

English soloed the W ridge of Mount Sabre; later Warwick Anderson and Ken Hyslop climbed the N buttress. There was an increasing trend for winter climbing in all areas, in spite of relatively poor weather conditions.

NORTH AMERICA

ALASKA

According to a report in *Climbing* 47 2, the Alaska legislature's 1975 resolution to change the name of Mount McKinley (6196m) to its native name of Denali is being questioned. The peak was originally named after President William McKinley whose home was in Ohio, and the Ohio congressman Ralph Regula feels that the change 'would be an insult to the name of Mr McKinley'. We have no news of the final decision on this point.

In 1977, Bugs McKeith, Jon Jones, Eckhart Grassman and Allan Derbyshire climbed a new route on the SW face of McKinley known as *Clodface* (Calgary Leftovers Outing to Denali) and later McKeith climbed solo on 10 June a 1400m route (*McClod's Rib*) on the W face in 8 hours. An article in the *Canadian Alpine Journal* 61 23 gives details.

In 1978, Scott Johnson made a solo ascent of a new route, left of Bugs McKeith's route (*McClod's Rib*). The route is 1500m in length with 1200m of 50° ice in the couloir. Johnson took only 7 hours over the difficult section to reach the Archdeacon's Tower at 5990m. Galen Rowell and Ned Gillette made a speedy 19-hr ascent of the West Buttress; Rowell contracted pulmonary oedema on the descent but recovered while waiting for a flight out. Further details of these climbs are given in *Mountain* 63 12.

Off Belay 40 35 contains an account of the first circumnavigation of the McKinley massif using nordic skis by Gillette, Rowell, Allan Bard and Doug Weins; 19 days were spent on the 90-mile trip, 11 of them on skis. The party overcame a number of vicissitudes including 80lb packs, 50mph winds, a dislocated shoulder and a near descent into a crevasse.

Climbing accidents on Mount McKinley must have been more thoroughly analysed than those on any other large mountain (see *AJ* 83 241). Another article on this topic appears in *The Western Journal of Medicine* 6/128 471 (by R. Wilson, W. J. Mills, D. R. Rogers and M. T. Propst). These analyses have of course been prompted by the exceptionally high number of accidents which occurred in the Bicentennial Year when 587 climbers were on the mountain, with a death rate of 1.7%. This rate is apparently similar (1.8%) to the rate from illness and injury among the US armed forces this century; however the mountaineering fatalities are crowded into a few weeks of the year and so make the chance of death very much higher during the actual season, and perhaps more comparable to the actual risk in battle. A hopeful sign is that it seems that some of the lessons of the 1976 season have been learned; in 1977, 438 people attempted climbs on McKinley and Foraker. No one died, 5 were rescued by air and the National Park Service paid for only 2 of these. Park rangers felt that climbers were being more careful and that fewer tyros came to these mountains.

Mount Huntingdon was popular during the 1978 season, with 12 parties attempting a variety of routes. Only 3 were successful however; Bruce Adams and 3 others climbed a moderate ice route on the NW face to the left of the W face route. The French Ridge received an 11-day alpine ascent. However, the hardest climb was Simon McCartney and Jack Robert's alpine style ascent of the N face. This took 5 days and the 1800m face was rated ED sup with Grade VI ice-climbing and 5.9 rock. Further details are given in *Climbing* 50 2 and *Mountain* 63 12.

In the 1977 season, J. Brady, P. Hollis, C. Moore and C. Tobin made the first ascent of the NW ridge of Mount Deborah (3761m) over 25 days in May and June. Some members of this party plus several others then made a number of other interesting ascents in the Deborah-Hess area including the second ascents of the SE ridge of Mount Hayes (Buchanan and Wheeler) and the N ridge of Mount Hess (Brady, Hollis and Wheeler). In August, Jim Jennings, Bill Kitson and Geoff Radford climbed the 900m N face of Mount Geist (3261m) (see *Climbing* 46 3 for more details).

