evening we went for a stroll and came once more on the two Englishmen whom we mention met on the Yamhair Pass and had arranged to travel back with. They gave us a cup of tea and later came back to our tent where we finished the "purely medicinal". They are brothers, called Lindley. One is an officer in the Indian Army Mountain Artillery and the other a civilian, a chemist in the Anglo Persian Oil Company at Abadan on the Persian Gulf. They had met for leave, for the first time for several years. Very pleasant company. (yes, it is raining again.) We confirmed the arrangement about transport and are to meet in Pahalgam. They will hire the bus as they are now a days March ahead of us. Yesterday dawned with low clouds and looked very black but Jonah, ever the optimist where ....

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Here is Lidarwatt in one of the moments when it was not raining, and you are looking up towards where we camped near Kolahoi. You can see the Cliff that leads to Kolahoi shutting in the end of the valley. You can see how Lidarwatt is a large open Meadow, though there are lots of rocks strewn around. The centrepiece of these rocks is a large boulder as big as the pine tree which grows beside it and split right through as though some Kashmiri men had been striking water from it. (not that I can imagine anyone being short of water at Lidarwat). You can see the forrest through which we walked to reach Lidarwat from Kolahoi.

.....weather is concerned said it would fine up. So we started to walk up a side valley (it did not matter where you went for you could see nothing for cloud anywhere, and put our lunch in our satchel. One o'clock saw us back in the tent soaked to the skin and the rain pouring down. We spent the rest of the day in the tent, slept most of the afternoon and I read the whole of the gospel of Saint Luke and got quite a way into the Acts

New Page

Today looked better and we struck camp and marched down the valley 7 miles to Aru. Before I leave Lidarwat I would say that, although the rain was there nearly all the time, we saw enough to realise that it is a most beautiful place.

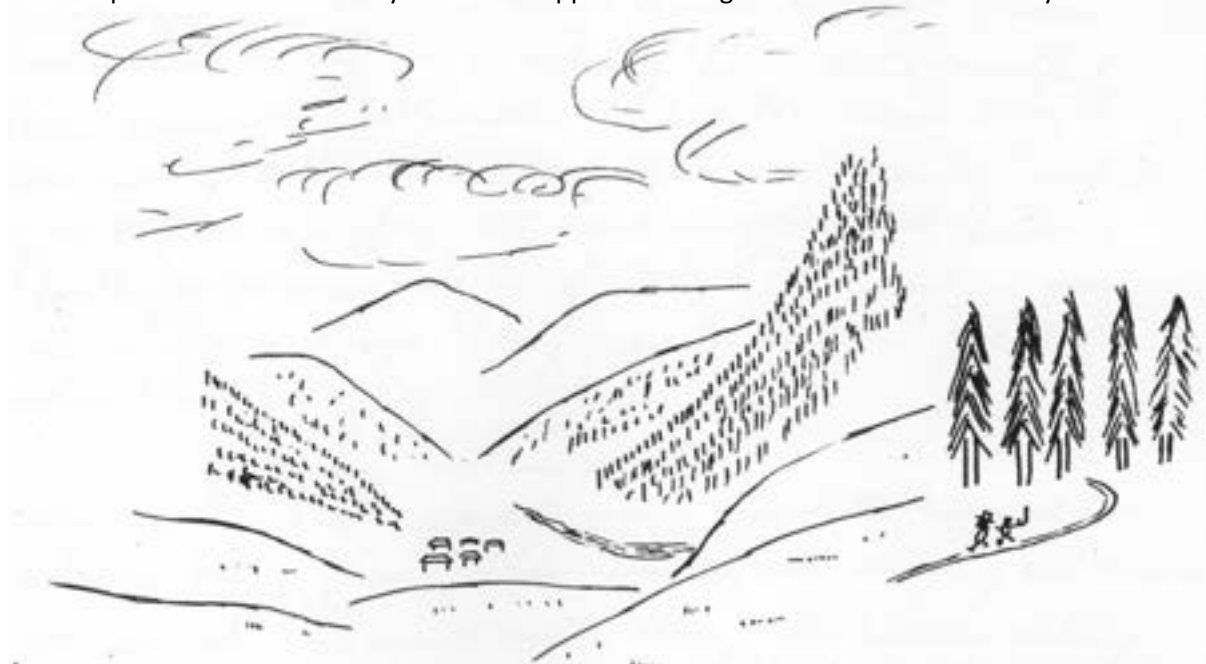
**Large gap on page - photograph missing**

Aru is also very beautiful. It is the junction and meeting of the water. Here joined the West and east Lidder streams. A broadening out of our valley giving an expanse of grassland nearly as broad as at Sonamarg. We have so far, met few others on trek.- one solitary European in fact who said he was the ? of Rawalpindi, two woman women who did not speak and the Lindley's - here however there must be 10 or 12 tents dotted around the marg. People come up here and stay two or three weeks. What a wonderful place to bring children.

