

THE D.U.Æ.A.-V. IN THE CAUCASUS, 1935

BY RUDOLF SCHWARZGRUBER ¹*Translated*

ELEVEN Austrian mountaineers visited in the summer of 1935 various Caucasian mountain ranges. This expedition, led by Rudolf Schwarzgruber, had for its objects the Chusurian groups, the Sugan, Dykhsu, and the Bezingi horse-shoe. Besides these, Ushba and Sheldykhtau were also visited, rendered futile, however, on account of bad weather.

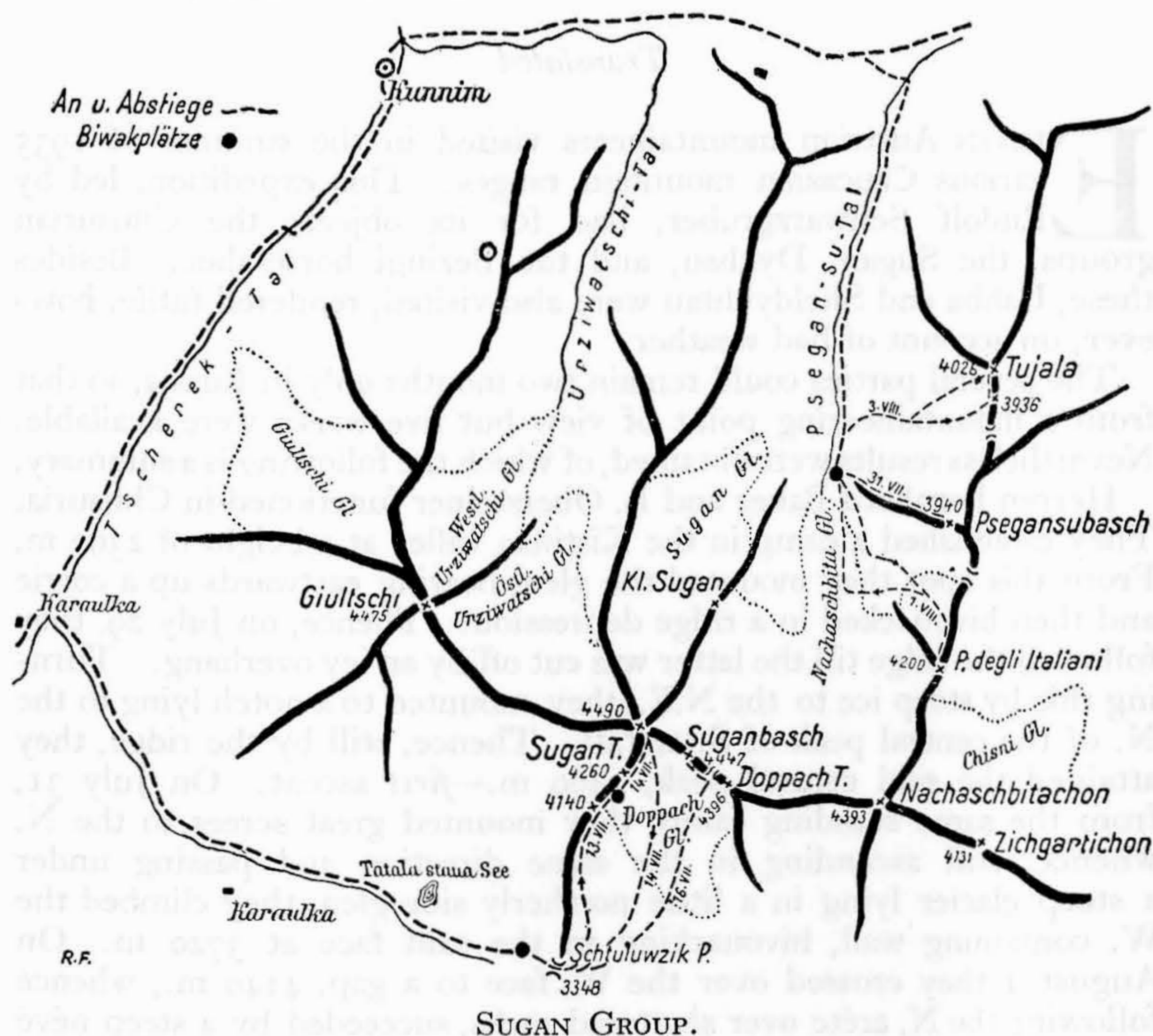
The several parties could remain two months only in Russia, so that from a mountaineering point of view but five weeks were available. Nevertheless results were obtained, of which the following is a summary.

Herren Bernhard Bauer and L. Obersteiner functioned in Chusuria. They established a camp in the Kistinka valley at a height of 2390 m. From this spot they mounted the glen, bearing eastwards up a corrie and then bivouacked in a ridge depression. Thence, on July 29, they followed the ridge till the latter was cut off by an icy overhang. Turning this by steep ice to the N.E., they mounted to a notch lying to the N. of the central peak of SHANTAU. Thence, still by the ridge, they attained the said central peak, 4460 m.—*first* ascent. On July 31, from the same standing camp, they mounted great screes to the N. whence, still ascending in the same direction and passing under a steep glacier lying in a little northerly side-glen, they climbed the W. containing wall, bivouacking in the said face at 3720 m. On August 1 they crossed over the W. face to a gap, 4140 m., whence following the N. arête over shattered rocks, succeeded by a steep névé edge and rocky gendarmes, they arrived on the summit of SHANTAU itself, 4525 m., *first* ascent. On August 4–5 the ascent of KASBEK, 16,546 ft., was made *via* the Ortsveri Glacier, after which the party took the Armkhi valley to the Shantshot glen where they pitched a camp at a height of 2100 m. On August 11 they attained the Sakharis Pass, 3690 m., whence they reached the summit of SAKHARIS MAGALI, 3970 m., *via* its N. arête—*first* ascent. On August 12 they accomplished the *first* traverse of the S. arête of KIDINEIS MAGALI. A 6 hours' climb in very bad weather brought them to the end point of the said peak, 4230 m., *first* ascent. On the 14th they ascended the W. arête of SELISMTA, 3875 m., on the summit of which an ancient cairn was found.

In the meanwhile another party of five, Herren R. Fraisl, F. Krobath, H. Peterka, E. Schlager and L. Spannraft, who had set out for a visit from Karaulka, came to the Sugan and Dykhsu groups. Krobath, Schlager and Spannraft mounted the upper Karaulka along the Aksu

¹ We are very much in Dr. Schwarzgruber's debt.—*Editor*.

torrent to a height of 2900 m., where they inaugurated a 'Sugan' camp below the Shtuluvsek Pass. After one attempt, defeated by bad weather at a height of 4100 m. they started on July 13 from their camp and attained the Shtuluvsek Pass, 3348 m. Thence, passing over points 3668, 3810, 3950 m., they reached a corniched summit, 4140 m.



Descending a corniched ridge they bivouacked at 4100 m. in a notch. On July 14 they attained over a rock and snow ridge a top of 4260 m., whence, after a descent to about 4000 m., they reached the summit of SUGANTAU, 4490 m., *first* ascent by the S. arête. The descent followed over the S. side to the Doppakh Glacier, between the N. and S. peaks.

