

South America¹

Colombia

Nevado del Huila Improvements in both roads and political stability permitted a reconnaissance of this little-known tropical peak by the author, and a small party in 1969. Although its elevated snow mass (c 5350 m) is conspicuous from the Cauca valley and the populous city of Cali it had gone unclimbed since the first ascent of its principal peak by Erwin Kraus in 1944. Dr Carlos Lehmann and Guillermo Cajiao, both of Cali, provided help and advice from a local base, virtually a prerequisite for parties with little time. Our base in the village of Toez on the Rio Paez can now be reached by new roads leading over the broad flanks of the Central Cordillera, a distance of 300 km from Cali. Excellent porters are available in the village. We followed the new road to a point within 10 miles of the glaciers and employed a trail cut up the Rio Verdun to the paramo. This unusual zone is very wet and spongy underfoot and free of trees except for *espeletias* whose rosettes of woolly pale green leaves rise on stalks up to 20 ft in height: a type of landscape that is a peculiar feature of Ecuadorian and Colombian mountains. The glaciers radiating outward from the north peak proved to be unexpectedly broken up. We were able to make but one attempt on the highest, Central Peak, but were diverted onto a rib of the North Peak by ice cliffs and were forced to give up.

In 1970 our party of eight returned by the same route to a higher and better located Base Camp. The summit party also included Jon Gary Ullin, Steve Salva, and Robert E. Dietz IV. We devoted one day to threading the ice-falls of the central amphitheatre on the west flank of the snow mass and on 10 January made our way to the fog-enshrouded summit, skirting ice-falls and active fumaroles. A narrative report, including useful advice by the expedition doctor, George Van B. Cochran, M.D., and an account by Erwin Kraus of his first ascent, are available on request.

Philip C. Ritterbush

Peru

CORDILLERA BLANCA

The earthquake of 31 May 1970 in the Santa valley hit the heart of the populated area at the foot of the Cordillera Blanca. Yungay, Huaraz and Caras, which

¹ We are indebted to E. Echevarria for most of this information.

had been the starting point for many expeditions, took heavy damage. As a result, mountaineering activities in the 1970 season were extremely limited. Fortunately, the earthquake occurred when the dry season was beginning, a happy circumstance that reduced hardships for both local inhabitants and mountaineers. Of the latter, who were early in the field, one group from Japan escaped without mishap, but a Czechoslovakian expedition camped near Huascarán was totally destroyed. Fifteen expedition members and a Chilean climber who had joined them, were buried under a rock and ice avalanche that fell on their camp on the Yanganuco valley. A party of twenty men of the Cuerpo de Socorro Andino (the Chilean mountain rescue service) was dispatched from Santiago, but was unable to recover the bodies. The little mountaineering that took place in the Cordillera Blanca refers mainly to the ascents of the 1970 New Zealand expedition to this range, which was active in the Alpamayo and Pucahirca groups. The group (Jim Jolly, leader, John Glasgow, Alex Buchanan, Peter Gough, David White, Hugh Wilson and John Stanton) placed its Base Camp on the shore of Pucacocha (lake), at about 4500 m and accomplished the following ascents:

Nevado Jancarurish, 5601 m, Stanton, Wilson, 6 June.

Nevado Jancarurish, 5601 m, Glasgow, Gough, 12 June, first ascent of East ridge.

Nevado Tayapampa, 5675 m, Wilson, Stanton, 13 June, first ascent of East ridge.

Nevado Pucahirca Oeste (claimed to be 6000 m high), a first ascent; Glasgow, Gough, Stanton, Wilson, White, by way of South buttress.

Nevado Pucarashta, c 5500 m (corresponds to the 'lesser snow peak, c 18,100 ft, lying between Alpamayo and Pucahirca Sur', climbed by J. Ricker and N. von Tunzelmann; see *A.J.* 74 249); first ascent of North-east face, Buchanan, Wilson and an American visitor, Steve Milard, 4 July.

Nevado Alpamayo, 5950 m, Jolly, Stanton, first ascent of North face, 6 July.

An attempt on an unnamed summit between Pucahirca and Pucarashta was abandoned for lack of time. The party reported many avalanches during the earthquake; Pucahirca Oeste lost its summit cone. But the effects on the Santa valley were not fully learned by the expedition almost until its return. A German expedition of the Bayerland section of the D.A.V., which was also bound for the Pucahirca-Alpamayo group of peaks, changed its plans on account of the earthquake and transferred instead its activities to Southern Peru (see Cordillera de Vilcabamba, below). Upon its return to Lima, the expedition leader, Herr Walther Welsch, was asked by the Peruvian authorities to make a photogrammetric survey of the avalanche area above the destroyed towns of Ranrahirca and Yungay, at the foot of Huascarán. While Herr Welsch,

a geodesist, was at work, other members of his expedition climbed Huascarán Norte (6655 m) to check possibilities of further avalanches. Fritz Weidmann, and Jurgan Vogt reached the top via the normal route on 21 July. Heinz Hauer, with the local porters Justiniano Huamán and Marcelino Morales repeated the ascent on 22 July, as did Manfred Rogge, Heinz Kobrich and Herbert Karasek on 27 July.