We arrived about 1:00 o'clock in sunshine. Today has been sun alternating with rain and there has been enough sun since we came here to sunbathe a little and nearly dry yesterday's wet clothes.

New Page

How sad to say, it's raining again. Because we're getting just a little tired of rain. (It is most fortunate however that these three rainy days have come now when we are ambling slowly home than earlier in the trip and as I have said they have not stopped us seeing how beautiful is this valley.



Here is the view of Aru. Looking down on the village as we came to it this morning. I wonder if you get the idea. We had walked through the forest and here we came upon wide meadowland, very broad and falling rapidly away down to the village. Beyond the village the valley once more becomes pine forrest. All over the big grassy expanse are dotted the tents of people who have come to stay. The place is so big however here that we have no one near enough to come to call.-It is getting lower and warmer than at Lidarwat in spite of the clouds. One of the funny things about getting back to Srinagar on Wednesday. We've heard nothing for a fortnight. - (note Jonah has viewed this picture and wishes to point out that he does not always brandish his stick.)

New Page

#### Pahalgam. Lidder Valley Tuesday August 17<sup>th</sup>

Pahalgam is a failure, it's a horrible place, "it is" says Capt Jones "exactly like Hampstead Heath on a bank holiday" Only we have to camp here because tomorrow we are to be picked up by the side of the road and go 60 miles in a bus back to Srinagar. It is an Indian health resort, where Indians come to stay as a holiday from those dreadful plains during the hot weather. And the Indian likes the summer no better than we do. There are literally hundreds of tents here and after the solitude of the past fortnight it comes as a bit of a shock. Jonah is very disconsolate and says "I only pray for tomorrow morning when I can get out of this place"

Yesterday evening was lovely. Fine after the rain and we had a grand walk round the marg at Aru, a truly lovely place. This morning was sunny and ?nice and we had a pleasant walk through the wooded valley to this place. Started raining soon after we had camped. After lunch we found the Lindley's camp. They have done much better than we have, camping in a secluded side valley, but then they have been here several days which has made it worth their while to engage fresh coolies tomorrow to strike their camp and bring their baggage down here to the road. They have arranged the bus and we leave here (Gott sei dank) at eight o'clock in the morning. They entertained us until 7:00 o'clock with tea and interesting talk. Tales of Persia and India. Last night there was something worth recording. Ahada has been telling us how Black ....



A Camp at  
Pahalgam.  
Lidder Valley.

New Page

#### A Camp at Pahalgam. Lidder Valley

.....and Brown Bears inhabit these parts. Last night he became very excited and pointed far up the hillside saying "bear!". There was something black moving through the trees. We examined it through glasses but it was not very clear. Jonah who is a stickler for accuracy and hard to convince (he even doubts my edelweiss) says that with the glasses he made it out to be a black she-goat: but I am not so sure, I think it may have been a bear. Anyway Ahada said it was.

Here endeth the chronicle of the trek and I hope the next heading will be Srinagar.

The infant must be getting quite old now she will be one month tomorrow. Fancy that!

New Page



Upper picture

Ahada, in black hat pays off the coolies there was much salaaming. ?Passad was given to all and they were very happy. Concerning the coolies I forgot to tell you that the day after they had carried the baggage over the Gumbur pass, we gave them, as is the custom a sheep whole to roast for themselves. We bought the sheep after due bargaining from a shepherd at the top of the West Lidder.

Previous page Lower picture

The bus, ready to start for Srinagar. You can see Jonah looking at the camera. And the Lindleys bargaining with the Dhobie man.

New Page

Wednesday August 18<sup>th</sup> Hotel Regina Srinagar

Well the trek is ended. We took bus this morning for the trip back to Srinagar. 60 miles by road from Pahalgum. Very expensive. ₹90.00 between the two parties Lindley brothers and ourselves. ₹45.00 each.

Pleasant trip back except we burst a tyre and then 3 miles from Srinagar ran out of petrol and finished the journey in a Tonga! (the tonga fare was deducted from the ₹45.00). Arrived back for a late lunch and a lovely bath in Nageem Bagh in the afternoon.