Times :

Shtuluvsek Pass	.	.	.	.	12.00	July 13
3800 m.	.	.	.	.	15.15	
3950 m.	.	.	.	.	17.20	
Bivouac	.	.	.	arr.	19.00	
"	.	.	.	dep.	06.20	July 14
4260 m.	.	.	.	.	07.45	
Sugantau	.	.	.	.	10.45	
Doppakh Glacier	.	.	.	.	13.00	
Shtuluvsek Pass	.	.	.	.	17.00	

On July 16 the party from its Sugan camp mounted to the Shtuluvsek Pass, whence along the Borshon ridge they proceeded *via* the Doppakh Glacier to the ice gully to its S., up which they attained the nameless gap, *ca.* 4000 m., between Suganbashi and Doppakhtau. The first abrupt step of the former's S.E. arête was turned to the S. by a glazed chimney of 200 ft., after which the summit of SUGANBASHI, 4447 m., was reached over a snow and rock ridge, *first* ascent. The descent was made by the same route.

Times :

Shtuluvsek Pass	.	.	.	.	01.15
Doppakh Glacier	.	.	.	.	03.00
Nameless Gap	.	.	.	.	06.00
Suganbashi	.	.	.	arr.	09.45
"	.	.	.	dep.	11.00
Gap	.	.	.	.	14.10
Shtuluvsek Pass	.	.	.	.	19.30

On July 15 the Fraisl-Peterka party accomplished the second ascent of AILAMA, 14,854 ft., whose N.E. face and E. arête they climbed for the *first* time. After bivouacking in the rocks near the upper Ailama Glacier, some 2000 ft. above the Karaulka camp, they attained the approach to the N.E. face through a parallel glen to the E. of the crevassed icefalls under Ailama. The following is the party's account : 'To the right of Woolley's approach with Jossi in 1889,² a hanging glacier plunges downwards into the upper glacial recesses. Half-way up the face and below the icefall of the hanging glacier is a kind of rock buttress, or E. arête. The ascent lies first over steep névé, then, in the upper parts, by the buttress itself and the great icefalls of the hanging glacier to the peak's summit. The descent was made by the great avalanche gully separating our route from the rib taken by the first party.'

Times :

Bivouac	.	.	.	dep.	03.30
Bergschrund	.	.	.	.	05.30
Summit	.	.	.	.	11.30
Bergschrund	.	.	.	.	15.00
Bivouac	.	.	.	arr.	17.00

On July 19 Fraisl and Peterka, from their camp on the upper Ailama Glacier, proceeded right into the furthest recess thereof, the angle formed by Ailama itself and the hitherto unclimbed ZURUNGAL. The route then lay over an icefall, a snow slope and difficult rocks leading to a depression between the two peaks, 3900 m. The summit was then reached for the *first* time by the N.W. arête, several rock-steps and a steep snow edge.³ The top, 4222 m., 13,916 ft., is composed of a corniced ridge.

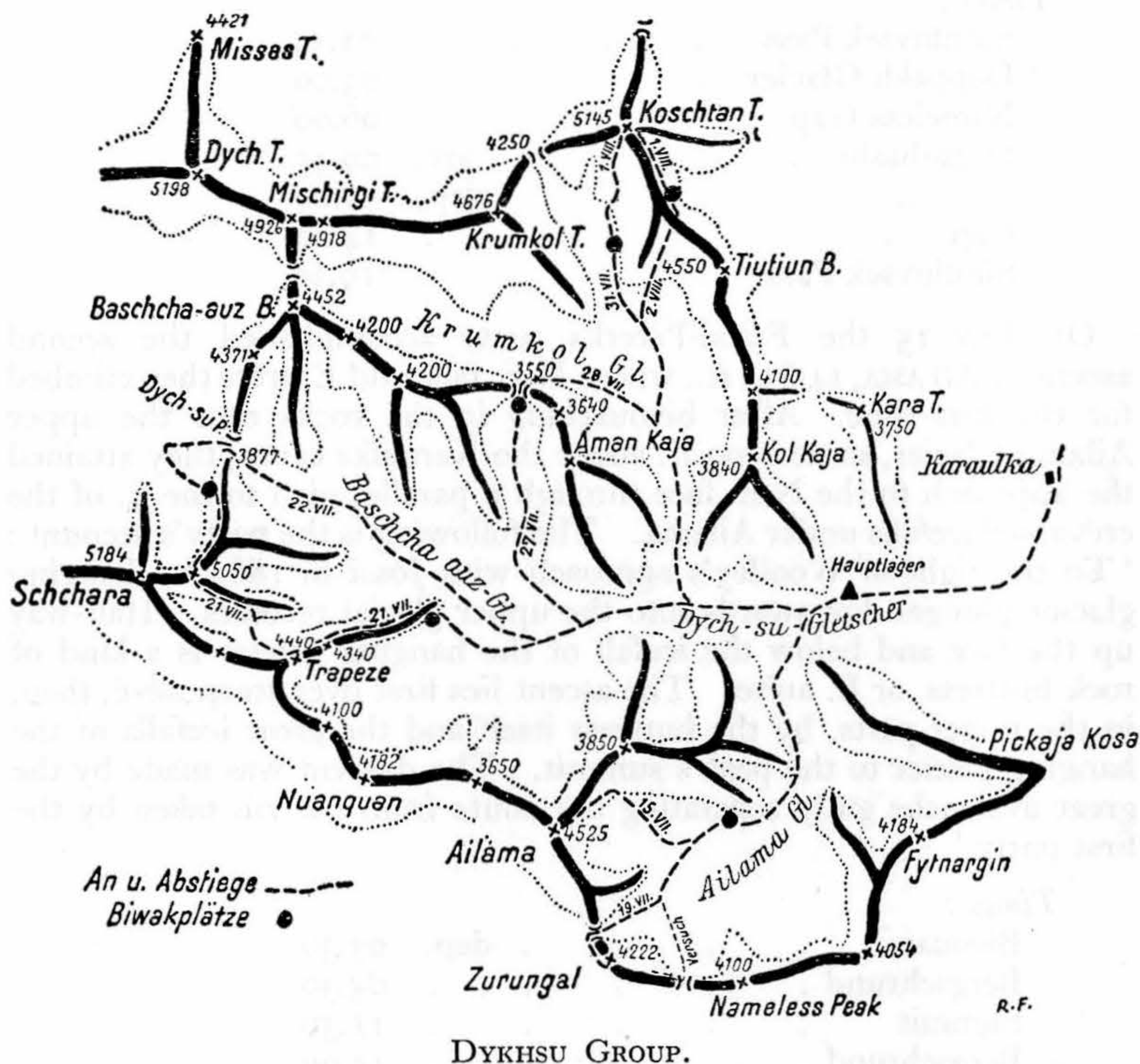
² *A. J.* 18. 297 sqq.

³ See illustration, *A. J.* 47. facing 119.

