

# Various Notes

EDITED BY H. ADAMS CARTER

## UNITED STATES

*Tetons, Wyoming.* In the past summer several new routes were made in the Tetons. A few of the more important climbs follow.

*Traverse between Bivouac and Reynold's Peaks.* Lying between Moran and Snowshoe Canyons is one of the most spectacularly pinnacled ridges of the Teton Range, which Leigh Ortenburger has labeled as "terrific." After Bill Buckingham and I had reached the summit of Bivouac Peak by the ordinary route by midmorning on September 4, we started for Reynold's Peak far to the west. Lying between us and our goal was a twisting, crumbling, knife-ridge, which lived up to Ortenburger's evaluation. The actual climbing of the ridge proved not too difficult, it being clearly a problem of endurance and extreme care on the decomposed rock. Bill and I climbed all the major pinnacles, at times even rocking back and forth the summits of the smaller spires. Our greatest problem was water, and toward the end of the ridge a nearby lake was so tempting that we happily descended for refreshment. After this brief respite we took once again to the ridge and soon found ourselves on top of Reynold's Peak. In all we took 11 hours for the traverse and all night for the return to Jackson Lake via Moran Canyon.

JOHN FONDA

*West Ridge of the Middle Teton.* The long west ridge of the Middle Teton was ascended for the first time on August 4, 1955, by William Buckingham and Mary Lou Nohr. From the south fork of Cascade Canyon we followed a broad couloir into the lower end of the basin between the west ridges of the Grand and Middle Tetons. From there we climbed the ridge over numerous large towers to the section of small pinnacles just before the point where the west ridge abuts against the Middle Teton itself. These pinnacles proved to be extremely rotten, and we climbed only a few, traversing the rest on the south side. There followed a difficult chimney, a bit of airy face-climbing and finally several hundred feet of scrambling before we stood on the summit, just 12 hours after we had left Jenny Lake.

WILLIAM J. BUCKINGHAM

*Ascents in Avalanche Canyon.* In June and July Graham and Mary Ann Matthews climbed from Avalanche Canyon. They made the ascent of an unnamed pinnacle east of Mt. Wister, quite obvious from the highway

but evidently not previously climbed. A fine climb was that of the south face of Cloudveil Dome, a route that had long attracted attention. It turned out easier than expected, but offered varied and interesting climbing from class 3 to class 6.

GRAHAM MATTHEWS

*South Face of Disappointment Peak.* Near the end of August Dick Pownell suggested that I make a new route with him on the south side of a subsidiary buttress of the Disappointment Peak ridge between Surprise and Amphitheater Lakes. The route requires about three hours. Several pitons were used for anchors. The majority of leads were class 4, a few being class 5 where protection was desired. We began the climb at the western edge of the face and then traversed right (east), where we reached the ridge quite far down from the summit. At this point there is a choice of proceeding unroped to the summit or crossing, also unroped, the remainder of the face to the outlet of Surprise Lake.

ALLEN STECK

*North Face of Disappointment Peak.* Two routes, one direct and the other on the western edge of the face, were pioneered by William Cropper and John Dietschy on August 4 and 15. The direct route on the previously unclimbed face involved a very difficult struggle with a five-foot overhang which was finally climbed by arm-strength rather than direct aid.

*Northeast Chimney of the Middle Teton.* On September 4 Donald Goodrich and John Reppy climbed the more easterly of the two prominent chimneys which cut the north face of the Middle Teton. Some ice increased the difficulty near the top of the chimney.

LEIGH ORTENBURGER

*Grand Teton Direct North Face.* Despite the fuming comments of the guide (Willi Unsoeld), Jolene Unsoeld (wife) dallies in bed at Amphitheater Lake until 5:30 A.M. The first ascent of the north face took 18 hours from the foot of the face, but Jolene hates early starts. By 8:00 A.M. they have climbed the Teton Glacier, deposited ice axes and crampons in the bergschrund and are ready to start up the face itself. Up to the third ledge very good time is made, only four and one-half hours being required for this first three-quarters of the face. The best explanation of the time is Jolene's attitude toward belaying. Before they left the bergschrund, she told her guide that she had just read Wexler's mathematical treatment, "The Theory of Belaying" and that it gave her such a headache that she resolved upon the spot to have nothing further to do with the subject. It is thus unnecessary for any leader of her rope to bother snapping into

pitons since such actions are superfluous when unsupported by any belay. Teton guides being accustomed to such attitudes, much time was saved thereby.