New Page

Offices Mess 7th British Kings Own Royal Regiment

Sunday August 21st

Napier Barracks Lahore

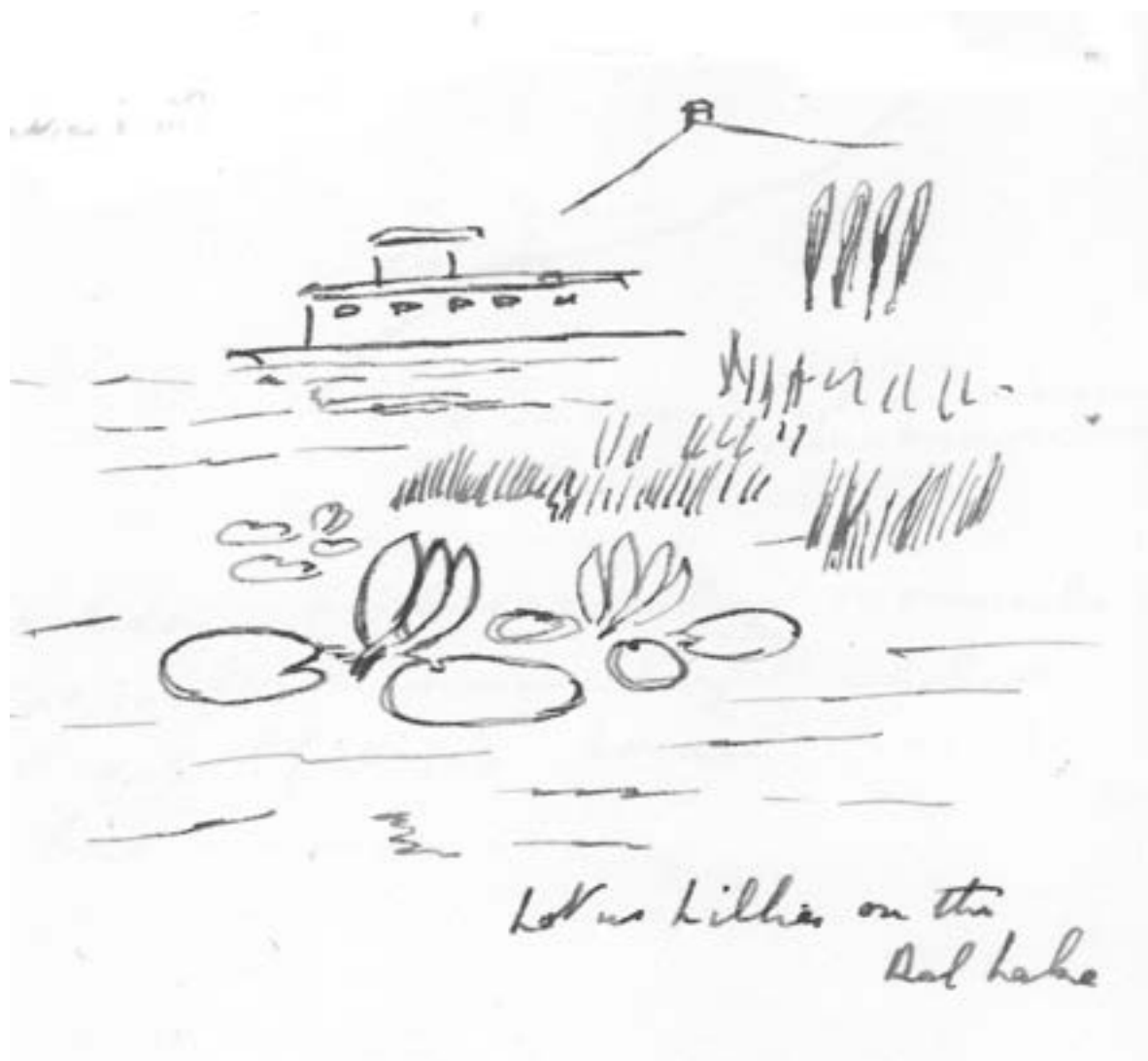
It is all over and here it is as hot as hot and it is unbelievable that we were cold (up there we were sleeping with three blankets and a pullover and bed socks, here one lies naked and can't sleep for the heat.) the prickly heat is all coming back but we still feel very well.