Times :

Bivouac	.	.	.	dep.	02.00
Depression	.	.	.	.	07.15
Summit	.	.	.	.	10.30
Depression	.	.	.	.	13.45
Bivouac	.	.	.	arr.	18.45

On July 20 the five climbers pitched a camp in the Karaulka Group on a rocky islet called by (?) Mummery Grschoj-Kaja [*sic* ?]. This



islet is surrounded by the upper Bashauz Glacier, Nuamquam and the upper Dykhsu Glacier. Their intentions were to climb SHKARA, 17,038 ft., by the so-called 'Trapeze' ridge. The remarkably involved topographical note of the first party is as follows: 'The 'Trapeze' ridge is that long arête breaking off from the Shkara-Nuamquam main ridge in an E. direction towards the junction of the Bashauz and Dykhsu Glaciers. This side ridge supports several peaklets on it, of which one of 4340 m. was provisionally christened *Little Trapeze* and another of 4440 m., *Great Trapeze*; these names are in accord with the shapes of the peaks. The point on this ridge hitherto measured as 4250 m. corresponds with the *Great Trapeze*, but is too low—the

true height by aneroid appears to be 4440 m. Of Mummery's attempted, 1888, ascent with Zurfluh there were no indications. The main feature of Shkara's E. arête can be reached, without passing over the *Trapezes*, from the Bashauz Glacier and the extremely crevassed, nameless glacier on the E. slope of Shkara. Our route was as follows: From a bivouac on the upper rocks of Mummery's islet, 3350 m., we proceeded over an icefall straight up to an ice bulge, 4080 m., then by a névé ridge, followed later on the left side by rock-strewn ice slopes, to the top of *Little Trapeze*. We descended thence by a steep and corniced snow ridge, followed by an ascent to where a rocky step bars progress. We turned the step to the left by a snowy ledge leading to rock-interspersed ice chimneys. A rib then gives access to the top of *Great Trapeze* (cairn). Now along the true corniced edge to its point of fusion with the main ridge. We then descended to the right over steep slopes to the nameless glacier E. of Shkara, 4300 m. At this point began that peak's E. arête, crowned with many rock pinnacles on its lower portions. We struck the arête at practically its lowest point, climbing over the pinnacles to an icy hog's-back. This latter followed by boulders brought us to Shkara's N.E. peak, 5050 m. The summit unfortunately escaped us owing to bad weather. We descended the N.E. arête, being obliged, owing to mists preventing us from finding the route to the Dykhniaus Pass, to bivouac at a height of 4280 m. On the following day we descended to the said pass, reaching the Dykhsu Camp on the same day.'

Times :

Mummery's Bivouac	.	.	dep.	00.50	July 21
<i>Little Trapeze</i>	.	.	.	04.25-04.45	
<i>Great Trapeze</i>	.	.	.	06.15-06.30	
Glacier surface	.	.	.	09.00	
Shkara, N.E. peak	.	.	.	13.00	
Bivouac	.	.	arr.	20.30	
"	.	.	dep.	06.15	July 22
Dykhniaus Pass	.	.	.	11.30	
Mummery's Bivouac	.	.	.	17.30	

After this expedition, Fraisl, Peterka and Schlager went to the village of Kunnium, and on July 31 crossed a grassy col, 2140 m., into the Psegansu glen, pitching a camp close to the Nakhashbit Glacier. Two of the party climbed a peak on the same day, christening it 'Psegansubashi,' 3940 m.: the ascent was made by the W. arête, while the descent was accomplished over the N. slope of the said ridge.

On August 1 Fraisl, Peterka and Schlager followed the right lateral moraine of the Nakhashbit Glacier to the corrie lying S.W. of 'Psegansubashi.' From the corrie's innermost recesses, over snow, a gap, the N. arête contiguous to the said gap, consisting of rocky gendarmes and a névé ridge, they attained the point christened previously *Punta degli Italiani*,⁴ 4200 m. From the said gap in the N.

⁴ A. J. 42. 278-88.

arête they descended direct into the great scree corrie lying beneath the mountain's N. face, whence the central portion of the Nakhashbit Glacier was attained.

Times :

Camp	dep.	05.15
Gap in N. arête		09.00
Summit		11.30-12.00
Gap		13.00
Camp	arr.	17.00

On August 3 Fraisl and Schlager left camp in the Psegansu glen and descended the moraine of the Nakhashbit Glacier on its true right, eventually taking to the glacier torrent's gorge. Crossing the stream with some difficulty, they descended the gorge till they could take some grassy slopes to the right. Ascending these, they attained a depression between TUJALATAU and 'Psegansubashi.' The S. peak of the former, 4026 m., was easily attained over its W. arête, *first* ascent. A descent followed to a gap, whence the N. peak, 3936 m., of the same mountain was reached *via* its S. arête. The descent was made by débris slopes to the gorge traversed on the way up.

Times :

Camp	dep.	06.30
Tujalatau, S. peak		10.00
„ N. peak		11.30
Camp	arr.	14.30

Between July 31 and August 2 Krobath and Spannraft were able to accomplish important work—the *first* ascent of KOSHTANTAU by its S.W. flank. The party's account reads as follows: 'The Krumkhol blends with the Dykhsu Glacier at a height of about 2800 m. We followed the former to about 3550 m. and then mounted the nameless glacier to the right coming from the Koshtantau Glacier.⁵ This latter, at a height between 3500 and 3800 m., steepened into a precipitous icefall which we ascended on the right. Next we proceeded over its surface for a short time till we could take a rocky buttress bounding on the right the hanging glacier. We bivouacked at about 3950 m. Thence we turned the hanging glacier to the left for about 350 ft., and over two ice bulges, each 20-30 ft. high, attained a snow slope which we mounted to where the glacier bifurcates at about 4200 m.—the hanging glacier is Y-shaped. Taking the right branch, we crossed a great bergschrund and, by an ice slope of 55°, subsequently made rapid progress. Some 300 ft. higher up we turned perpendicular rock steps by neighbouring iced crevices. At about 4800 m. the glacier once more assumes a slope at the former angle, ending some 160 ft. under the summit which we reached easily over rocks, 16,880 ft. In the descent we followed the S. arête, bivouacking at about 4400 m. On

⁵ Mr. Freshfield's 'E. Krumkhol' Glacier?—*Editor*.



Photo, D.A.C.A.-V. Expedition.]

DYKHTAU, S.W. SLOPE, MISHIRGITAU, KOSHTANTAU, SHOWING MUMMERY AND 1935 ROUTE.

[To face p. 110.]

August 2 we followed the be-pinnacled ridge further, taking a gully for the descent to the Krumkhol Glacier W. of the route to the Tiutiun Gap. [*A.ŷ.* 47. 160-3.]