From the third ledge, the fourth is reached by a route some 150 feet to the east of that used by the four previous successful parties. This is quite close to the beginning of the fourth ledge, just to the west of the first big inversion which turns a section of the ledge into a ceiling. After one follows the fourth ledge for 50 feet, it suddenly disappears in a rocky corner, continuing only as a narrow crack slanting up across the sheer face. This stretch is about 10 feet long but requires an assortment of pitons topped off with an airy sixth class swing on a sling. The ledge re-emerges from the wall again, although rather slowly for a few feet. Before the regular route is intersected, the ledge again inverts twice, but each is bypassed by working out onto the face below by taking advantage of some thin cracks and ledges. Exposure during this traverse is spectacular with the rope giving its unsatisfactory protection customary to traverses.

Jolene has gamboled along rippingly to this point, but now, with the last serious pitch before her, her legs begin to quiver and she has to approach the traverse into the "Vee" relying mostly on her arms. At the start of this final pitch her arms give out as well, but her trusty guide is ready with his Little Gem Client Hoist and soon they are on the summit. The time is 5 P.M., which gives plenty of time for the stroll down to the Guide's Camp on the Lower Saddle.

WILLI UNSOELD

*New Variants on the East Ridge of the Grand Teton and on Teepe's Pillar.* Yves Erikson and William Briggs made a new variant on the long east ridge of the Grand Teton in early August. After a 4:15 A.M. start from Amphitheater Lake, they climbed unroped to the base of the Molar Tooth, the first tower on the ridge. There in the left (southeast) side was a tempting 300-foot chimney leading to a balcony of broken rock below the summit block. The chimney was not particularly difficult, although two odd overhangs made it interesting. Once on the balcony they traversed around the left corner to a south shoulder separated from the tower by a fine, 80-foot jam crack. However, they shunned this obvious route and attacked the east face of this shoulder, only to have the route give out 15 feet from the ridge top. After considerable time they drove a piton behind a poor flake and managed a delicate traverse to the left where better holds enabled them to reach the summit. After some scrambling and a short rappel into the notch behind the tower, one lead brought them onto easy going, and they gained the summit of the Grand Teton at 1:15 P.M.

The next morning John Morrison and Briggs climbed the north ridge of the Middle Teton by 9:30 A.M. From there they traversed to Teepee's Pillar via the black dike. They disliked the looks of Hans Kraus's chimney on the northwest ridge and decided to vary the route by climbing to the right. Here, about 20 feet down from the col, Briggs traversed farther to the right and continued up a rope length to the base of a chimney, the key to overcoming two overhangs. After jamming up five feet of the chimney, he moved left with footholds on the lower and handholds on the higher. A five-foot traverse in this fashion led to cracks bypassing the upper overhang and leading to the ridge. There they joined Dr. Kraus's route and followed it to the summit.

WILLIAM BRIGGS

*West Face of the Devil's Tower, Wyoming.* In the latter part of July Jim McCarthy and I arrived at the Devil's Tower, Wyoming, hoping to put up a new route on one of the previously unclimbed faces. The tower is granite, with vertical fractures (resulting in the well-known hexagonal columns) which offer numerous possibilities for artificial climbing. We chose a route beginning in an inside corner between two columns on the west face. Using stirrups and double rope, Jim McCarthy led 120 feet, with one belay from stirrups, to a small ledge beneath an overhang. We continued by traversing right to a vertical V crack, which we ascended for about 150 feet to a large overhang, again using artificial aid. Fortunately there were two belay points available on the tops of broken columns. After a free pitch over the left of the overhang, we tried what looked to be an easy vertical crack. It proved unexpectedly difficult, there being a lack of both holds and piton cracks. The remainder of the climb was of only moderate difficulty, proceeding through the heavily broken area at the top of the tower. The climb required three days to complete, no climbing being done after noon because of the heat. We rappelled down, leaving the ropes, and reascended the next morning, using prusik knots. About 75 pitons were used. Jim McCarthy led the difficult pitches, using artificial aid entirely on the first 250 to 300 feet.