The last two days were spent almost exclusively bathing in Nageem Bagh and were very good. But Jonah did drag me reluctantly up the Hari Parbat, that is the little hill with the temple I drew in the

first letter. A good through heat haze view of the Jehlum, the town of Srinagar and the Dal lake. Also visited by boat Nishat Bagh one of the famous mogul gardens. Beautiful formal gardens with stately avenues of trees, fountains (unfortunately not playing) and terraces. The even more famous Shalimar (pale hands I loved) was further on and we decided not worth the effort as the fountains only played on Sundays and by then we should be away. On the Dal Lake we saw the Lotus Lilies. Huge special kinds of pink water lily.

Also saw a film of the Pied Piper which you told me to see and I like immensely.

Have lots of photographs which are coming to you some in these letters and some separately. Have also bought a housecoat for you of Kashmir ?wool



Lotus lilies on the Dal lake

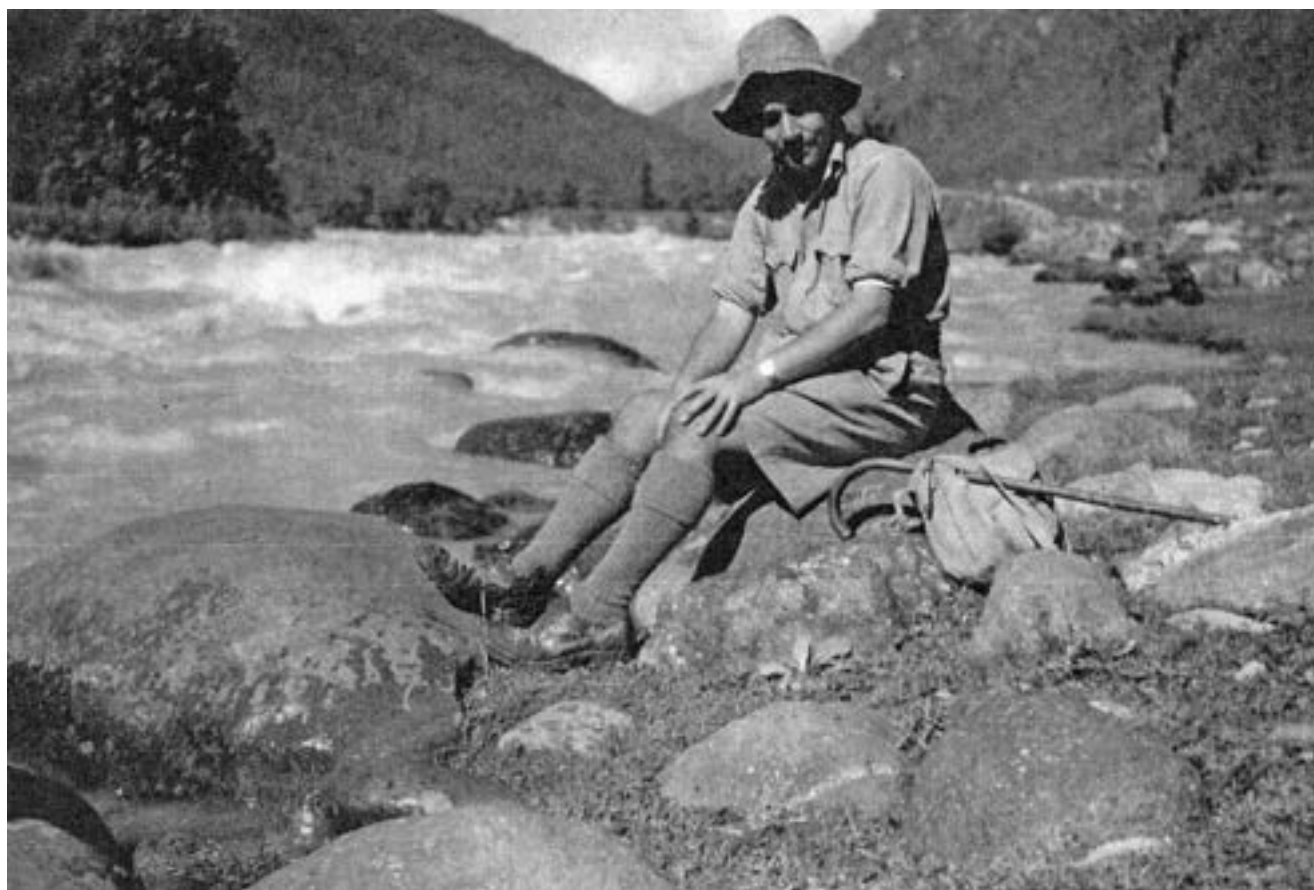
New Page



PLAIN OF THE PUNJAB

Statistics and Dynamics of Holiday. Distance walked 125 miles height climbed altogether 20,000 feet maximum height reached 14,000 feet cost ₹475 each. (35 pounds one shilling) it was an unforgettable holiday but---





