

29 March Day 11 I came to the Mountain

Today, I came to the Mountain.

I'm sitting staring up the valley at clouds shrouding the four big peaks of this valley. But, before the clouds set in, I had a clear view of Lhotse, Sagarmathe (Everest), and Ama Dablam.

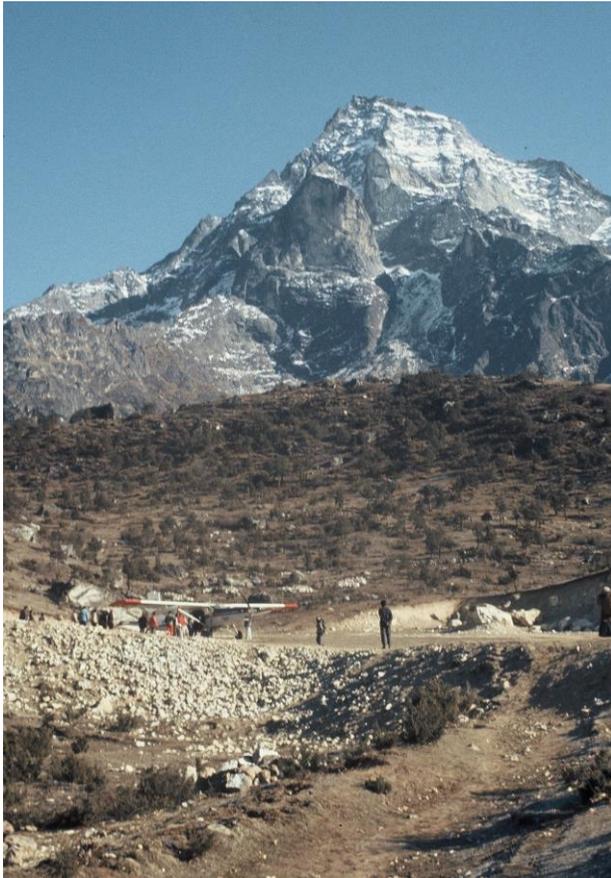


Everest, Lhotse, and Ama Dablam from atop a bluff over looking Shyangboche Airfield behind me, Dudh Kosi River Valley to my left and the Kunde just over this hill. By way of identification, Ama Dablam is the single large thrusting peak to the right; Lhotse is in the middle of the picture almost straight ahead; and Mt Everest is the highest peak in the middle of the "peak cluster" just to the left of middle of the picture.

They are really beautiful to behold and create a massive feeling within you. But, as I noted, you must see them in the morning, for the afternoon brings the clouds that cover the peaks.

We left Namche at 0705 (7:05 AM) this morning for Shyangboche and the STOL field. After much chatter between my Sherpa and another field official, I came to find my ticket awaited me. It was for the 3<sup>rd</sup> of April, but we had no problem

changing it to the 31<sup>st</sup> of March. We watched the Pilatus Porter (STOL airplane) land, then take off again.



He uses about 4,000 feet of the "runway" then (up) and banks down the valley as he begins to gain altitude. The pilot seems to be a jolly Aussie (actually turned out to be Swiss) who jokes with everyone as he sips his tea.

I'm really thankful for the blessing of health the Lord has given me on this journey. I, just last night, picked up a raspy throat, and it developed because I didn't keep warm enough last night prior to climbing to Shyangboche field. Then, I got really heated up on the climb, and cooled off again on the top.

Donna, the American gal I wrote of previously slept with us last night in the Sherpa house. I really enjoyed her company and a chance to unwind a bit with an American. She's developed some sort of chest cold or bronchitis, I think. She complained of it in the climb to Namche and again had problems last night with chest pains and breathing. Namche is absolutely the wrong place to develop any kind of medical problem though the STOL field above Namche is available for emergencies. She

washed her hair and took a shower last night which was perhaps a bit foolish, if in fact she is developing a bad chest cold. At any rate, she's a pretty tough gal, and I hope that she'll be feeling better tonight (she's the gal traveling by herself).



The Kunde, and a village mentioned repeatedly by Mrs Hillary; below, the school they built with the Sherpas.



The pictures above are: on the right overlooking the school, immediately in the foreground, then on the left, the school houses. As noted above, the Kunde lies over the knoll from where I took the picture of Everest above. Beyond this point you drop down over to the Dudh Kosi River again.



Look closely at the construction of this bridge. It is really quite functional; however, also note what must happen when the river swells excessively. Sir Edmund's wife tells of one of these bridge repairs in her book, *High Time*.

The climb to Tengboche is not bad, but I took plenty of time. We're banging away mighty close to 13,000 feet and over exertion would be foolish now.

Some of Everest is clearing slowly, but I'll wait until tomorrow morning for any more photos. If the moon is still full tonight I'm going to burn about half a roll going after the peaks at night. The area of the monastery is bleak in my opinion, and the perpetual stone of the Sherpa buildings really tones everything down. But, in the whole analysis, the view from Tengboche up the valley is worth the trek.

1600 (4:00PM)

We are camped just above the monastery outside the rock wall, surrounded by large Himalayan peaks.

I have good news. I finally had my first bowel movement in 11 days. WOW! I can't help but feel that it was to be that way since diarrhea is a real problem on the trail. Anyway, I wanted to record it since it was a slight concern to me during the past 11 days. The peaks are still covered with clouds, but tonight perhaps...