JOHN RUPLEY

*First Ascent of Open Door Pinnacle, Wyoming.* South of Grand Teton National Park, about 25 miles from the town of Jackson on U.S. Highway 187, a gravel road turns northeast up Granite Canyon. Eventually the road leads to a small Forest Service recreation area 10 miles from the main highway. The reserve includes a waterfall, a hot spring and several cabins. Naturally heated water from the spring supplies a concrete swimming pool. Delightful though these facilities are, the climber will likely be distracted

by the imposing limestone pinnacle which rises directly back of the swimming pool. Actually the tower is a partially detached buttress of a much larger and considerably higher massif known as Open Door Peak, but because the tower juts out toward the road, it dominates the scene as the visitor approaches the recreation area. The origin of the name is immediately obvious. On the western face, fronting the road, is a deep recess, rectangular in shape and of majestic proportions, which strikingly resembles a doorway. On July 31, 1955, Roald Fryxell and the writer, starting from the hot spring, climbed up the brushy slope leading to the tower and found that its walls were indeed as sheer as they had appeared from below. The most likely route appeared to start from the col between the tower and the principal mass of the mountain. To avoid the exceedingly rotten cliff below the col, we circled far to the left up onto the adjacent mountain and descended to the col from above. The last 60 feet of this descent was over rock even more shattered and disintegrating than the cliff we had just abandoned, but at least we had the security of a rope. We gingerly rappelled down and found the col itself reasonably stable. From here, after a respite for lunch, we started up the wall of the tower. The rock turned out to be rather more secure than we had expected, though by no means up to Teton standards. After 95 feet of high-angle cliff where we used five pitons, we reached a broad talus bench, from which it was a scramble of 80 feet or so to the top. There was no cairn, nor could we find any evidence of a previous ascent. After an hour on top we climbed down to the talus bench where we attached a sling loop to a solidly rooted tree. A 95-foot rappel brought us to the col, from which we dropped down 40 feet to the scree slopes by means of a second rappel. Three smaller pinnacles nearby proved interesting enough to climb. None offered any difficulty. The highest of these is more or less the twin of the Open Door, though it has no "doorway." Presumably it has been climbed many times. The route from the back side is obvious. FRED D. AYRES

*South Face of Pilot Peak, Absaroka Range, Montana.* Knowing only Pilot Peak's name, its location and the fact that Phil Smith had climbed it previously, on July 31, 1955, Bill Buckingham, my wife Jean, and I followed Fox Creek as far as the limestone formation which contours around the mountain's base. There we turned left out of the creek bed and traversed up a breach in the formation out of the forest and into the meadows which stretch below the north face of Pilot Peak. We discovered there that although from the east the mountain bears a striking resemblance to the Matterhorn, at close range it reveals its true nature as a crumbling

dolmen of volcanic rock. Climbing this face was out of the question; rock was constantly falling from it. A herd of mountain sheep enticed us to the ridge between Pilot and Index Peaks. We assumed that if we could flush them higher up, they would show us an easy way up, but as we followed them around the western ledges on what was not quite rock and not quite earth, we wished for crampons. We were forced many times to deviate from their route to suit our feeble attempts at climbing. The western ridge brought us to the final summit pyramid. The summit looked about three extremely difficult leads away. We followed a large scree-covered ledge along the southern base of the pyramid until we could go no farther. Rockfall danger indicated that a party of three would be most unwise, so Jean volunteered to wait on the broad sunny ledge. Bill led the first two pitches and amid crumbling hand- and footholds drove three pitons for psychological reasons. Horribly exposed and absolutely vertical, the second lead, at the most, boasted of three finger pinch holds. For 20 feet there was nothing of any comfort. This lead was a true mountaineering nightmare, and Bill's ascent of it testifies to his climbing ability. The next lead, an overhang, I led only with the idea born of despair to get the mountain climbed and get home. From the top of the overhang we climbed up a shallow gully, bearing right occasionally until the summit rocks were in sight. On the top we found only a shipwrecked cairn, but no record of Smith's ascent. The eastern side of the mountain has, I understand, an easier and less dangerous route to the top. The crowning blow came a few days after the climb when a letter from Smith informed us that on the first ascent a ram's skull was found on the summit. JOHN FONDA