CORDILLERA ORIENTAL

This seems to be an accepted name for the Huagaruncho group. A joint American-Norwegian party also destined for Northern Peru visited instead this range, situated east of Lima. The whole party (Leif-Norman Patterson, leader, James Jones, Americans, and the Norwegians Trond Aas, Odd Eliassen and Jon Teigland) made the second ascent of Huagaruncho by a new route, the South ridge, on 2 July. The last two climbers mentioned chose a different line of descent, the West ridge, thus traversing the mountain. The name of this peak has various spellings: Waqar Uncho (original name), Huagoruncho, Huangaruncho. Heights obtained belong to the American Geographical Society Expedition (1928), with 5748 m, and the British 1957 expedition, with 18,797 ft, or 5729 m.

Thereafter, Patterson and Jones made the first ascent of Incatana, (Peak 32), 5122 m, and Patterson, with Eliasse, the third of Jancahuay (Peak 33), 5160 m (8 and 10 July, respectively).

CORDILLERA DE VILCABAMBA

Before ascending Huascarán Norte three times (see above), the Bayerland expedition had also been active in the Salcantay group of the Cordillera Vilcabamba, of Southern Peru (Cuzco and Abancay districts). From 13 June to early July, the Bavarians climbed seven peaks over 5000 m, all from their Base Camp situated south-east of Nevado Salcantay. Peaks climbed were Points 5100 m (five times), on South-east ridge of Salcantay; 5000 m (seven times); 5170 m (four times); 5130 m (three times) and 5350 m. In the area north of the latter point, that is, toward the great Nevado Soray, they also climbed Pt 5075 m and Pt 5184 m. All these *Fünftausenders* were hitherto untrodden. Thereafter the climbers attempted Salcantay. J. Vogt, H. Höbrich, M. Olzowy, H. Hauer and the leader, Herr Welsch, tackled the 1300 m high South buttress, but had to abandon the ascent on account of lack of proper ice equipment. Meanwhile, other members of the expedition had tried the mountain via the 1968 Japanese

route (North-east ridge) and reached the top on 29 June, thus achieving the seventh ascent (F. Wiedmann, M. Rogge and H. Harasek).

The height of Salcantay has been fixed by Herr Welsch as 6271 m, accepting this trigonometrical figure of the Peruvian army's Instituto Geográfico. Therefore, the two previous heights recorded by Hiram Bingham (20,500 ft, in 1911), and by Dr G. Egeler (6081 m, in 1956) can be now replaced by this more modern figure.

CORDILLERA URUBAMBA

A party of five New Zealanders and one Rhodesian entered the Pampaminas and the Plateriyayoc valleys and made the following ascents:

Terijhuay massif:

Gatuyoc, c 5300 m (West ridge and South face) and Quenti West Peak, c 5060 m (West ridge), both on 14 July, by B. Gunn, J. Petheram, J. Nankervis and J. Wild.

Iscay Chiptana, over 4700 m (first ascent; East ridge), on 5 July, by Cathie Harding, B. Webb and Nankervis.

Plateriyayoc massif:

Paycunapac Quilla, c 4900 m (East ridge), on 21 June, by Nankervis, and on 15 July by Gunn and Wild via a new route, the North face.

Pucará, c 4970 m (first ascent, North ridge and East face), on 1 August, by Gunn and Nankervis.

Cuchupicchu, c 4900 m (first ascent; East ridge), on 2 August, by Nankervis.

Palanganayoc massif:

Quem, c 4900 m (first ascent; East face), on 23 July, by Gunn, Harding and Petheram.

Tana Yana Ñañacuna, c 4940 m (first ascent; North ridge), on 19 July, by Nankervis and Petheram.

Yuracturán, c 4940 m (first ascent; West ridge), on 22 July, by B. and P. Webb and Petheram.

Yunca Huacaychac, c 5060 m (first ascent; South face and East ridge), on 25 July, by Harding and Nankervis.

Palanganayoc, c 5120 m (first ascent; East face), on 21 July, by Gunn, Nankervis and Wild.

