First men on the summit of Mount Everest

Breaking news: We have received news that E.P. Hillary, a New Zealand member of the ninth expedition, has conquered Mount Everest. He reached the summit at 29,002 feet with the Sherpa Tenzing on Friday 29th May.



News of the successful expedition was given to the Queen at Buckingham Palace last night. It was first made public by United States radio stations, shortly before midnight, and this was confirmed in New Delhi in a message from Colonel Hunt.

Colonel John Hunt, who is a serving officer of the King's Royal Rifle Corps, led the British team on this expedition. Colonel Hunt expressed his delight, “we couldn’t be more thrilled, when I saw my men making their way back down to the base camp, and I knew they had succeeded. We spent all night celebrating while Hillary and Tenzing slept.”

These brave, adventurous men were Mr E. P. Hillary, who is a beekeeper in New Zealand, a man always looking for the next big quest. He served in the Royal New Zealand Air Force during the war before setting his sights on higher ground. Tenzing, who is 39 years old, was the leader of the Sherpa guides. This fearless man was a mountain dweller on the southern slopes of the Himalayas and he has taken part in more attempts on Everest than any other man has.

The journey to the summit

With 350 porters and 10,000lb of baggage, the party set out from the Nepalese base at Katmandu on March 10 and trekked 170 miles to their headquarters at Nanche Bazar. They arrived on March 25th and began training and trying out the equipment. After weeks of dangerous climbs and icy weather, it came time for the two explorers, Tenzing and Hillary to make the final step towards the summit. At 6:30am on May 29th, both men started to make their way up to the summit. Tenzing explained, “Each step felt like an hour, we were battling exhaustion, freezing temperatures and dangerous ridges, I was moaning all the way!”



Their biggest obstacle was a vertical 40 foot rock but with Hillary’s knowledge and experience, he was able to find a way to get himself and Tenzing up to the top.

“I was in shock when we finally made it to the top, all we could see was sky! To my surprise, Tenzing threw his arms around, we were overjoyed!” Explained Hillary.

Tenzing carried three flags, the Union Jack, the United Nations flag and the Nepalese flag and planted at the top as a sign of the first men to make it to the summit.

Their fame was spreading even as Hillary and Tenzing left the mountain. "When we came back toward Kathmandu and everyone wanted to know which of us made it to the top first. Tenzing and I agreed to tell who stepped on the summit first," Sir Edmund recalls today. “The Nepalese people wanted Tenzing to be the first as he was from the area.”

When asked what they wanted to do next, both men agreed that they wanted to rest their feet somewhere sunny until it was time to begin their next adventure.