*Olympic Mountains, Washington.* I spent a month in the Olympic Mountains of Washington this summer, fortunately during the driest August on record, and enjoyed a whole month of sunshine. While surveying we ascended several of the peaks surrounding the Mt. Olympus massif. We were surprised to find that some of these bore no record of ascent, although they are within easy reach of campsites used for the ascent of Mt. Olympus, annually climbed by scores of climbers. Names of Greek gods and goddesses seem appropriate for these 6,000- to 7,000-foot peaks. None of them is technically difficult, but their alpine setting around the glaciers of Mt. Olympus makes them delightful ascents. The most striking of these minor peaks is "Mt. Hermes," a sharp rock summit located east of the Hoh Glacier. EDWARD LACHAPPELLE

*New Ascents in the Cascade Range.* Early in the summer of 1955 two new climbs were undertaken in the Washington Pass area of the Methew

Cascades. One, a new route of difficult standard, the southeast buttress of The Temple, on Kangaroo Ridge, was accomplished by John Parrott, Louis Pottschmid, Herb Staley, and Fred Beckey. The crucial portion of the ascent was an exposed chimney with divergent, smooth, flaring walls. On the nearby Liberty Bell massif, John Parrott and Fred Beckey made the ascent of the only unclimbed summit of the five in the group, Concord Tower. The climb involved a certain amount of tension climbing in addition to the use of three bolts to overcome some short, crackless overhangs.

In the Cashmere Crags the "White Feather" of Three Feathers was scaled by John Parrott, Bob Lewis and Fred Beckey. After several hundred feet of class 4 climbing, the summit monolith rises flawlessly above an exposed granite crest. Its ascent was entirely artificial, requiring the use of 10 bolts—a very full afternoon's work in slings.

Numerous pinnacles on the west ridge of Mt. Stuart and Peak 8700, one mile to the east of Stuart, were climbed by Art Maki and Fred Beckey. Although some of these summits appear difficult from the distance, none imposed any problem. In fact, the rope was seldom required.

Waterfall Column, adjacent to Drury Falls on the south side of Tumwater Canyon, was climbed for the first time on June 6 after several preliminary attempts. A long, exposed final overhang required the use of pitons, bolts and wooden wedges for direct aid.

FRED BECKEY

*South Face of Brazos Peak, New Mexico.* An excellent climbing area exists on the south face of Brazos Peak in northern New Mexico. The face varies in height from 500 to 3,000 feet, the angle from 60 degrees to vertical. The cliffs, which are readily accessible from a road leading to Corkins Lodge by leaving U.S. Highway 84 at Park View, extend for several miles and are composed of extraordinarily sound rock. Two routes have been completed on the face. Known as "Easy Ridge" and the "Great Couloir," they are the most prominent ridge and the couloir leading rather directly to the summit. Each involved about 2,000 feet of roped climbing and the use of about 10 pitons, mostly for safety. Each route was completed on the third attempt. Most of the face remains to be explored, but I do not hesitate to recommend the area as a playground for rock climbers. The peak can be ascended from the north by jeep almost to the summit.

GEORGE BELL

## CANADA

*Mt. Robson.* Fred Ayres and Dick Irvin made a variant of Kain's original route up Mt. Robson in the summer of 1955. Instead of climbing the

steep, often ice-covered rocks above the Dome to reach the southeast ridge they kept to the right as you face the mountain and climbed the hanging glacier in its center. It is less steep and, particularly early in the season, it is merely a question of kicking steps. They feel this route is both easier and safer.

H. A. C.

*Mt. Kitchener, East Ridge.* We had been attracted by the advantages of a new and shorter route up Mt. Kitchener which would avoid hours of toil on the Athabaska tongue and the Columbia Icefield. In the early hours of July 25 we (Fred Ayres, Don Claunch, and Dick Irvin) set out over the terminal moraines of the Dome Glacier, which separates Snow Dome from Kitchener, and toiled up the deceptively short glacier. Finally after reaching a point below the col between Kitchener and its easterly neighbor, K2, we labored up the monotonous, broken shale slopes to the col. In gathering clouds we ascended the steep but not really difficult east snow ridge, crossing several crevasses, until apparently not far from the summit we clambered over the rocks onto a flat platform where we found a small cairn but no message. Beyond was a gap in the ridge and beyond and above, more mist shrouded rocks—we were on a pinnacle! Our distant reconnaissance of the route had disclosed no gap or irregularity in the ridge; a poor joke on the part of the mountain, we thought.