# Grandpa's Garden of Bliss

Claire Chambers

Published 22/08/2021 in the Dawn e-paper at <https://www.dawn.com/news/1641916>



**I write this from self-isolation. Our elder son has Covid, luckily a mild case. We're not going near him and wear masks when leaving food at his door. So far, the rest of us are healthy and testing negative. But it has reminded us, once again, how scary and drawn-out this pandemic is proving.**

While we deal with our son's illness, I've been reading family history. My maternal grandfather, Philip Coleman (1912-1997), was a doctor who, during the Second World War, reluctantly became a captain in the Royal Army Medical Corps, with the King's Own Royal Regiment Lancaster, 7th Battalion. From March 1943, he was based in Lahore. His battalion was not deployed in active service, but handled "internal security."



My grandfather, Philip Coleman | Photos courtesy Claire Chambers

Late in his life when I, his only granddaughter, was teaching English in Pakistan (1993-1994), I remember his enthusiasm for my year out. Although Grandpa's time in the army was unhappy, he clearly had fond memories of the place that would become the Islamic Republic.

We recently discovered a journal and photo album Philip kept of a three-week holiday he took in summer 1943. He departed Lahore for Kashmir nine days after my mother's birth — my granny was left holding the baby at the home of her in-laws (Philip's parents) in Blitz-era Britain.



Houseboats on Lake Dal in Kashmir

Meanwhile, with a friend named Jonah, Philip embarked on the expedition of a lifetime. Partly out of guilt and boredom, and partly because he wrote well and relished self-expression, Philip kept a daily diary. Entries telling my granny of his adventures were accompanied by drawings of the more remarkable things he saw and did along the way.

At the journal's outset, he declared: "I hope it will amuse because it is the first chance of giving you a real narrative of my doings without the intervention of censorship. The war will have nothing to do with my holiday in Kashmir."

The trip began with Philip and Jonah climbing the Murree Hills, before trekking in the Great Himalayan valleys. On their way back, they passed through Pahalgam, which felt "exactly like Hampstead Heath on a bank holiday."

This noise and bustle was because the Britons' arrival coincided with the annual pilgrimage of Hindus intent on seeing the holy cave and snow lingam of Lord Shiva at the Amarnath Temple. Philip commented: "There are literally hundreds of tents here and after the solitude of the past fortnight it comes as a bit of a shock." The medic in him worried about germs and cholera from the large crowds.

During his journey, Philip saw some spectacular sights. After a hike traversing the Zoji La pass, words failed him. "I do not think the description of the day will be a success," he demurred to his wife, "because I seem to

have used up all the superlatives and you must be tired by this time of the adjectives marvellous and wonderful as applied to scenery.”

To read this is to feel wistful. Despite my many years travelling to and from the Subcontinent, I’ve never been able to go to Kashmir because of the violence that erupted in the Valley from the late 1980s onwards. Yet, here is my grandfather to sketch a shikara and describe these houseboats “like Noah’s Ark” on Lake Dal. The boats, he recounts, “advertise Best Spring Cushions and have names like ‘Rolls Royce’ or ‘Margaretta the Best Flower in the World’.”



Lahore Punjab.

## Kashmir Holiday

28<sup>th</sup> July 1943 This is the introductory chapter to what I hope will be sheets and sheets of paper on an interlude in an exile. I am going to give you a very full account of the Kashmir Holiday in fact keep a diary. I hope it will amuse because it is the first chunk of your, you a real narrative of my doing without the interference of censorship. The war will have nothing to do with my holiday in Kashmir.



Well here's a blue print of the holiday as conceived here in the plains. I have found a lot more about it by a fortunate meeting with a chap here (ie Lahore) who has holiday in Kashmir as a hobby and who took to his hotel last Sunday showed wonderful photographs and supplied quantities of information and suggestions as to route. T. L. Jones has just returned from a course in

A page from his diary

Philip's trip must have seemed idyllic to his wife in England as she navigated her baby's needs and the niceties of living with her in-laws. But for a few days, her husband and his friend experienced a thunderstorm that made life at high altitude treacherous. Philip noted: "It rained all night and it rained all day. ... The first part of the morning I kept Jonah amused by reading him passages about the deluge."

The Bible (especially its flood narrative) and an old, badly-written guidebook were their sole reading matter. Boredom meant that my less-than-pious relative had no choice but to make “an extensive study of Holy Scripture” during his tour. The men also committed their guidebook to memory: “certain phrases stuck in our minds and could be answered as a catechism long afterwards.