Times :

Junction of Krumkhol Glacier to bivouac	5 hrs.
Bivouac to summit	9 „
Descent of S. arête to Krumkhol Glacier (bivouac excluded)	11 „

In the Bezingi area, W. Marin, F. Poringer, H. Thaler and the writer [Dr. Schwarzgruber, leader of the expedition], reached on July 15 the terrace between Katuintau and Gestola. Having left a camp situated on the last meadow on the right lateral moraine of the Bezingi Glacier, some 4 km. distant from the Dykhtau 'corner,' at 03.30, towards 17.00 and at a height of 4670 m., they dug an ice cave in the said terrace. On the following day they climbed GESTOLA, 15,932 ft.,⁶ by the S.W. arête and continued to LJALVER. A bold descent by the latter's N.E. slope brought the party to the glacier by which they attained camp at 24.00. On July 21 the same party left camp intending to climb the hitherto but twice-trodden JANGA, highest peak, 16,559 ft., by its unattempted N. face. For this they employed a rib rising from the level, dry Bezingi Glacier, exactly between Merzbacher's route and the (?) Katuintau buttress. This rib, forming a mighty buttress of rock, gives a perfectly safe route to the summit of Janga. At a height of some 4000 m. the rib, whose W. slope is covered with steep névé, merges into a sharp, steep ice edge leading over a few towers ; at a height of 4600 m. this latter flattens somewhat into the torn masses of hanging glacier lying beneath the summit-ridge.

Having left camp, the party steered towards the Bezingi Glacier, mounting the crest of the great moraine in the direction of the Dykhsu Pass. They eventually bore slightly across the dry glacier towards the rampart of the above-mentioned rib. This inaccessible portion was turned to the W. by steep névé and an ice bulge. Doubling back to the left towards the rocks, they reached an iced runnel. Climbing this they mounted difficult rocks to some glazed channels—always on the W. side—leading to easier terrain whence the edge of the rib or buttress was attained, at first of gentle angle. Following the crest over a difficult ice-nose, they came to the termination of the rock buttress which culminates in a prominent tooth. Here at 4000 m. and a rope's length under the tooth, a bivouac was inaugurated. On July 22 a start was made by a rock-interspersed névé ridge becoming very steep and sharp higher up. Three remarkably abrupt gendarmes had to be climbed over; moreover, snow conditions were extremely bad hereabouts. From the last gendarme they attained the névé-basin, whence very arduous progress brought them to a bivouac site where a snow cave was dug at a height of 4800 m. On July 23 they

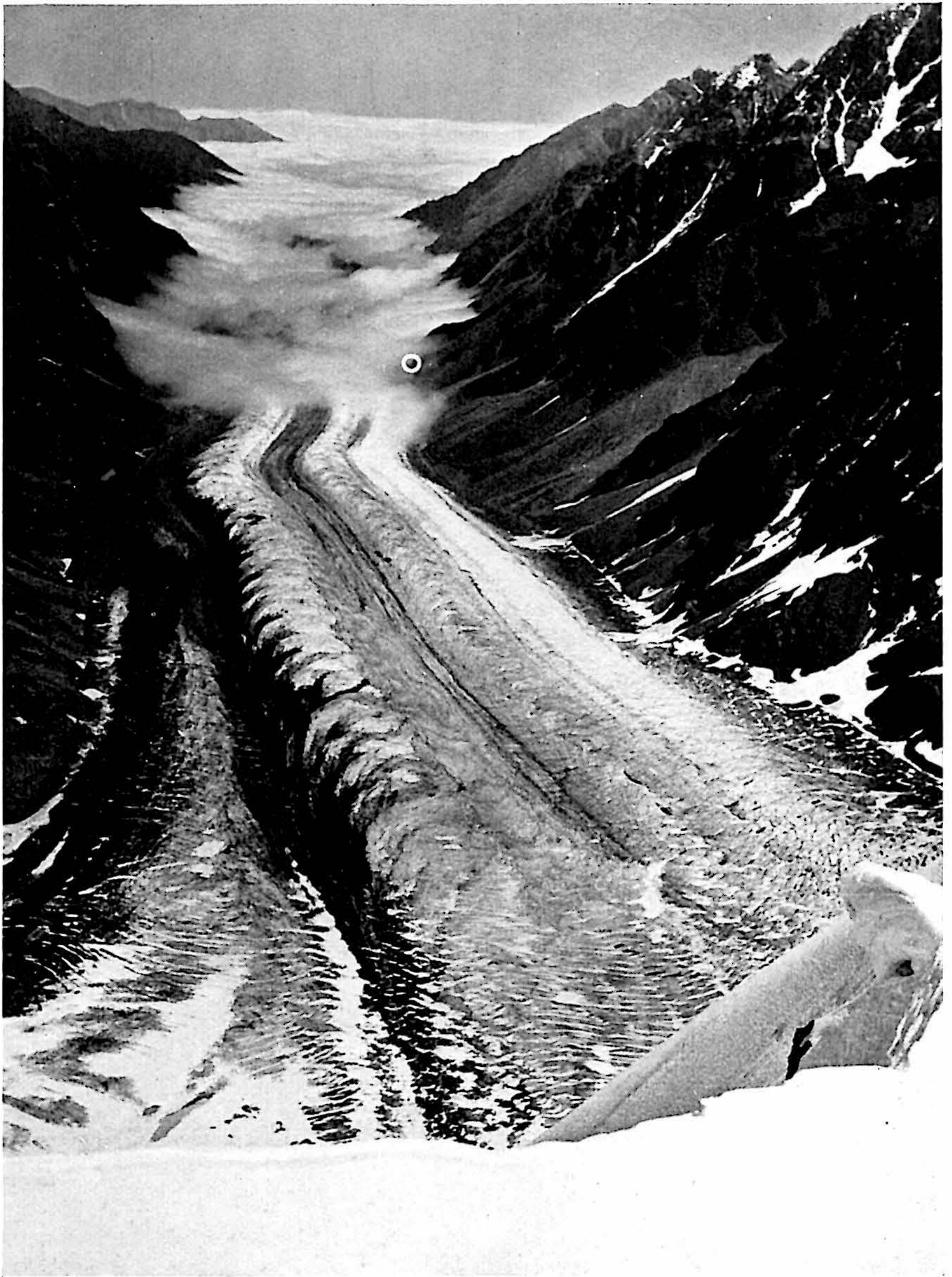
⁶ *A.ŷ.* 13. 220 sqq.—under name of Tetnuld Tau.



Photo, D.u.C.E.A.-V. Expedition.]