In the Chigmit Mountains, Gary Bocarde and Kevin Duffy made a winter ascent of the SE ridge of Mount Redoubt (3108m). Beckey, Bjørnstad and Martinson attempted the Tusk, a 460m rock tower, but were forced back by rock-falls at the 1971 high point of the Hachett/Kircher party. They made first ascents of 2 previously unnamed peaks, tentatively called Snowbird and Mount Cheops, to the W and SW respectively of the Tusk.

Coastal Range/Yukon

The Devil's Thumb (2767m) has attracted attention. *Mountain* 59 34 contains an article by John Krakauer on a solo spring ascent by the SE face in 1977. Some further details, including a map, of the approach to the mountain which was made on skis up the Baird Glacier from Thomas Bay are given in *Climbing* 46 7. In 1978, Bob Plumb and David Stutzman made the first ascent of the NW face (VI, 5.9) between 16 and 19 August; 57 pitches, one-third involving mixed or ice climbing were all climbed free.

In the St Elias range, a 4-man Canadian team climbed and descended the E ridge of Mount Logan (5945m) in 17 days, including a 7-day storm. The alpine style ascent was made by C. Scott, T. Jones, J. Jones and D. Chandler.

Les Alpes (1/1978) contains an article by Chlaus Lotscher on the Tombstone Range in the Ogilvie Mountains in the central Yukon.

CANADA

Good weather in the 1978 season enabled a number of new routes to be done in the Canadian Rockies. On the same day in July, 2 new routes were completed on Mount Edith Cavell. Mark Hesse, John Krakauer and Joe Hladock climbed a new mixed route from the upper left hand corner of Angel Glacier to the E summit, while Larrie Bruce and Harry Kent climbed another new route to the right of the Beckey/Chouinard/Doody route (Grade V, 1160m of climbing). The route was half rock and half ice and was named the McKeith Spur after Bugs McKeith who was killed earlier in the summer, when a cornice gave way on Mount Assiniboine (see 'In Memoriam' p. 265). The very hard Emperor Face of Mount Robson was finally climbed after many attempts by Terry Stumps with Jim Logan. The climb involved 1500m of very demanding ice-climbing with occasional rock steps (5.9 and A3). The ice was likened to the Bridalveil Falls in Colorado.

In the Bugaboos in 1977, Ken Trout climbed the W pillar of the S Howser Tower—this is thought to be the first solo of a big wall in this area.

Activity continued apace at Squamish where new routes are still being found on the Chief; a lot of the effort is however being devoted to freeing and regrading existing climbs. Scott Flavelle, after several preliminary efforts with a variety of partners, finally soloed what was termed the most difficult aid climb on the Chief to date, *Humpty Dumpty* (V, 5.6, A5). It subsequently received second (Lane and Russell) and third ascents (Mitten and Beckham). More details are contained in *Mountain* 60 15 and 63 13, and its difficulty was confirmed. The *Canadian Alpine Journal* 61 9 contains a 'Squamish Commentary' 1974–1977 by Robin Barley.

Mountain contains (59 36) an outline of climbing history in Quebec by Raymond Jotterand and some news of developments in 1977 (59 15).

UNITED STATES

There has been much activity as usual at all the major rock-climbing centres which is reported in detail in the pages of *Mountain* and *Climbing*. We only note some of the outstanding items here and try to draw attention to apparent trends and new areas of interest.

In Wyoming in the summer of 1977, some new routes were climbed on the NW face of Bighorn Peak. Bob Bliss and Robin Cassanova climbed an 11 pitch IV, 5.8 route in the Bighorn–Darton cirque. John Krakauer and David Roberts did several other routes in the Northern cirque, including a 370m fin involving 12 pitches, 5.8 to 5.9. This area, although smaller than the Wind Rivers, has considerable potential and has seen little climbing traffic.

In Yosemite, the limits of free climbing are being pushed higher and higher and *Climbing* 47 2 lists 7 routes in the 5.12 category; these have been variously climbed by Jardine, Lakey, Kauk, McGinnis and Bachar. In *Mountain* 60 28 there is an excellent article by Tom Higgins with photos by Tom Gerughty which describes the climbing possibilities in Tuolumne Meadows near Yosemite. It contains numerous photodiagrams and a selection of routes ranging from 5.7 to 5.11+. The area is recommended for those who enjoy high angle face climbing in the cool, it being 4000ft higher than Yosemite. The rock is 'orange, bright and knobby' as compared with Yosemite's grey, both being granite however. Many of the domes are broken by very few cracks and established routes without cracks are usually protected by bolts which apparently can be difficult to find. The longest climbs are 10 to 12 pitches, but most are 3 to 5 and thus shorter on average than Yosemite's.