CORDILLERA OCCIDENTAL

As expressed before in this journal (*A.J.* 71 150), it appeared that the great Nevado Solimana (6318 m) was until 1970 still unclimbed. In 1952, an Italian-

Austrian party (P. Ghiglione, A. Parodi, M. Rebitsch, plus the local porter V. Motta) had climbed on this four-peaked mountain, accomplishing the first ascent of a north peak claimed as 6275 m (altimeter).¹ The map of the Yale Peruvian Expedition, by Isaiah Bowman and Kai Hendrikson, published in 1916, shows three peaks in the Solimana massif: North-west, 19,684 ft, East Central, 20,730 ft, and South-west 19,993 ft. The contours of the same map also show a North Central peak of about the same height as the East Central point. This was the 'north' peak at 6275 m, claimed by the Austrian-Italian party mentioned, a fact which has been confirmed by Signor Parodi himself. Acting on this statement, the Italian climber Mario Bignami assembled a party made up of himself, plus the Peruvian Julián Blanco and the German Paul Götz. A first attempt on the highest peak (20,730 ft or 6318 m) was defeated, due to exhaustion of the climbers (for lack of support of pack animals on the approach march). A second attempt was successful. The three climbers reached over 5300 m with pack animals at a spot east of the North-west glacier. On 1 August, Bignami and Blanco climbed to the top, after twelve hours' work on different forms of ice terrain (penitent snow, steep slopes of 55° to 60°, and crevassed areas). They reached their camp at 2am, after a twenty-two-hour day.

Evelio Echevarría

CORDILLERA DE VILCANOTA

From 6–24 July 1970 a French party of thirteen, including one woman, was climbing in the cirque situated north-east of Ausangate (see *A. J.* 64. 38 with map at p 40 and list of first ascents at p 43).

After leaving the village of Ocongate, Base Camp was established on 7 July near Tinki and not far from the Col Campa and Mariposa. In spite of heavy falls of snow from 8–11 July and again on the 20th the party made the following ascents: Campa I 5485 m and II 5611 m; Campacito, 5390 m; first west-east traverse of El Chico, 5700 m, with one bivouac; Mariposa, 5818 m: Pt 5400 m (south-east of Campa II); Pic Doris, 5460 m, and Tinki, 5450 m.

Members of the party also made the first ascent of the South-east arête of Pachanta, 5727 m, a fine route, about 800 m and TD. The ridge climbed is that against the right-hand skyline on the illustration at p 246. The route followed

¹ See Piero Ghiglione, *Nelle Ande del Sud Peru*, Milano, 1953, pp. 64–9. A photograph by Dr Arnold Heim shows clearly all four peaks of the Solimana massif; see his *Wunderland Peru*, plate 64 (Bern, 1948).



101 *Pachanta (5727 m), south face and south-east ridge. Photo: Exp. Parisienne 1970*

the far side of the ridge as far as a characteristic pointed gendarme at the foot of the rocky part of the arête and then continued by the crest of the ridge. Unfortunately a violent storm burst and the party had to turn back within a very few feet of the summit.

Bernard May

Bolivia

CORDILLERA OCCIDENTAL

The ice and snow volcano Nevado Sajama (6520 m), highest mountain in Bolivia was ascended twice in 1970 by two different American parties:

R. Hartshorne, C. Saville and W. Schmiemann, on 26 June by the North-west (ridge), and M. Danker, J. McKenna, J. Perkins and C. Pollock, on 7-9 November (same route).

Chile

CORDILLERA CENTRAL

These Alpine-like central districts registered the following activities worth mentioning:

Portillo district: the rock peak of Cerro Caracoles ('Snails'), astride the Argentinian border and near the ski resort of Portillo, was ascended for the first time by Police Captain Pedro Rosende and five companions, on 7 December at the beginning of the local climbing season (December to March). In this same district took place the most important ascent of the 1969-70 season. The great peak of Alto de los Leones (5445 m), famous in Chile for its steep and unstable walls, had at last a new route opened on its flanks. Since the first ascent in 1939, all six parties that reached its top had taken the North face of a wall that connects this peak with another unnamed point to the east. In January 1970, a team of eleven men of the 2nd Mountain Regiment of the Chilean army, led by Major Emilio Moraga attempted two routes: two ropes followed the normal way, while the third introduced a variant to the right (North face, North gully). The three ropes joined in a high bivouac at 5000 m and on 9 January, all eleven men reached the top. The descent was made via the normal route. Difficulties were rated as V, with one short stretch of VI, in which a rope was fixed.¹

Santiago district. Near the international pass of Piuquenes (with Argentina), S. Kunstmann and P. Marín made the first ascent of a 4000 m peak, which they named Punta Rayada ('Striped Mountain').