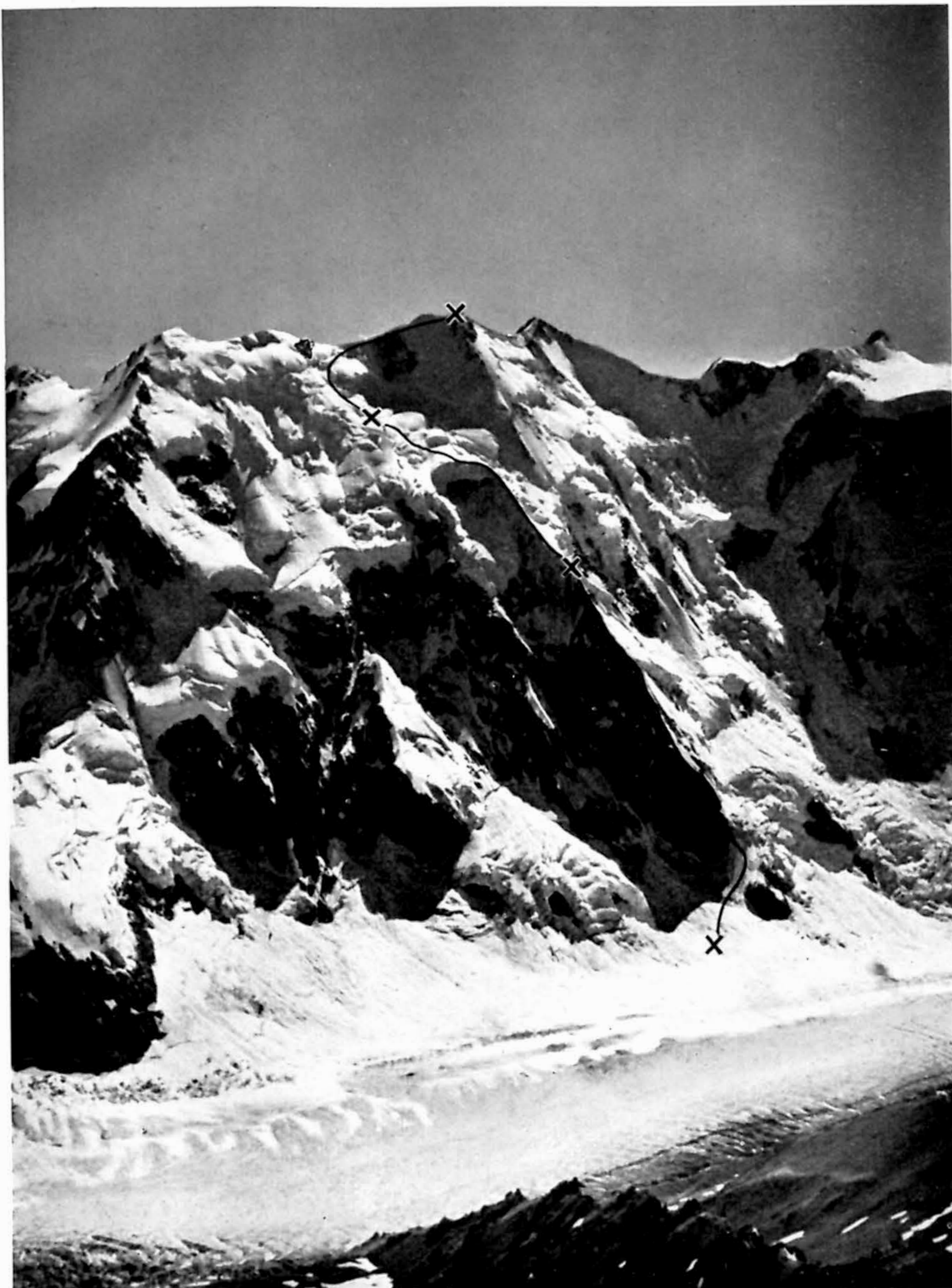
KOSHTANTAU FROM S.W.

[To face p. 112.]



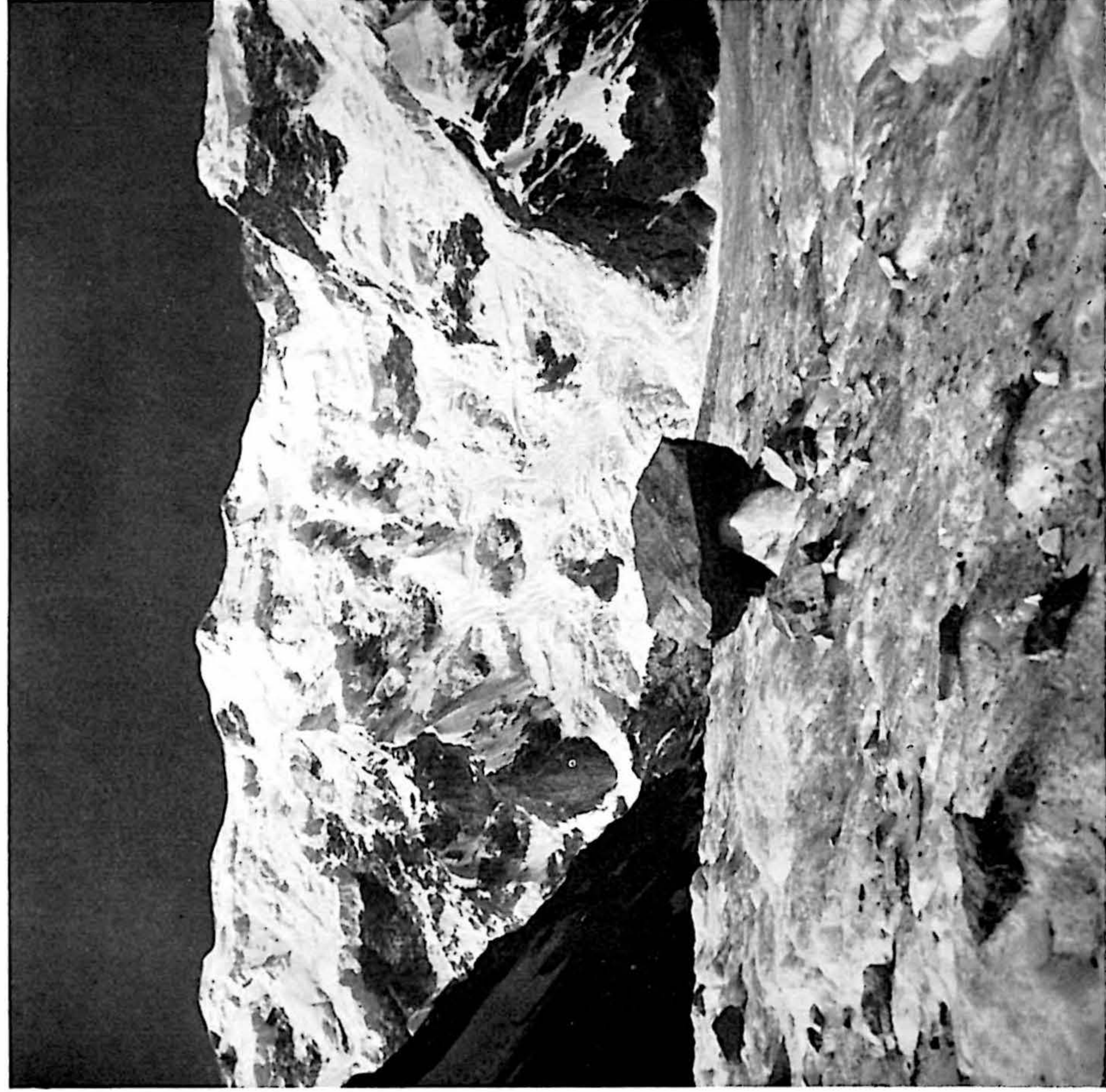
Photo, D.u.C.E.A.-V. Expedition.]

BEZINGI GLACIER FROM 'KATUIN' RIDGE OF JANGA, SHOWING MISSESSKOSH.



Photo, D.u.Æ.A.-V. Expedition.]

JANGA, N. FACE, E. AND CENTRAL PEAKS AND KATUINTAU RIGHT, SHOWING 1935 ROUTE.



Photo, D. u. G. A. - V. Expedition.]