**Q. What will the villagers of Sonamarg do for the traveller?**

A. They will point out the ruins of the old church.

**Q. What must ladies in jampan be prepared to do?**

A. Ladies in jampan must be prepared to walk!

**Q. What must we do when crossing the Yamahair pass?**

A. Give rassad to all.

The book did not explain what a jampan was nor the meaning of rassad but we rather concluded that the first was a sort of sedan chair and the rassad was tips or extra wages.”

Striking here are the references to sedan chairs and servants’ wages, as well as the inaccurate Hindi–Urdu. This further exposes the glaring fact that, during his sojourn, Grandpa occupied the privileged bubble of the white sahib.

He and Jonah were accompanied by an “excellent” factotum named Ahada, who managed 13 “coolies.” Even atop a glacier, Ahada and his staff made familiar English fare, including tea, scones, tomato soup, chicken stew, apple fritters and coffee. Ahada also seems to have always been ready with local knowledge and home comforts to help the homesick Brits.

These private musings on a vacation aside, my grandfather’s only published writing focuses on his clinical work; he wrote a short article, ‘Revaccination of an Army Unit’, for a 1944 issue of British Medical Journal. Despite its age and dry academic prose, the piece is resonant today.

In it, Philip tells the cautionary tale of a British soldier in India who caught an ultimately fatal case of smallpox during brief shore leave. As the medic in charge, Philip traced the soldier’s contacts, then set about enforcing “the isolation of the company concerned [and] disinfection of all fomites.”

The essay centres on the subsequent revaccination programme, and patients’ physical reactions to the precautionary inoculation.



Encouragingly, while some men had more side effects from the vaccine than others, no one else contracted smallpox and the disease was quelled.

Reading his words, I hope for containment of the current pandemic too before long. Of course, a jaunt of the sort Grandpa enjoyed in 1940s Kashmir would be next to impossible right now. Yet his journal has lifted the spirits of this armchair traveller at a tough time.

*The columnist is professor of Global Literature at the University of York, and author of three books, including* Rivers of Ink: Selected Essays

*Published in Dawn, Books & Authors, August 22nd, 2021*

[Type here]

\*The writings in italics are extracts from the journal in chronological order

## Kashmir Extras for Philip's Journal

A guide book I found in Leeds libraries is A Centenary Third Edition of "Kashmir the Playground of Asia" by Sachchidananda Sinha printed by Ram Narain Lal, 2, Katra Road, Allahabad in 1947 Not the one mentioned in the journal but I think an earlier edition might have been available in 1943. This book lists all the available books on Kashmir but I have not been able to identify the one Philip used.

*\*The Vale of Kashmir itself is quite hot in August in spite of its 5000 ft but nothing like these horrid plains and all the prickly heat will go, Gott sei dank (at the present moment I am both pouring with sweat and itching like scabies).*

Miliaria rubra, commonly called prickly heat or heat rash, is a rash that causes the skin to turn red, along with a warm, stinging, or prickly sensation. The feeling is usually accompanied by small red dots in the affected area. The rash may also have small, raised bumps and blisters. Prickly heat is often caused by exposure to warm temperatures and will normally clear up on its own after a few days.

*Now read on to what really happened when they set out for those Himalayan altitudes where mother nature has woven her intricate art for those past thousand years or more – or was this in Jasper Park\*.*

**Jasper National Park** is a national park in [Alberta, Canada](#). It is the largest [national park](#) within [Alberta's Rocky Mountains](#) spanning 11,000 km<sup>2</sup> (4,200 sq mi). Its location is north of [Banff National Park](#) and west of [Edmonton](#). The park contains the [glaciers](#) of the [Columbia Icefield](#), [springs](#), [lakes](#), [waterfalls](#) and [mountains](#).

