

North America 1982

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There seems to be an extraordinary growth both in the number of climbers in America and in the skills and ability of many of them. Many climbers are making technical ascents of difficulties which just a few years ago would have been considered impossible. This includes short rock climbs, ascents of peaks, winter climbs, climbs on frozen waterfalls, etc., all over the United States and Canada.

Notable new or unusual ascents were made in Alaska. Two of the most remarkable were done on remote *Kichatna Spire*. The mountain was first climbed in 1966. It took 13 years and at least 7 failures before the second ascent. The third ascent was made in 1982 by a very difficult new route on the 2800-foot-high E buttress by American Scott Woolums and New Zealander Bill Denz. They spent 9 days (4 of them stormy) climbing the 19 pitches (VI, 5.9, A4). After they left the region, David Black, David Graber and George Schunk made an equally difficult route on the E face proper. Racing against the notorious bad weather of the zone, they completed the climb in 5 days (VI, 5.10, A5).

Young Coloradans, Craig Gaskill, Michael and Glenn Ruckhaus and David Johns, climbed *Mount Blackburn* (4996m) over Rime Peak and the E ridge, a climb with chiefly ice difficulties.

Much activity took place on *Mount McKinley*. Out of 696 people who attempted the peak, 310 reached the summit, most of them by standard routes. However, outstanding climbs were made. Americans Mike Young and Jon Waterman and Briton Roger Mear made the second winter ascent of the peak, climbing the Cassin Ridge. Mark Hesse climbed the Scott-Haston route on the S face solo. Jack Tackle led a group up the SE face of the South Buttress, though they did not continue to the summit. Mike Covington, Bill Holton and Stan Olsen ascended a new direct route on the West Buttress, well to the left of the normal route. Gary Bocarde led a group that made the second ascent of the difficult North-west Buttress.

In the St Elias Mountains, Frenchmen Pierre Beghin and James Mérel skied up a new route on *Haydon Peak* and descended on skis, despite threatening avalanche conditions.

In Arctic Canada two different expeditions, one led by Allan Errington and the other by G. V. B. Cochran, independently visited the *British Empire Range* on N Ellesmere Island and climbed some of the most northerly mountains in the world.