JANGA AND BEZINGI HORSESHOE.

took the ridge between the central and *highest* peak and attained the latter point. In the afternoon they failed to find access to the Shkara recess by the first party's, Cockin-Almer-Roth,⁷ route, and bivouacked once more at 4400 m. On the 24th they descended by Merzbacher's line, attaining their camp at 02.30.

Times :

Bezingi Camp	dep.	02.20	July 21
Base of rampart		04.50	
Level ridge		09.30	
Tower on ridge (bivouac)		19.00	
" " " "	dep.	07.00	July 22
Termination of névé edge		14.30	
Bivouac		17.30	
" " " "	dep.	06.10	July 23
Gap in summit-ridge		08.05	
Summit of Janga		08.42	
E. peak of Janga		11.30	
Bivouac		20.00	
" " " "	dep.	05.20	July 24
Lowest extremity of Merzbacher's snow ridge		08.30	
Shkara recess		17.30	
Bezingi Camp	arr.	02.30	July 25

An attempt on July 31 to attain Dykhtau by the S.W. face failed at a height of 4900 m.

On August 7 the same party went to Naltshik with the intention of exploring the Gimarai Group. The Russian authorities unfortunately forbade a longer visit in Russia, so that Elbruz, Bsedukhtau and Dykhtau only could be attempted. Failures were recorded on Ushba and Sheldytau owing to bad weather. During the night of August 15-16, Krobath and Peterka attained a height of 3740 m. in the N. face of Sheldytau, where very bad weather defeated them completely on August 16. An attempt by Fraisl and Peringer on Ushba failed likewise about the great terrace. Fraisl, Marin, Schlager and Thaler climbed the W. peak of ELBRUZ, 18,470 ft.

Peringer and Hans Bocek, an Austrian living in Russia, accomplished on August 17-18 the third ascent and *first* traverse of BSEDUKHTAU, 4271 m., and the *first* descent of the N. face. They crossed the torrent by the O.P.T. Camp in the Adylsu glen and mounted the crooked left lateral moraine of the Kaiakha Glacier. Where the ice became level and free from crevasses, they bore diagonally across to the base of a snow couloir leading to the N. arête. Mounting this and the following rocky portions of the said arête, they attained the commencement of the steep snow ridge along which with much step-cutting they reached the summit-ridge in the evening. Bivouacking in a bergschrund, they achieved the summit early on the 18th. In the descent they followed

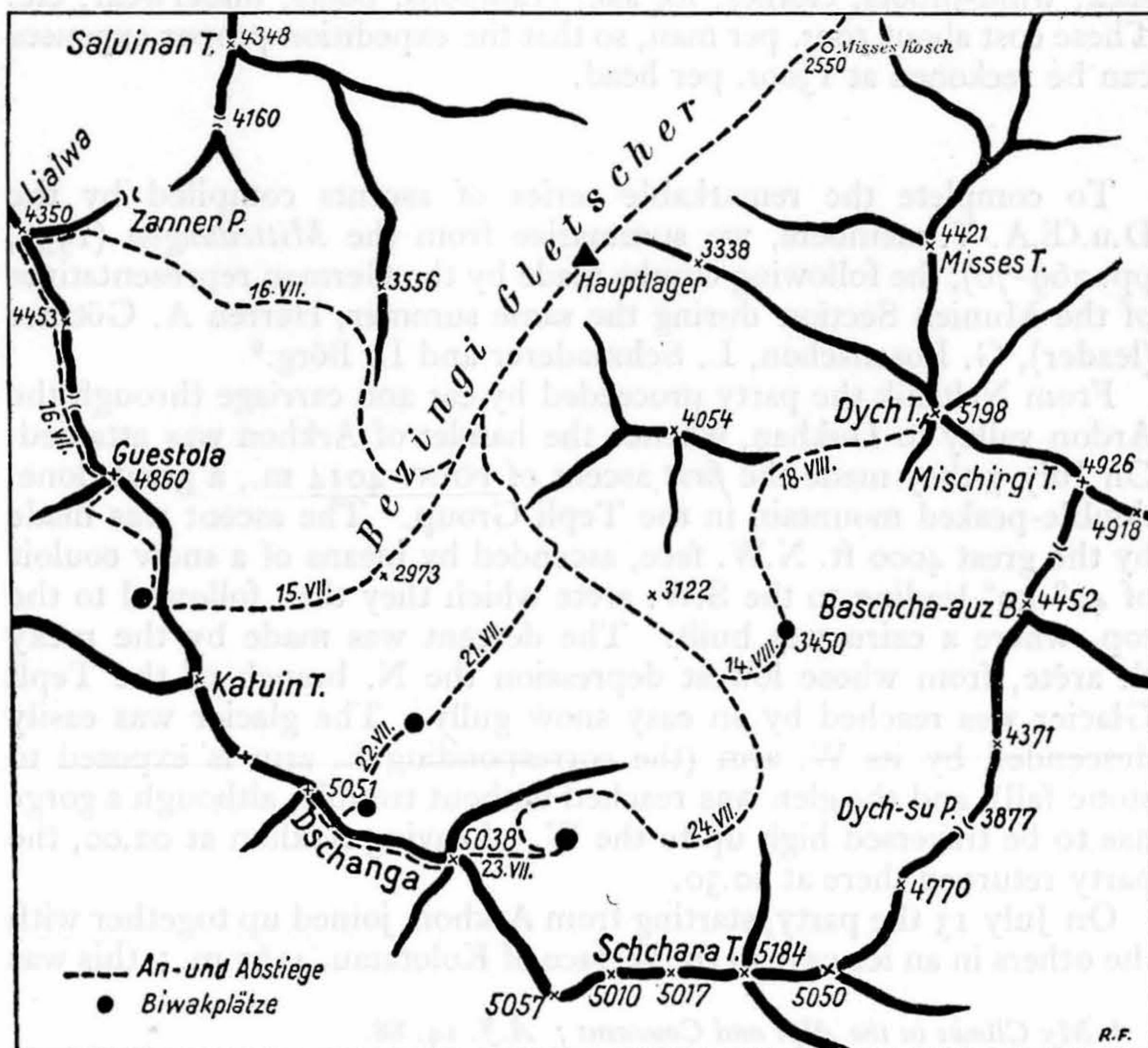
⁷ A. J. 16. 477 sqq.

the rocky W. arête for some ropes'-lengths and then descended the iced and shattered rocks of the N. face. Some 400 ft. lower down they came to an ice slope of 50° which they descended for 700 ft. The icefall was overcome by a double *rappel*, when the upper basin of the Bsedukh Glacier could be reached over steep névé slopes. The icefall of the glacier proving impracticable, a deviation was necessary towards the base of the N. arête. A bivouac was made on the ridge above the snow couloir, and camp regained next day.