There has been much exploration of Joshua Tree, new routes appearing in profusion. A recently produced guide (by Randy Vogel) already needs a supplement after a year. Details are given in *Mountain* 60 15.

Colorado climbers have been busy in all areas, and Jim Collins made the first 5.12 ascent in Eldorado Canyon, completing the first entirely free ascent of *Psycho Roof* in summer 1978. The route had previously been freed by Steve Wunsch in 1975, but since then some important holds have fallen off. On Long's Peak several major routes were climbed free on the Diamond; Ferguson and Revely freed the Grand Traverse (V, 5.9) and Westbay and Bachar completed *Diamond 1*, the classic route, which involved four 5.11 pitches (V, 5.11). Fowler later free soloed the Grand Traverse in one hour without a rope. Beth Bennett and Pat Adams climbed the Yellow Wall free, the first all female ascent of the Diamond.

Mountain 62-18 contains an historical essay by Al Rubin on New Hampshire climbing; this assesses the developments in the last 50 years in one of the most important climbing areas in the eastern United States.

The following guide-books have been received or are noted:

Alpine Guide to Southern British Columbia Dick Culbert (Dick Culbert, Vancouver, 1974, pp 441, many maps, and photos and diagrams, npq). This is an excellent guide which to quote its author 'attempts to locate and describe all important alpine trails, roads and routes within weekend distance of Vancouver, including S Vancouver Island'.

A Climber's Guide to Devil's Tower National Monument Terry Rypkema and Curt Haire (Rypkema and Haire, Wyoming, 1977, pp 80, 8 photos, \$5.95, paperback). A guide to 55 routes on Devil's Tower, Wyoming, all having ratings of 5.6 or higher.

Climbers' Guide to the Interior Ranges of British Columbia—South Robert Kruszyna and William L. Putnam (American Alpine Club and the Alpine Club of Canada, Springfield, Mass., 1977, pp 226, 17 photos, 14 maps, \$8.30 members, \$10.30 non-members).

A Climber's Guide to Yamnuska Urs Kallen (Alpine Club of Canada, pp 44, illustrated, \$3.95 + 20c p & p).

Yosemite Climbs George Meyers (Mountain Letters, California, 1977, pp 120 + 14 pages of topo. photos, npq). This ring-bound, loose-leaf book, subtitled 'Topographic Drawings of the Best Rockclimbing Routes in Yosemite Valley', is just that. Apart from the Table of Contents, Appendix of Difficult Free Climbs Compared and a map of the Upper Yosemite Valley, the only descriptive matter is one page of Notes and a list of symbols used in the topos. Whilst the loose-leaf large format ensures that the many topos are clear and easily followed, it also means that it is a book which will need to be left safely on the ground as it will soon disintegrate.

Essential reading for anyone in the Valley, however, remains:

Climbers' Guide to Yosemite Valley Steve Roper (Sierra Club, San Francisco, 1971 (2nd printing 1975), pp viii + 306, photo topos, \$7.95) although, as this is purely a reprinting, climbers will have to look elsewhere for details of climbs done since 1971. This volume is in the standard format of a Sierra Club Totebook and to the usual excellence of production. Afficionados can spend happy hours sorting out the differences in pitch gradings between the 2 books.

SOUTH AMERICA

(The following notes and review have been kindly provided by Evilio Echevarría.)

There appears to have been much less activity in this region than in the preceding year of 1977. A general characteristic for 1978 expeditions was the tendency to undertake more and more difficult climbs, by groups that tend to become smaller and smaller. As for local mountaineering, there has been a great upsurge in Chile, Colombia and Venezuela, while in the remaining countries, institutions seem to have remained stagnant or unable to reverse the decline they have been experiencing in the last 3 or 4 years.