and Smith took three days to break through the steep wall between After Glow and You Only Live Twice, yielding Wall of White Light (24, A3).

Kranzberg. A long brooding crag near the Thabazimbi mines, of hard rock, characterized by its high mineral content. Cursed by an FM tower on top and farmers' cows munching around the camp-site, and very few easy lines, Wages of Fear, G3, had both aid pitches eliminated by Haffner, Curson, Slatem, Schlotfeld and Leslie-Smith. The first three also did an FFA of Faction Fighting (22), which they thought harder than Wages.

Hanglip lies in the eastern forest area, and has unique strata almost mudstone-like, or resembling shattered shale bands. The first frontal was done by the legendary Dick Barry (who fell to his death on the Monk's Cowl opening attempt) in the 1930s. The frontal super direct (G2) was climbed in four hours by Curson and Slatem, freeing the aid pitch. Haffner and Curson freed the aid moves on the first two pitches of Rocky Horror Show (G3). Darkness prevented any further aid eliminations after pitch 5, and the climb remains true to Dave Cheesmond's description: 'for suicidal maniacs only'. Chinery's route Black Widow was freed by them also at G2. Curson was joined by George Mallory (grandson of 'Everest' Mallory) to climb an unnamed hard line, littered with slings and beacons next to Born Free. The crux roof was a desperate G2, but looked even more alarming.

Conclusion

Every year the Last Great Problems tumble and we get dire predictions of nothing left to climb. But even on the accessible crags the youngsters pull surprises, and in the more remote areas there is unlimited scope for those who can beat the heat and bush. Chalk has become an epidemic of unnecessary proportions—fed by the magazines' dazzling photographs of white-handed muscled bats hanging on to Yosemite roofs. We are promoting the idea of chalk coloured specifically for each type of rock, but that will take time to get going.

Our grading system is an obvious mess of four countries' values, as is apparent from this narrative. Who knows what hope of survival exists for an Esperanto-equivalent grading system!

New Zealand 1985–86

Bill King

Plates 88–89

The summer season at Mt Cook was rather a mixed bag, with continuous norwester storms up until the end of January; as a result not many climbs of note were completed. However, early February saw long spells of fine weather, with several good ascents being made by climbers who decided to take their Christmas leave at a later date.

In late December Colin Monteath and Pete Cleary climbed Mt Sefton via the E ridge. This ridge was first climbed in 1895 by E A Fitzgerald and Mattias