Times :

Adylsu Camp		dep.	02.30	August 17
Gap in N. arête			07.30	
Bivouac			19.00	August 18
"		dep.	06.30	
Summit			07.15	
Bsedukh Glacier			16.00	
Bivouac			21.30	
Adylsu Camp			09.00	August 19

From August 14 to 17 Spannraft and Schwarzgruber remained marooned in a tent pitched at a height of 3450 m., on the moraine



BEZINGI HORSESHOE.

rising towards the S. from the Mishirgi valley to the Bezingi Glacier, some 4 hrs. distant from the Missesskosh. On August 18 they accomplished, in $11\frac{1}{2}$ hrs., the second ascent of the S.W. route of Dykhtau, 17,054 ft., by the same way that Mummery and Zurfluh had accomplished the first ascent of the mountain in 1888.⁸ Difficulties were increased by the fresh snow fallen in the last few days. In the upper parts the said difficulties were at times very severe. Some of the rock formations seem to have changed much, since places particularized by Mummery in his narrative could no longer be recognized, notably his 'gigantic sun-dial.' After the 'traverse to the left,' however, which we found to be the hardest place, there came the two perpendicular bulges which proved hard to negotiate. After the 'traverse,' the terrain became much steeper and two ropes'-lengths of direct, but not too arduous, climb had to be made. Extremely laborious the last chimney proved to be, reminding us of the *Schmittkamin* of the Fünffingerspitze. In the descent we bivouacked at 4400 m. by the 'White Tower' and on August 19 reached Bezingi in one stage.

The costs of the expedition from and to Vienna amounted for each participant to 1800 *schillings*, which included, however, a complete, new equipment. This comprised: tent, sleeping-bag, rucksack, wind-proofs, clothes, ice axe, crampons, boots, underwear, etc. These cost about 500s. per man, so that the expedition proper expenses can be reckoned at 1300s. per head.

To complete the remarkable series of ascents compiled by the D.u.Æ.A.-V. members, we summarize from the *Mitteilungen* (1935, pp. 269-70), the following climbs made by the German representatives of the Munich Section during the same summer, Herren A. Göttner (leader), G. Rosenschon, L. Schmaderer and L. Börg.⁹

From Naltshik the party proceeded by car and carriage through the Ardon valley to Dukhan, whence the hamlet of Arkhon was attained. On July 7 they made the *first* ascent of POINT 4014 m., a great, lone, double-peaked mountain in the Tepli Group. The ascent was made by the great 4000 ft. N.W. face, ascended by means of a snow couloir of 40° - 50° leading to the S.W. arête which they then followed to the top, where a cairn was built. The descent was made by the rocky S. arête, from whose lowest depression the N. branch of the Tepli Glacier was reached by an easy snow gully. The glacier was easily descended by its W. arm (the corresponding E. arm is exposed to stone fall), and the glen was reached without trouble, although a gorge has to be traversed high up to the W. Leaving Arkhon at 02.00, the party returned there at 20.30.

On July 13 the party, starting from Arkhon, joined up together with the others in an ice cave in the W. face of Kolotatau, 4167 m.; this was

⁸ *My Climbs in the Alps and Caucasus*; A.ŷ. 14. 88.

⁹ These young mountaineers, with the exception of the second named, were responsible for the *complete* traverse of the Péteret 'ridge' in 1934.—A.ŷ., 46. 409.

attained by a 3000 ft. high, steep snow gully. On the following day KOLOTATAU was duly climbed, *first* ascent. Descending an easy snow slope to the S.W. and then remounting over a peak of some 4000 m., a sharp snowy ridge led to the E. peak of Teplitau, 4200 m., previously climbed by Vittorio Sella and E. Gallo in 1896. Continuing, an extremely hard climb over the glazed and rotten teeth of the N.E. arête, some of which had to be turned, brought the party to the summit of TEPLITAU, 4423 m., at 13.00—*first* ascent. The descent was made down the 3000 ft. E. face by a steep snow gully to the southern Tepli

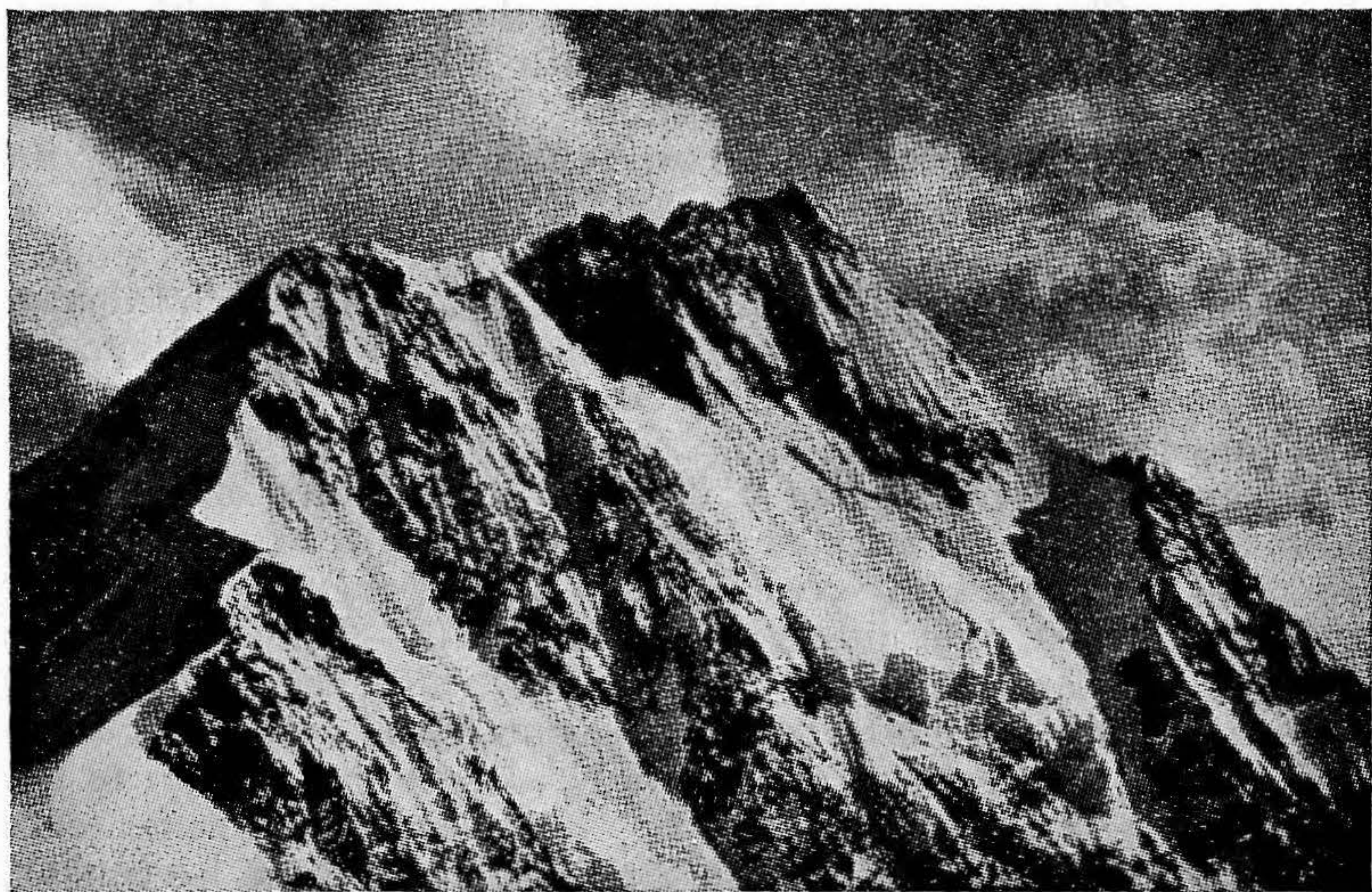


Photo by courtesy of Æ.-A.Z.]