*The Hotel Regina is quite comfortable and built of wood, about five stories and very like a Swiss Chalet type of hotel – ask mother about the Hotel Baren Wilderswil*

[Type here]

\*The writings in italics are extracts from the journal in chronological order



Hotel Baren\*

*Unfortunately for us there is a most sacred cave at the top end of the East Liddar Valley and August is the month when “?Longam folk to go on pilgrimages” (as Jane points out this is from the Prologue in Chaucer’s Canterbury Tales - “Thanne longen folk to goon on pilgrimages”)*

### Sacred Cave

#### From Wikipedia

**Amarnath Temple** is a [Hindu](#) shrine located in [Jammu and Kashmir](#), [India](#). The cave is situated at an altitude of 3,888 m (12,756 ft),<sup>[1]</sup> about 141 km (88 mi) from [Srinagar](#), the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir, reached through [Pahalgam](#) town. The shrine represents an important part of [Hinduism](#),<sup>[2]</sup> and is considered to be one of the holiest shrines in Hinduism.<sup>[3]</sup> The cave is surrounded by snowy mountains. The cave itself is covered with snow most of the year, except for a short period of time in summer when it is open to pilgrims. Hundreds of thousands of Hindus and other devotees make an annual pilgrimage to the Amarnath cave across challenging mountainous terrain.

Also <https://magikindia.com/amarnath-pilgrimage>

*Round the city are the great hills, quite near are two little ones (the local datriggs), one crowned by a temple and the other by a fort looking exactly like the sort of toy castle you always hoped your uncle would give you for your lead soldiers.*

[Type here]

\*The writings in italics are extracts from the journal in chronological order



### Hari Parbat Fort

*You go about in a shikara. I have tried to draw it for you.... It is a long narrow boat*



Shikara

**Sonamarg** known as Sonamarag ;(lit. 'meadow of gold') in Kashmiri, is a hill station located in the Ganderbal District of Jammu and Kashmir, India. It is located about 80 kilometres (50 mi) northeast of the capital city, Srinagar.

The hill station is situated in the [Kashmir Valley](#), at an altitude of 2,730 metres (8,960 ft)<sup>[7]</sup> and is close to some of the valley's tallest peaks, alongside the [Machoi Glacier](#), [Sirbal Peak](#), [Kolahoi Peak](#), [Amarnath Peak](#) and [Machoi Peak](#). Combined with the [alpine meadows](#) that bloom in the summer as well as rivers and lakes stocked with fish, Sonamarg is a notable tourist destination in [Jammu and Kashmir](#).

*Today Jonah and I walked up the Zoji La pass to Ladakh Tibet China and Yarkand \*(I must find out where Yarkand is*

**Yarkand from Wikipedia**



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\*The writings in italics are extracts from the journal in chronological order

Yarkant County,[4][5][6] also Shache County,[7] also transliterated from Uyghur as Yakan County, is a county in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, China, located on the southern rim of the Taklamakan Desert in the Tarim Basin. It is one of 11 counties administered under Kashgar Prefecture. The county, usually referred to as Yarkand[8] in English, was the seat of an ancient Buddhist kingdom on the southern branch of the Silk Road and the Yarkand Khanate. The county sits at an altitude of 1,189 metres (3,901 ft) and as of 2003 had a population of 373,492.

The fertile oasis is fed by the Yarkand River, which flows north down from the Karakorum mountains and passes through the Kunlun Mountains, known historically as the Congling mountains (lit. 'Onion Mountains' - from the abundance of wild onions found there). The oasis now covers 3,210 square kilometres (1,240 sq mi), but was likely far more extensive before a period of desiccation affected the region from the 3rd century CE onwards.

Today, Yarkant is a predominantly Uyghur settlement. The irrigated oasis farmland produces cotton, wheat, corn, fruits (especially pomegranates, pears and apricots) and walnuts. Yak and sheep graze in the highlands. Mineral deposits include petroleum, natural gas, gold, copper, lead, bauxite, granite and coal.

*And I'm sure I found an edelweiss\*, because it looked just like the pictures I have seen*



***Leontopodium nivale***, commonly called **edelweiss** is a mountain flower belonging to the daisy or sunflower family [Asteraceae](#). The plant prefers rocky limestone places at about 1,800–3,000 metres (5,900–9,800 ft) altitude. It is non-toxic and has been used in traditional medicine as a remedy against abdominal and respiratory diseases. The dense hair appears to protect the plant from cold, aridity, and ultraviolet radiation.<sup>[1]</sup> It is a scarce, short-lived flower found in remote mountain areas and has been used as a symbol for [alpinism](#), for rugged beauty and purity associated with the Alps and Carpathians, and as a national symbol, especially of Romania, Austria, Bulgaria, Mongolia, Slovenia, Switzerland, and South Tyrol. According to folk tradition, giving this flower to a loved one is a promise of dedication.