The cleft was of distinctly inferior design with both sides composed of loose vertical shale, and the bottom, 75 feet below, a steep ice chute capped by an unstable cornice. Fortunately the mists were now thick enough to prevent our seeing the total exposure. Belayed by Fred, Dick moved down the rocks to an icy patch, chipped tiny holds for fingers and spikes, then crossed to more rock and let himself carefully down onto the snow of the cornice. The snow seemed solid enough, so he crossed the gap and sunk in his ice axe for a belay. It went in distressingly easily; to his dismay he discovered that it went right through the cornice! Knowing that you cannot have everything, he called for Fred to join him. You can imagine his surprise when he saw Fred slip and start to fall. Don held the slip and Fred joined him at the belay spot. After encouraging Fred to find a better place for his axe, Dick started to lead up the west side of the notch. The first few steps were snow, followed by ice, then rock where we had to shed crampons, gloves, axe, pack and goggles. There was just enough rope to reach a welcome belay spot at the top of this pitch. It is difficult to understand how rock can be so loose and so steep at the same time. Occasionally I have my doubts about Newton. Fortunately our fear of more gaps did not materialize, and a short scramble took us to the ice.



A few swings of the axe and we stepped out onto the icefields; only a trudge remained to the top, elusive though it was in the mist.

RICHARD IRVIN and DON CLAUNCH

*Rearguard North Face.* Although Rearguard, Robson's 9,000-foot subsidiary peak, is normally a very easy climb, its imposing northern rock face, towering 3,500 feet above the valley, had never been conquered. A steep northerly snow couloir had previously been scaled, but the rock wall still presented a challenge. Ellis Blade and Joan Crosby of the Alpine Club of Canada, Mike Shor of New York City, and I crossed the icy stream channels opposite the Alpine Club of Canada's camp early on the morning of August 5 and scrambled up the 1,500 feet of brush and talus slopes below the final 2,000-foot rock face. This we attacked to the right or west of the snow couloir and found the climbing a combination of moderately difficult and fourth-class terrain, long, exposed and thoroughly pleasant. Route finding was a bit tricky, and the rock was often quite loose. However, if we had not chosen the right route, the difficulties would have been greatly increased. We had to scale several cliffs and terrace bands. With the Alpine Club Camp almost at our feet and the North Face of Mt. Robson close at hand, in the perfect weather and on the interesting rock it was a stimulating experience. In my opinion this tour constitutes a fine but not easy training climb for the longer rock climbs.

DON CLAUNCH

*Mt. Louis.* Essentially the route up Mt. Louis that I did in 1952 with Walter Perren, the Zermatt guide then with the CPR in Lake Louise, was identical with the standard one to the base of the final tower. There it diverges to the right (direction of Banff) up a series of slabs and small faces, where we used three pitons for safety. The great advantage of it is that it obviates that miserable chimney, which is nowhere really wide enough for a portly citizen like me.

HAROLD B. BURTON

*Odoray via the Northeast Ridge.* The northeast ridge of Odoray is the steep righthand skyline of the mountain when viewed from the Canadian Alpine Club hut in the O'Hara Meadow. Don Morrison and I set out from the cabin about 6:00 A.M. on July 19, 1955, and reached the base of the climb an hour and a half later. This begins where the wooded ridge between Morning Glory Lakes and Linda Lake abuts against the rock wall. Odoray's northeast ridge is rather a combination of ridge and face, made up of a series of 20- to 60-foot high rock bands; the lower ledges are fairly

wide, but higher up they narrow. The rock is generally good but loose in a few places. All the climbing is quite difficult, and belays are scarce.

