

28 March Day 10 Namche!

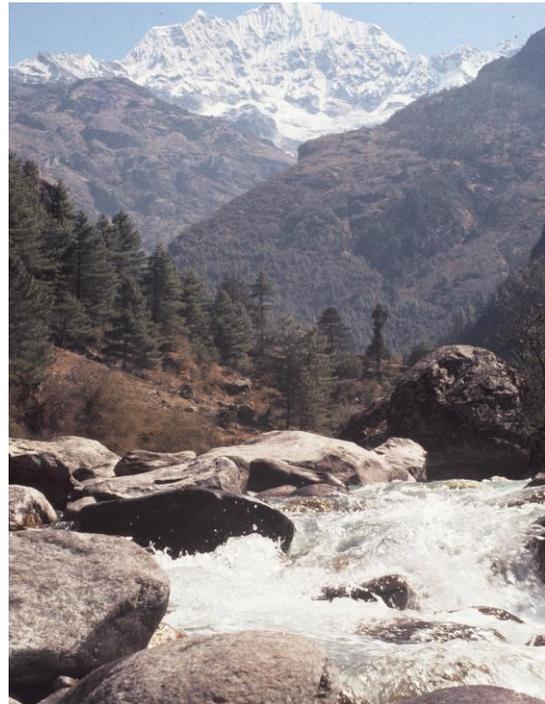
I am sitting, writing in a Sherpa home in Namche Bazaar. I am disappointed in this 11,300 foot Sherpa village, and I'll tell you exactly why. Tourists!!! Yes, tourists. It's cold, it's snowing slightly, and European and American rich folk are walking up and down the streets buying tourist-type items. It seems spoiled, soiled, tainted plus - I didn't want them to be here, here of all places after nine and a half really tough days of trekking. It's a gloomy, little village carved out of a mountain at 11,000 + feet, and there is hardly any other way to describe it. Perhaps some of the charm is in the hardy lives of the people who make this their home.

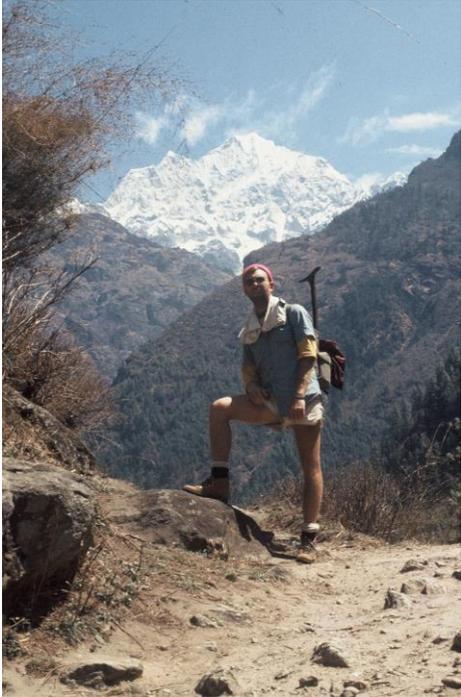
Once again, I have been extremely fortunate in having a Sherpa guide. We stay in a Sherpa home devoid of other's clamor, racket and general tourist banter. This is a special place, it should not have been so trashed by the rich who can afford to fly to Shyangboche and walk around the Everest area at their leisure.

Anyway, I wish to describe this morning's trek before disenchanting you any further. I kept feeling as though I were walking up a canyon somewhere out West in the good ol' USA. We walked quickly I might add, along the floor of the valley of the Dudh Kosi River. It was an emotional experience for me. God's great power really seemed to fill me to the brim.