TEPLITAU FROM KOLOTATAU

Glacier. Then, passing over point 2974 m., they attained Kolota where they slept in a herdsman's tent, 20.00. On the following day, July 15, remounting to point 2974 m., two of the party made the *first* ascent of Kolotatau from the E. The others made the *first* ascent and traverse of ARKHONTAU, *ca.* 4150 m.

Transferring their activities to the Adai Group, a camp was pitched at Rekom.¹⁰ On July 19 Göttner and Börg went up to the Zea (Tsaya or Zej) Glacier; near the lower icefall they took a newly constructed path on the N. side of the glen leading to a new geological station. Farther on they mounted débris to the S. ridge of TUR KHOKH, 13,500 ft., which was climbed over, in parts extremely difficult rocks, to the summit—*first* ascent by this route. The descent was made to the depression between this summit and ULLARG KHOKH, the latter's sharp and corniced N.E. arête being then ascended to the top,

¹⁰ For the Adai Group, see *A.Ź.* 29. 142 *sqq.*, and especially Mr. Raeburn's map, *loc. cit.*

14,084 ft. The descent was made to the said depression, whence a high snowy couloir brought the party to the Zea Glacier and Rekom.

Following a day's rest, Göttner and Rosenschon again mounted the Zea Glacier, camping near the second icefall. On the next day, falling ice and stones defeated an attempt on the W. face of [?] Adai Khokh, 15,244 ft. They then followed [*sic*] the Zea Glacier, bivouacking at the S.E. face of Uilpata, the highest peak of the group.¹¹ On July 23 they mounted a 1000 ft. ice couloir leading from the Zea Glacier to the depression between the Tvilisis and the S. peak of Bubis Khokh, known also as 'Double Peak'—*Merzbacher* again all wrong. TVILISIS, *ca.* 4300 m., was then attained with some difficulty *via* its N.E. arête—? *first* ascent. The peak from the Zea Glacier appears as a distinct snow-summit. Returning to the depression, the S. peak of BUBIS KHOKH, 14,878 ft., was climbed by its 1800 ft. difficult and dangerous, rocky S.W. face. From a gap N. of the peak, a difficult 400 ft. ice ridge led them to the N. peak of similar altitude—? *first* ascent. The descent was made to the gap and thence by a 60° couloir of bare ice to the Karagom Glacier, reached after much danger and labour. The glacier surface was descended and the party bivouacked at about 3800 m.

Meanwhile, after spending a night on a rock-islet of the Zea, Schmaderer and Börg attained over a crevassed glacier and difficult ice slope the depression between Uilpata and Songuta, where they again bivouacked. On July 23 they crossed the depression to the Karagom Glacier, whence *via* a rock and ice ridge, they attained the gap between the N. and S. peaks of Songuta, from which very steep and difficult, diagonal progress on its N. slope brought them to the summit-peak of SONGUTA, 14,629 ft. Returning by the same route to the gap, by a sharp and corniced ridge followed by an ice couloir, the N. peak, *ca.* 4400 m., was also reached—? *first* ascent. The return was made to the Karagom Glacier where the party bivouacked once more.

On July 24 the two parties joined up on the glacier and climbed Uilpata *via* the gap S. of the summit and the S.W. arête. They descended the S.E. flank of the peak exposed to falling ice, reaching Rekom over the Zea Glacier.

Later ELBRUZ, E. peak, 18,347 ft., was climbed, following which a member of the party became very ill. The three others together with a Russian mountaineer, Harlampiew, crossed the Betsho Pass to Suanetia. On August 9, *en route* for Ushba, they mounted from Mazeri to the Gul Glacier where they bivouacked. On August 10, second bivouac at the 'Red Corner.' On August 11 the final rampart was attained over bare ice; missing the 'Schulze' route owing to mists, they forced with extraordinary difficulty an ascent to the left and attained the S. peak of USHBA, 15,409 ft., at 17.00. Roping down

¹¹ ? Uilpata is the alternative name for Adai Khokh, 15,244 ft., on the *Raeburn* map; the party declares *Merzbacher* to be incorrect, as pointed out by *Raeburn* in *A.J.* 29. *loc. cit.*

the N. face—three *rappels* of 100 ft. each—they bivouacked in that face. On August 12 [? 13] they descended to the Ushba depression, whence the N. PEAK was attained at 09.00, where a great storm broke, causing a most laborious descent of the N. arête. On the ice slope where the great step in the ridge must be turned, they moved to the right bearing towards the névé terrace below the step and far into the peak's W. face. By means of pitons they roped down, seven *rappels* in all, each of 100 ft., but were nevertheless benighted again before attaining the glacier. A fourth bivouac accordingly was made in an avalanche-free notch hewn in the ice. After a bad night, by endless more *rappels* they attained the Ushba Glacier, whence a very laborious, dangerous and difficult descent over the Sheldi Glacier brought the party to Adylsu in the Baksan valley. This was the second traverse of Ushba, the first having been made from N. to S.¹²

On August 19 Göttner and Börg with some others of another party camped at Missesskosh, reaching the Russian camp at 3500 m. on the following day. On August 21 they crossed the crevassed Missess Glacier towards the right to the base of DYKHTAU's N.W. arête which they proceeded to climb. The arête constituted first a steep ice edge, then rocky pinnacles difficult of access. At 13.00 névé was reached and, at 14.00, the final rampart. Perpendicular steps gave extremely severe work and a bivouac at 16,000 ft. on a narrow ledge proved obligatory. On the following day the N. arête, 400 ft. below the top, was attained, along which after difficult ice work the summit was reached—*first* ascent by the N.W. arête. The others had turned back from the bivouac and were compelled to sleep out again. The descent of the two Munich climbers was made by the snowy N. arête to the gap in front of Missesstau, when the difficult Missess Glacier was descended to the Russian camp, 19.00, and Missesskosh. KASBEK was climbed subsequently.

A French party, visiting the Caucasus during the same summer, encountered so much bad weather that the only successful ascent recorded was that of the last-named summit.

¹² August 10–14, 1903. Herren L. Distel, G. Leuchs and H. Pfann.—*A. J.* 21. 570–1. In an interesting account of the 1935 traverse, *D.A.Z.* 1936, pp. 52–6, the height of the S. peak is given as 4705 m., while that of the N. peak is stated to be 4737 m. [? 4707 m.]. Should this measurement be correct, and we believe Herr C. Egger concurs as regards the height of the respective peaks, then the *first* ascent of USHBA was made on September 28, 1888, by Mr. J. G. Cockin with Ulrich Almer.—*A. J.* 14. 93, 199–200. Freshfield (ii, p. 246) gives the heights of the peaks as follows: S. peak, 15,409 ft.; N. peak, 15,400 ft.—*Editor*.