After starting directly up the ridge, we soon climbed diagonally upwards to the right, bringing us onto the face above Linda Lake. The fourth pitch took us straight up to a grassy ledge where we continued to the right to another ledge 40 feet higher. Here the choice was not easy. We finally followed the ledge to the right around a corner and diagonally up and across a bulge of loose rock into a slight depression running up the face. This we ascended, using thin and untrustworthy holds to a scree shelf which ran up to an overhang sporting a jagged flake of rock on its right. Don tried the overhang and found it the first "hard" lead of the climb. A few easy feet bearing left and some difficult ones brought us to a slimy, downward-sloping ledge. It was a difficult pull up on rounded crumbling holds on the top side of a small but awkward overhang (the second really difficult pitch). Three more pitches diagonally left toward the ridge proper brought us to an ugly, steep, ice-filled gully. Don led up the quite easy rocks on the left of the lower part, across the ice to the rocks on the right, up at the edge of the ice for about 80 feet, then straight up the right wall of the gully for another 40 feet to a sloping ledge with a good belay. From there we crossed back to the left side and climbed a 30-foot wall to escape from this dungeon and regain the ridge proper. All the way up we had awe-inspiring views of Linda Lake right under our feet at the bottom of the gully. After two more difficult pitches, we climbed a tricky, narrow chimney in a wall of loose rock. We then moved slightly to the right up 150 to 200 feet of steep snow, and then up easy rock to the point where the ridge rests in its meteoric rise toward the summit. We scrambled across the horizontal hundred feet or so to the base of the summit block, a steep and forbidding structure of the notorious rock of the black band, cut by two foul-looking chimneys. The narrower one to the right looked the lesser of the two evils and proved easier than we had expected. Above, we scrambled over black rubble to the final slope, a knife edge of treacherous, rotten snow, curving gracefully to the very summit. There are over 3,000 feet of rock to climb on this route, which took us ten and three-quarter hours from base to summit.

*Victoria by the South Face.* During our stay at Lake O'Hara we also made the first 1955 ascent of Victoria, and that by a new route up the south face. We cut diagonally up and across the moraine at the foot of the valley between Huber and Victoria and climbed the south cliffs of Victoria with a fine view down to Lake Oesa on the right and across to our left an imposing view of Huber. The climbing was straightforward

until we were confronted by a tremendous cliff band which appeared to overhang its base all along. We contoured to the right and continued up the cliffs until we reached the black band, through which we climbed in a chimney of three pitches. The last pitch necessitated a lay-back. This brought us to the prominent step on the regular route about 1,000 to 1,500 feet above Abbot Pass. From there to the summit we followed the orthodox route. This route is more direct and offers more and better climbing than the regular route from the O'Hara side (that is, around Huber, across the Huber Glacier and up the Western cliffs of Victoria).

JAMES TARRANT

*Mt. Forbes and Mt. Freshfield.* Early in the 1955 season, Don Claunch, Richard Irvin, and Fred Ayres back-packed up the Howse Valley, ascended the Glacier Rivers, and set up a high camp at timberline between Division Mountain and the east lateral moraine of Mons Glacier. From here on July 2, we started for Mt. Forbes at 11:00 A.M. after a night and morning of heavy clouds and intermittent rain. We climbed up the north Glacier to the west col of Forbes, then followed the west arête to the summit (6:30 P.M.). This early in the season the route was almost entirely snow. We returned by the same route and reached camp at 9:30 P.M.

After descending to the outlet of Glacier River, we continued up the Howse, following the newly improved trail on the east side of the valley, then turned southwest up the gravel flats of Freshfield Brook, fording several streams. At a point not far from where Forbes Brook issues from the forest, a good trail leads south and west over the ridge to the outwash flats of Freshfield Glacier.

It should be noted that a faint trail also starts along the north side of the box canyon of Freshfield Brook. This route is more scenic than the previously mentioned trail, but anyone attempting it with a heavy pack should steel himself for an arduous two or three hours of heavy going. The trail soon deteriorates into virtually nothing.

We camped on Niverville Meadows, justly famed for their lovely setting and for the magnificent view which they provide of the Freshfield group of peaks. After waiting out a day of rain, we climbed Mt. Freshfield (July 6) in dense fog, consuming the entire day in confused blundering before we finally found the summit at 6:00 P.M. After two more days of rain, the weather cleared, but there was time then for only a quick ascent of Mt. Niverville on a gorgeously brilliant morning, after which we started out for the highway.