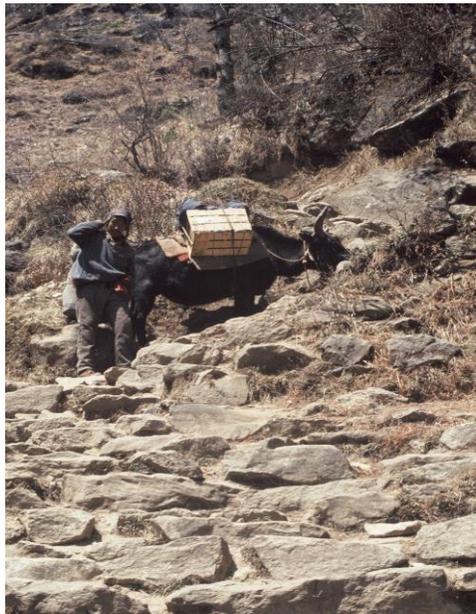
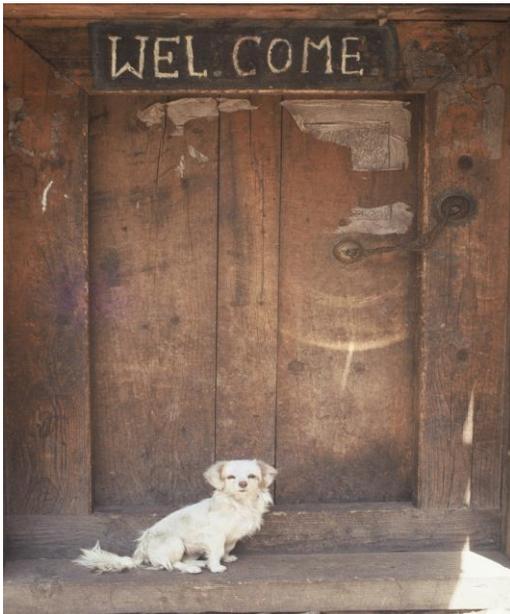


A Hillary bridge and sheer God-made beauty all around





The trail wound its way up, down and around and across the Dudh Kosi River with beauty everywhere; above is yet another Hillary Bridge.



Kodak moments were everywhere; a puppy welcomes us, and on the right, there's no passing a yak on its way to market at Namche...one lane road.

An inspiration to the mood and feeling for the whole trek seemed to pour into me. I was grateful to my God for blessing me with this journey amongst His masterpieces of nature.

The climb out to Namche wasn't too bad, considering the entire time we followed the river we were actually gaining altitude.



Finally, Namche. Note the rim of the mountain at the top of the picture; that is where I climbed to Shyangboche and the airstrip in the picture below.

I am going to Tengboche tomorrow morning by way of Shyangboche and the Short Takeoff and Landing (STOL) field up there (on top of that mountain plateau). We have made good time, and I don't wish to sit around dreaming when I've got responsibilities back in Thailand. I have not yet been allowed to view Sagarmatha (Mt Everest) due to the clouds that poured into the area starting about noon. (A note, I was told these clouds roll in off the plains of India just about every afternoon in the spring). I glimpsed Lhotse briefly, but I will work hard tomorrow to film the area appropriately.

I feel perhaps a change in the weather has had much to do with my (initial) feelings of Namche, but the spirit of the trip was somewhat lost by seeing all the tourists

floating around the streets. I apologize for harsh remarks made perhaps hastily; however, my feelings should be recorded as that is a part of this diary.



Our host and her baby---simply precious.

At 1615 (4:15 PM), after much cheese and potatoes and tea, Sarkay Tsering (my Sherpa) and I went up, and I mean up, to the STOL field at Shyangboche. I wanted to see just what I would be flying out of. WOW! It was about 9,000 feet of hard grass. (A note not in the journal - Mrs Hillary mentions the building of this field in her book, and indeed, some personal references to the Sherpa team that helped build it). It begins against the mountain, dips slightly and then gains height and the edge of about 300 yards of dug up dirt, then air and a long drop (straight down to the Dudh Kosi river). The clouds were coming in from all directions; only for an instant did I see a beautiful peak isolated in the clouds. Where there was beautiful blue sky and wispy clouds this morning is now fog and very large dense black/blue clouds. It continues to spit snow as darkness arrives. Tomorrow, at 0800 (8:00b AM) we're to meet with the STOL field men to discuss my flight out. Then, on to Tengboche.