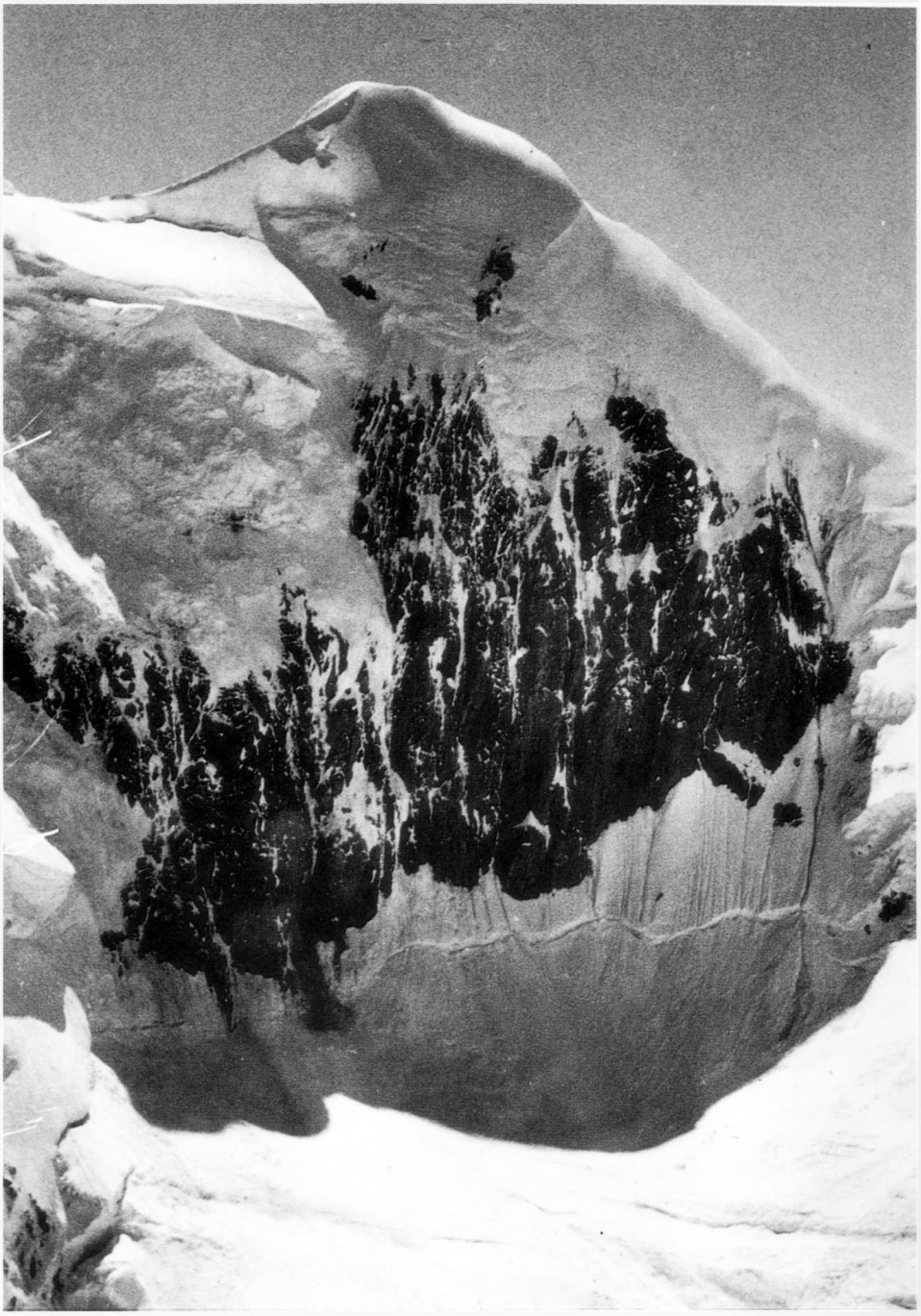


Photo: Colin Monteath Collection

88 *Balfour Face of Mt Tasman (Mt Cook/Westland National Park, New Zealand).*

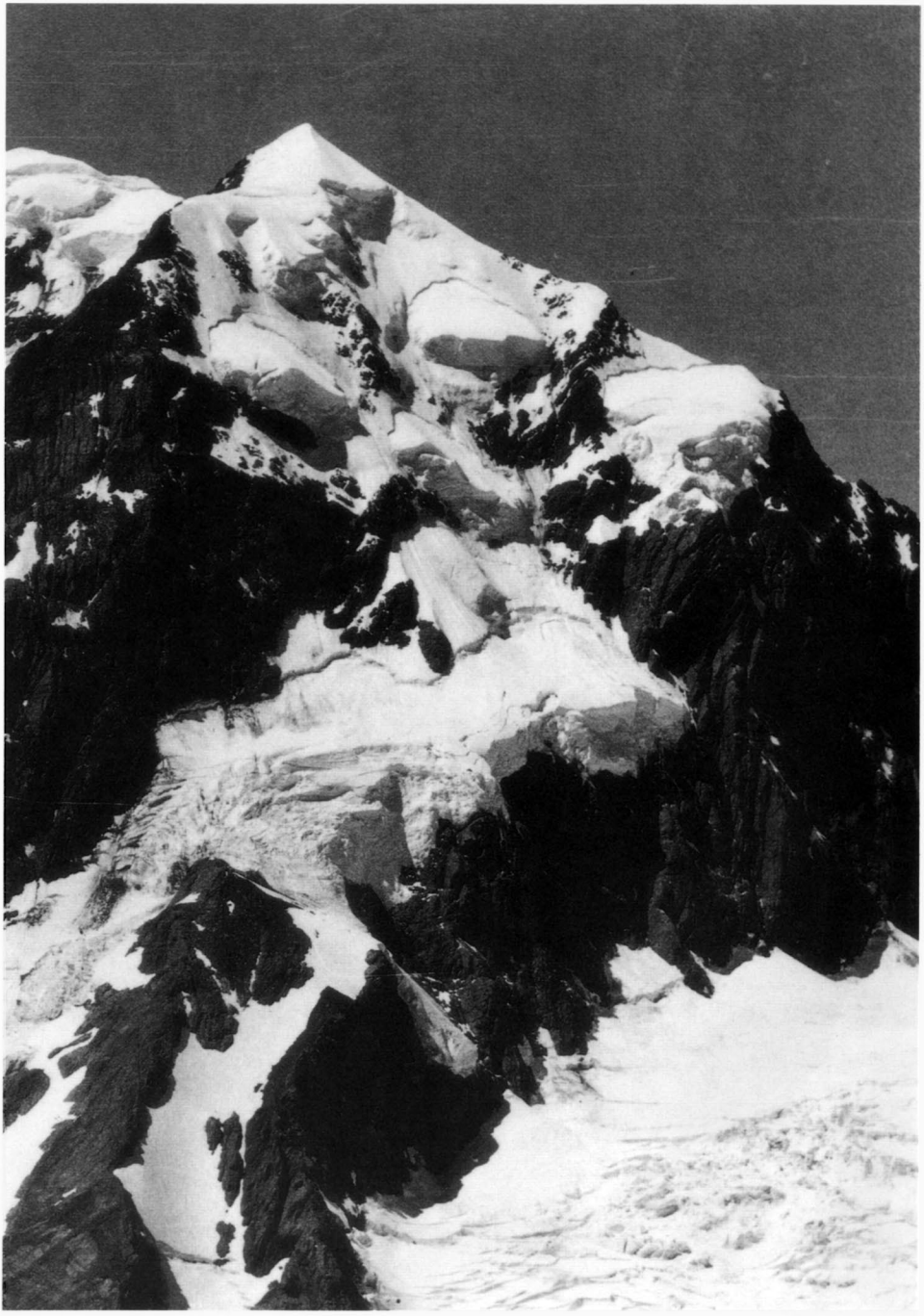


Photo: Colin Monteath Collection

89 'South Face', Mt Cook.

Zurbriggen and has had few ascents since, because of the poor quality of the rock. The pair bivouacked on the summit in a storm for two days before struggling down the W ridge in poor visibility. On Mt Cook, the S face, Zurbriggen's ridge and the Linda routes were the most popular ascent routes. The 'White Dreams' route on the S face of Mt Cook is a classic NZ ice-climb. The climb was first completed in 1980 by Nigel Perry and Colin Brodie, and since then has had its reputation enhanced as 'one of the best' climbs on Mt Cook. The climb itself is 900m of steep ice. Belays are normally on ice, but good rock belays can also be found at times. The crux pitch can vary from a 3-metre ice-bulge to a 20-metre ice-cliff.

The most impressive list of ascents this season must go to the Australian climber, John Fantini. John has climbed in the NZ Alps for over 15 seasons and has also climbed extensively world-wide, with many good European ascents to his name. John brought to NZ the European trend of making extremely fast ascents of difficult mountains. Climbing solo with only a small pack, he climbed both Mt Cook and Mt Tasman in one day. As these are the two highest mountains in New Zealand and are a reasonable distance apart, this feat is a remarkable test of both speed and endurance. He next completed two routes on Mt Cook in one day. This included climbing the Hooker face to the High Peak in an amazing 1¼ hours. He finished the season with a new 11-pitch ice-route on the Balfour face of Mt Tasman. He left the following message in the Plateau Hut log-book for Kiwi climbers to ponder over, 'hope you Kiwis lighten your packs, and use the rope less and blast the mountains. Why burden yourself with too much s...t in your big packs'.