Rancagua district. The rock peak Chapa Verde ('Green Slab'), 3400 m high, was climbed for the first time by two members of the Club Andino Rancagua,

¹ Two good photos showing unclimbed walls and ridges of this mountain appear in the *World Atlas of Mountaineering*, pp. 197 and 198. The North face, free of ice, c. 2300 m high, is reputedly one of the most difficult climbs as yet to be done in Central Chile. Other faces (South, South-west) may be exposed to ice avalanches from the summit. But the rock is not the kind that would please climbers accustomed to the sound granite of the Alps, Norway or Yosemite.

A. Figueroa and O. Urrutia, on 30 August 1969, that is, in the local snowy season. Wintry conditions were found; during this season the snow descends as low as 800 m above sea level.

SOUTHERN CHILE (VOLCANIC REGION)

The small but glaciated volcanoes of Southern Chile have been climbed many times, when located near populated areas or when accessible by motor roads. A few of the more remote summits remain still unclimbed. One of these, that had remained with unrecorded ascents, was Las Yeguas (locally known as San Pedro), 3499 m. It was climbed on 27 December 1969, by J. Barrera, S. Kunstmann and F. Novoa, of the Santiago section of the Club Andino de Chile. The peak was found to be heavily glaciated on its southern and western slopes.

CORDILLERA AUSTRAL OF PATAGONIA

As mentioned by Derek Walker in *A.J.* 75 235, a Chilean group had attempted Cerro Catedral del Paine (2300 m) shortly after his party had abandoned the climb. This peak is located some 6 miles north of Paine Grande. The Chileans were defeated by technical difficulties and by strong winds of some 100 km per hour. Subsequently, they travelled to the Olguín group of peaks and made the second ascent of the 2300 m mountain the 1969 Czechoslovakian expedition had climbed and named 'Cerro Ostrava' (unofficial name). The virgin summit of Cerro Cota, 2000 m, was also climbed. This activity took place in January 1970 and the party was composed of Jorge Quinteros, leader, and Gastón Oyarzún, Bernhard Paul and José Troncoso.

Argentina

NEVADO TAMBILLOS

In the Andean town of San Juan, the local mountaineering institution, Club Andino Mercedario, has long been devoted to climbing local tops for the sake of a sort of high mountain archaeology, since the Incas, previous owners of the land, seem to have done an important number of ascents of high Andean volcanoes long before the first ascents of Mont Blanc, and even before Cortez's soldiers ascended Popocatepetl in Mexico in 1519. In the season of 1969-70, a new discovery was made on Nevado Tambillos (5800 m), located on the

Chilean-Argentinian northern boundary. The base of this mountain was reached on mules by an expedition of the institution mentioned, and a Base Camp was set up at about 4600 m. An ascent of the nearby Cerro Imán (5070 m) had been made *en route* on 30 November 1969 (A. Beorchia, group leader, C. Fava, F. Baruzzi and R. Accoroni), finding on top a rock-walled enclosure some 3×4.5 metres (15×19 ft). Nevado Tambillos was ascended on 6 December (the first three already named, plus H. de la Fuente); they found on the summit many traces of old Indian occupancy such as feather works, textiles, ceramics, clothing and rock altars. But vestiges of an excavation on the place seemed to indicate that grave-diggers, coming perhaps from the Chilean side, had beaten them to the punch. With one climber suffering from mountain sickness, the party retreated, abandoning its project of conducting a detailed survey of the Inca remains. The expedition was back in San Juan on 30 December.

CORDILLERA CENTRAL

Cordillera de Ansilta South of the volcanic district locally called *Puna*, but still north of the Aconcagua and Mercedario massifs, is found a group of rock and ice peaks named Cordillera de Ansilta, after its main peak, Cerro de Ansilta, 5885 m A. Beorchia, S. Job and J. Varas made on 11 February 1970, the first ascent of the unnamed southern peak (5100 m) of the Pico #5 de Ansilta; route used was up to the col between both peaks, via the rocky south-east slopes. This peak was christened Pico Fantin, after a well known Italian climber and author. Two days later, Job and Varas, plus C. Eguaburo and A. Godoy made the fourth ascent of Pico #4 de Ansilta (5130 m).

Polar Regions

Greenland

West part of Sukkertoppen ice-cap. Sukkertoppen ice-cap is situated between Søndre Strømfjord and Evighedsfjord on the west coast of Greenland. The mountains rise from sea-level to a height of 1500 m.

This area was visited by a Swedish party of three women and seven men between 15 July and 8 August 1970. The weather was good and we made twenty-six first ascents.