

The Everest Files.

THE EVEREST BASE CAMP BLOG

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EVEREST HAS LONG BEEN A MOUNTAIN OF FASCINATION FOR ME. MY JOURNEY TO THE MOUNTAIN BEGAN WITH A SINGLE BOOK.. **PHOTO:** MATT DICKINSON

'THE EVEREST FILES' AUTHOR IS BACK ON EVEREST AGAIN THIS YEAR ON A FILMING MISSION. IN THIS SERIES OF BLOGS HE REPORTS BACK FROM THE HIGHEST MOUNTAIN ON EARTH!

WHY EVEREST? HOW DID IT ALL BEGIN?

I am often asked at schools where my fascination for Everest began.

The answer is simple. It began with a single book, at my grandfather's house when I was seven or eight years old. Both my grandfather and my great grandfather had been big readers. There were thousands of books in their houses.

Shortly after my great grandfather died, my grandfather showed me his copy of *The Ascent of Everest* by John Hunt, the account of the very first epic climb to the summit of the highest peak on earth. I remember being enchanted by the pictures. It seemed such an incredible adventure and I never imagined for a single second that I would follow in the footsteps of Edmund Hillary and Sherpa Tenzing to reach that most sacred place.

MORE BOOKS!

Later, as I become more interested in climbing and mountaineering, I continued to read more and more books on the theme. I remember finding them in the library of my school when I was about twelve or



CONTEMPLATING EVEREST FROM THE NEARBY VIEWPOINT OF KALA PATTAR. PUTTING MY FEET UP FOR ONCE! **PHOTO:** MATT DICKINSON

thirteen years old and devouring them avidly. They were written by great British climbing heroes like Doug Scott and Chris Bonington. I could not imagine that I would one day film some of those great heroes myself for my documentaries!

Reading brought the mountains alive in a way that amazed me. I really felt lost in the stories.

YEARNING TO TRY IT MYSELF

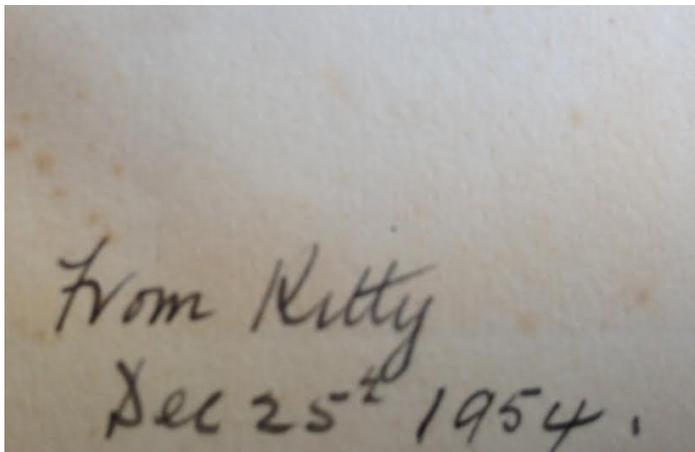
By the time I was fifteen I was getting really keen to try some mountaineering myself. I found ways to get to the Peak District, went rock climbing at the famous Stanage Edge and took long solo treks across the boggy marshland of Kinder Scout. But Everest already had a hold on my mind and I wanted to see it for myself. A gap year journey to the Himalaya followed, only to be interrupted by sickness and running out of money.

But the siren call of the mountain had a hold on me and it was only a matter of time before I would travel to the mountain itself.

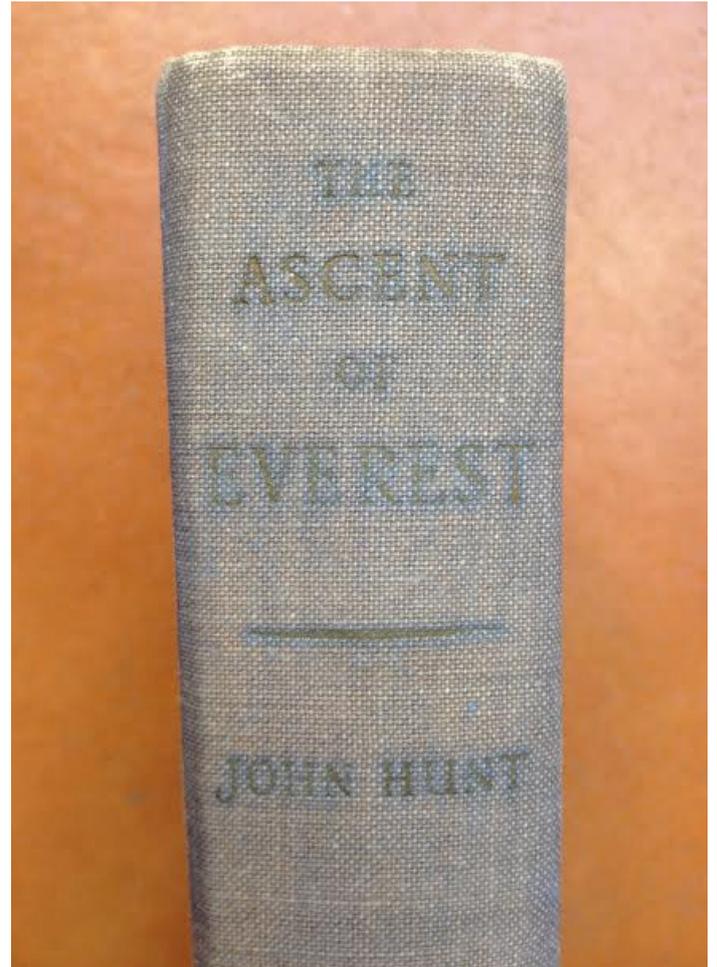
One of my great regrets is that my grandfather died before I summited the mountain. I think he, and my great grandfather too, would have been utterly amazed, and probably very proud, to know that someone from their family had reached the top.



MY GREAT GRANDFATHER'S PRECIOUS BOOK. **PHOTO:** MATT DICKINSON



IT WAS GIVEN TO HIM BY KITTY, A FAMILY FRIEND, AT CHRISTMAS 1954, ONE YEAR AFTER THE GREAT ASCENT HAPPENED. **PHOTO:** MATT DICKINSON



IT WAS MY GREAT GRANDFATHER'S COPY OF THE ASCENT OF EVEREST THAT STARTED MY OBSESSION. **PHOTO:** MATT DICKINSON