During winter, heavy snow-falls and a high avalanche hazard left climbing to the dedicated few. In July, Nick Craddock and Guy Cotter put up a new route on the N face of Mt Hicks between the central and left-hand buttress, using two bivouacs. This face is rarely visited in winter because of its extreme isolation.

Some outstanding solo winter ascents were also recorded. Steve Elder made the first solo winter ascent of the Abel Jansen face of Mt Tasman and the veteran winter solo climber, Bill MacLeod, soloed both the Caroline face (third winter ascent) and the Sheila face (second winter ascent) of Mt Cook. He also soloed the S ridge of Mt Cook. All these climbs were first solo winter ascents.

Early December saw more European trends arrive in New Zealand, with Rob Hall making the first parachute descent from the summit of Mt Cook. Using a 'parapente' canopy, it took him seven minutes to descend to his car on the Ball Hut Road. On the same day Mark Whetu made the first solo ski-descent from the summit of Mt Cook, skiing down Zurbriggen's Ridge.

Unlike those in some mountain regions of the world, most New Zealand glaciers are currently increasing in size again, and this is starting to cause a few problems for climbers. Ice-cliffs which have been dormant for years are now increasing in size and have started to break off, subjecting the unwary climber to more danger than usual. The main descent route from the upper W coast névés, down the Fox Glacier, is virtually cut off by overhanging ice, and the route off the terminal face is now often impassable. As a result helicopter firms are now doing a trade that is better than normal, but the poor climber has less to spend at the Fox Pub when he gets out.