*The glacier is dominated by Mount Kolahoi ( 17,500 feet). This is a magnificent rock pyramid not unlike the Matterhorn*

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\*The writings in italics are extracts from the journal in chronological order

**Kolahoi Peak** is the highest mountain with a peak elevation<sup>[1]</sup> of 17,799 ft (5,425 metres), in Jammu and Kashmir, in the vicinity of Sonamarg in ganderbal district. Kolahoi Peak is part of the Himalaya Range, and is located between 15 km south of Sonamarg and 21 km north from Aru, Pahalgam. To its north flows the Sind River and the glacier of its name Kolahoi Glacier is the source of Lidder River. in the vicinity of Kashmir valley.

Kolahoi Peak rises from the Kolahoi Glacier is a pyramid-shaped peak with ice falls and ice fields at its bottom. The rock formation of the peak is extraordinary stable with aretes and ridges.<sup>[3]</sup>



*on a clear day you could imagine you could see all India from this pass with Nanga Parbat\*, one of the Himalayan giants, appearing above all the lower heights.*

**Nanga Parbat** is the ninth-highest mountain in the world at 8,126 metres (26,660 ft) above sea level. Located in the Diamer District of Gilgit-Baltistan, Pakistan, Nanga Parbat is the western anchor of the Himalayas.<sup>[2]</sup> The name Nanga Parbat is derived from the Sanskrit words *nagna* and *parvata*, which, when combined, translate to "Naked Mountain" The mountain is known locally by its Tibetan name *Diamer* or *Deo Mir*, meaning "huge mountain".<sup>1</sup>

Nanga Parbat is one of the 14 eight-thousanders An immense, dramatic peak rising far above its surrounding terrain, Nanga Parbat is known to be a difficult climb, and has earned the nickname *Killer Mountain* for its high number of climber fatalities.

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\*The writings in italics are extracts from the journal in chronological order

Nanga Parbat is one of only two peaks on earth that rank in the top twenty of both the [highest mountains](#) in the world, and the [most prominent peaks](#) in the world, ranking ninth and fourteenth respectively. The other mountain is the famous [Mount Everest](#), which ranks first on both lists. Nanga Parbat is also the second most prominent peak of the Himalayas, after Mount Everest.



*While on the subject of coolies who are all the natives of these valleys, it was interesting to notice what a high population of them had goitres*

**A goitre** is a swelling in the neck resulting from an enlarged thyroid gland. A goitre can be associated with a thyroid that is not functioning properly.

Worldwide, over 90% of goitre cases are caused by iodine deficiency.<sup>1</sup>

Goitre and the associated neurological deficits due to iodine deficiency were common in Derbyshire, giving rise to the term Derbyshire Neck. These diseases were most prevalent in the 19th century and earlier, when they had devastating effects in the rural population. Since then they have declined in frequency. However, iodine deficiency disorders are still prevalent worldwide, and iodine deficiency is the single most common cause of mental retardation and brain damage. Globally, 2.2 billion people, ~38% of the world population, live in risk areas of iodine deficiency. Iodine deficiency disorders are common in areas of low environmental iodine.

In 19th century Derbyshire iodine deficiency diseases were likely to have been multifactorial. Goitres occurred principally in limestone areas and were due to the binding of iodine in the alkaline soils, with impaired uptake into local farm



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\*The writings in italics are extracts from the journal in chronological order

produce. Supplementary mechanisms may have included genetic susceptibility and dietary goitrogens.

The decline of iodine deficiency diseases began with the increased standard of living and a wider range of dietary products from areas outside Derbyshire. The condition is now practically absent in affluent nations, where table salt is supplemented with iodine. However, it is still prevalent in India, China,<sup>[28]</sup> Central Asia, and Central Africa.

From Wikipedia

. *We walked for a long time down a valley that I would like to call the valley of marmots for we saw a number of these strange creatures*

## **Marmots**



**Marmots** are relatively large ground squirrels in the genus ***Marmota***, with 15 species living in Asia, Europe, and North America.

These herbivores are active during the summer when often found in groups, but are not seen during the winter when they hibernate underground. They are the heaviest members of the squirrel family.

Marmots have been known since antiquity. Research by the French ethnologist Michel Peissel claimed the story of the "Gold-digging ant" reported by the Ancient Greek historian Herodotus, who lived in the fifth century BCE, was founded on the golden Himalayan

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\*The writings in italics are extracts from the journal in chronological order  
marmot of the Deosai Plateau and the habit of local tribes such as  
the Brokpa to collect the gold dust excavated from their burrows.

**Relationship to the Black Death** A number of historians and  
paleogeneticists had postulated that the *Yersinia pestis* variant that  
caused the pandemic that struck Eurasia in the 14th century originated  
from a variant for which marmots in China were the natural  
reservoir species.<sup>1</sup>