



# The Hugh Low Trail: The Quest for the Historical Trail to the Summit of Kinabalu

*Chin Shui Hiung, Ravi Mandalam, Christopher Chin*

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"7th March.-At 9 A. M. this morning the mercury of the barometer stood at 27,174, the thermometer being 760 in the shade. At noon I packed up and notwithstanding the great fatigue of the preceding day determined to push on towards the great mountain.....One of the tribe has agreed to guide us to the highest point known to these people." Thus wrote Hugh Low in his journal on the start of his historic ascent of Mount Kinabalu on 7th of March 1851. His subsequent climb to the summit of the mountain and his discovery of a great many exotic plants on its slopes form a fascinating chapter in the history of pre-colonial Sabah. Today, visitors in tens of thousands climb the mountain every year and stand on the highest point of the peak that bears his name. Few would however realize today, the enormity of the difficulties that Low and other 19th-century explorers after him faced to organize an expedition to the summit of Kinabalu. What was the path that he took to reach the top of the mountain? This has been a subject of interesting speculation in recent years.

In March 2001, exactly 150 years after Hugh Low's historic climb, a band of amateur climbers from the Sabah Society sought to recreate his feat by attempting to retrace his original route to the summit of Kinabalu. This book is a narration of the story of this expedition, the selection of the team members, the preparations, the triumphs and tribulations and the surprises in store for this band of adventure seekers. It is profusely illustrated with photographs of scenic locations and wild flora on remote parts of Mount Kinabalu.

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