

Photographs from the 1921 Mount Everest Expedition

The limited edition photographic prints featured in this brochure focus on the first Royal Geographical Society and Alpine Club Mount Everest expedition in 1921.

These stunning prints are the first in this format to be created from negatives in the Royal Geographical Society (with IBG)'s Collections and include the newly digitised fragile silver nitrate negatives, housed for the Society by the British Film Institute, as well as a selection of celluloid and glass plate negatives preserved at the Society.

Taken by George Mallory, Charles Howard-Bury, Alexander Wollaston and Edward Oliver Wheeler with Abdul Jalil Khan, the photographs were originally intended to complement the purpose of the expedition - to carry out new and more detailed survey work in the region. However, the aesthetic quality of these images - among the first to document Everest - is remarkable. The selection also includes some of the finest panoramic photographs of any high mountain region ever taken.

A selection of the most historically and aesthetically significant of these negatives have been scanned at an extremely high resolution, allowing for a better analysis of their material quality and state of preservation. The high resolution scans were then digitally cleaned and restored; a painstaking process that requires up to one day of work per photograph. Once restored to the original condition, some of George Mallory's negatives were combined into panoramas as he had originally intended, and all of the photographs were printed through the platinum-palladium printing process.



'Mount Everest in cloud from summit north of Advanced Base.'
George Leigh Mallory (1886-1924), Glass Plate Negative, MEE21/0681

“Mountain shapes are often fantastic seen through a mist: these were like the wildest creation of a dream ... Gradually, very gradually, we saw the great mountain sides and glaciers and arêtes, now one fragment and now another through the floating rifts, until far higher in the sky than imagination had dared to suggest the white summit of Everest appeared.”

George Mallory, from his account in the official publication of the expedition: 'Mount Everest: the Reconnaissance, 1921', Edward Arnold & Co Ltd

The 1921 British Mount Everest Expedition

Limited Edition Platinum Prints from the first Everest Reconnaissance Expedition



Above: Team member in foreground with Mount Everest, Kangshung Face and Lhotse from the Karta Glacier, MEE21/0482;
Below: 'Cho Uyo from Dirty Glacier Summit on east slope Kyetrak Glacier opposite Cho Rabsang.', MEE21/0411.
Glass Plate Negatives, Edward Oliver Wheeler (1890-1962).



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The chemical nature of photographic negatives makes them a particularly fragile form of cultural heritage. Many of the original glass and celluloid negatives stored in archives have already suffered from the passage of time, poor processing, or mishandling. All negatives, regardless of their current condition, will fade and disappear with time.

The mission of Salto Ulbeek Publishers is to secure and advance the preservation, interpretation and appreciation of key photographic archives before they fade. This is achieved through longstanding research and a continually improved understanding of historical and contemporary photographic techniques that range from large-format analogue and high-resolution digital image capture, to platinum-palladium printing. This knowhow is supplemented by the personal photographic experience of each member of the Salto Ulbeek team, and is enhanced by a meticulous approach to the production of limited edition books and portfolios.



Top: 'View from Windy Col Camp, 22,500 ft., showing Everest, North Col and North Peak looking W.' Howard-Bury, C1827 & C1835

Above left: 'Chomolönzo and Makalu from summit 21,200 ft. southwest of Advanced Base.' Mallory, MEE21/0705-0706

Above right: 'Members of Expedition at 17,300 ft. Camp'. Wollaston, MEE21/0396

Left: Images, left to right: Porters climbing along a ridge. Howard-Bury, MEE21/0571; 'Descending from Karpo Riwo, head of Kama Valley, Aug. 7th.' Mallory, MEE21/0805; 'George Mallory climbing like a spider.' Bullock, MEE21/0799

Print Prices and Sizes

Panorama prints and multiple image prints

Medium: (45 x 76cm) £2,410.00 + VAT

Large: (66 x 112cm) £3,945.00 + VAT

Single or double image print

Medium: (55 x 68cm) £1,975.00 + VAT

Large: (76 x 112cm) £3,085.00 + VAT

Edition sizes (per print)

Medium: 30 prints, Large: 20 prints

Prices include limited edition certification and UK mainland courier delivery

Enquiries

To make a private appointment to view the prints, please contact: images@rgs.org



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