

'IFYE' Glen Porter Finds Nepalese Friendly People

Ed. Note: The following is 90% of the people make a series of excerpts from a report written by Glenn Porter, son of Mr. and Mrs. Edgar Porter, Washington Boro. R1 Glenn is now in the International Farm Youth Exchange program in Nepal. Basigoon, Gakorna, Nepal October 20, 1961

Nepal is an independent kingdom (not a part of India as many people think) lying along the southern slope of the Himalaya Mountains, northeast of India between the Tibetan Highland on the north, and the Ganges Plain of India on the south. Kathmandu, the capital, is about the same latitude as Tampa, Florida. Nepal is a beautiful and scenic country about 100 miles wide and 500 miles long, which is about the size of Wisconsin. The climate is varied from tropical in the south to very cold in the High Himalayas, the highest elevation being Mt. Everest.



GLENN PORTER

The Nepalese are a friendly and hospitable people I saw more smiling faces after

five minutes in Nepal than the two days I spent in India.

I am now living with my first host family, the "Mani Ran Challise's", who live in the village of Basigoon, Gokarna, located about six miles from Kathmandu. He is a Brahman, one of the highest castes among the Hindus, although he is not a strict one. He is more well-to-do than most of the people. He teaches in an elementary school, owns about four acres of land and raises rice, wheat, millet, corn, one banana tree, and one orange tree. The bananas are just getting ripe, but I am afraid I will miss the oranges.

By the way, I've seen green grapefruit a foot in diameter.

We live in a two story brick house with a tile roof. The floors are constructed of bamboo girders overlaid with bamboo strips, covered with clay that is well dried. The main girders are of hand hewn wood. There is no heating except the open wood stove in the kitchen. If you have to buy wood for fuel in Kathmandu, it is quite expensive. A load that a man can carry on his back costs

about \$1.00. I will be staying with this family for two weeks — visited some of the 4-H Club plots. Here the clubs have a joint project instead of individual projects like we do in the States because the parents cannot afford them. A club meeting followed, with introductions, business, a talk by me on 4-H in the States through an interpreter, and some native dances by two of the club members. Now it was time for lunch. The menu was the ever present rice, (You have it at every meal except tea,) chicken which is another item served only on special occasions to those who will eat it, dal, a liquid made from lentils or pulse, a bran type of thing to mix with the rice, potatoes in a sauce that was really spiced, and two raw vegetable dishes. (I may not eat any raw vegetables for reasons of health.)

I also spent one night in another hill village with the principal of the Rural Institute where the Village Development workers are trained. In the last phase of their training they spend two weeks of practical training in

a village. During this the principal makes an overnight visit to each group trainees and returns to desk in the morning. He travels by bicycle or on foot, refusing to go by jeep, as he wants to set an example for the trainees, even though is no young man. One of the problems is to get people really work, because as they get some education they look for a soft office and to do a good job as Village Development workers in the mountain areas leads a rough life. On a particular trip we rode bicycles for about one half hour.

Bicycling in Nepal is an adventure for there are side walks in most places where they are they are used. The roads are steep and full of holes and ditches some so bad we had to carry our cycles across. You have to dodge stones, holes, people, cows, dogs, and water buffalo. The buffalo do not move for anything I saw a scrape with the horns one but it did not throw. After a night's rest on a hard floor with one blanket which was sufficient, (Turn to page 14)



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