FRED D. AYRES

*Mt. Bryce.* On July 23, 1955, Richard Irvin and Fred Ayres made the third ascent of the main peak of Mt. Bryce. Our route was via the south glacier and southeast face, the same as that used in 1937 by the second-ascent party consisting of Lillian Gest and Kate Gardiner, with the guides Christian Häsler and Edward Feuz, Jr. We started from the vicinity of the Saskatchewan Hut and back-packed via the Saskatchewan Glacier, Castleguard Meadows and Thompson Pass to a campsite at about 5,600 feet on the dim, very dim North Rice Brook trail (see Boundary Sheet 21). Scarcely anything remains of this trail except the blazes, but the hiker is well advised to follow them. They serve as route markers and help to avoid some of the worst of the down timber. In contrast, the trail (not shown on Sheet 21) from the southern limits of Castleguard Meadows down to the crossing (ford) of the swift Castleguard River at 5,600 feet is in excellent condition. From here on, the trail, still in fair shape, follows the dashed red line shown on the map past Watchman and Cinema Lakes, becoming more vague as Thompson Pass is approached.

To reach the lower end of the South Glacier from North Rice Brook requires considerable bushwhacking, whatever the route. Certainly our attempt to conserve altitude by turning diagonally up the mountain from the 5,500-foot level on North Rice Brook proved futile. Rough terrain and alder slides cost us much in up-and-down climbing. Once on the south Glacier, the climber can gain 3,000 feet of elevation without much trouble, provided the snow is in good condition. The long upper section of the glacier leads to a distinctive col with a gendarme rising in its center. From here the route turns westward up the southeast face, a final thousand feet of stepped-back limestone cliffs, partly covered by snow and ice. The summit is a long narrow ridge capped with a snow cornice, but having a ribbon of bare rock facing to the west.

After descending the upper southeast face, we looked across a nearly level glacier bench to the unclimbed middle peak of Bryce, hardly more than half a mile away. However, it was 5:00 P.M., and threatening storm-clouds were approaching from the south. We decided against the attempt and continued the descent, arriving at our North Rice Brook camp about 9:30.

FRED D. AYRES

*Southern Selkirks.* The fourth Harvard Mountaineering Club Climbing Camp was held last summer during the latter part of August in the Southern Selkirks. Nineteen members participated, and some 19 days were spent in the area. For climbing and training purposes, two base camps were established, one at Glacier Circle, the other at Mitre Creek near the

site of Howard Palmer's old Bishops' camp. From Glacier Circle, the usual climbs were made, including Fox, Hasler, Augustine, Wheeler and Kilpatrick, the last two being climbed by the same party in one day. To speed up climbs to the south and facilitate the pack over to Mitre Creek, the Deville Cliffs were well ironed and a fixed rope was rigged up. From Mitre Creek, several climbs were made in the western portion of the Purity Range, two of which, I believe, were first ascents. These were the two major peaks (*ca.* 9,800 and 10,000 feet) on either side of Purity Pass and between Mounts Kilpatrick and Purity. We have tentatively named these mountains "Pristine" and "Vestal," respectively. Both were predominantly snow climbs and presented no significant route finding problems. Mt. Purity itself was climbed directly from the north—a ridge climb, and a new route, I believe, which entailed going over a 10,000-foot subsidiary peak en route to the summit.

TED SCUDDER

*Northern Selkirks.* August 1955 saw the Northern Selkirks under siege by a group of eight climbers, including Graham Matthews, David Michael, and Richard Irvin. The initial phase was the air drop of supplies at Tangier Summit and on the Sir Sandford Glacier, followed shortly by the ground forces who, finding their supplies at Tangier seriously damaged by enemy bears, pushed on rapidly to the primary objective: the Sir Sandford and Adamant areas. Sir Sandford yielded to no less than three different assault teams, though other elements found the southeast ridge impregnable. After bad weather defeated one attack on Big Blackfriar, Michael and Matthews, in a brilliant counter-thrust, succeeded in putting a new route on the East Face. In other skirmishes both Silvertip and the Gargoyle fell before the onslaught of the invading forces. The decisive engagement of the expedition took place on the slopes of Palisade Mountain; though well defended by goats almost to the very summit, it, too, succumbed to its first human invaders.

GRAHAM MATTHEWS

*Niut I, Coast Range.* Victor Josendal, Harvey Manning, and Robert Sipe, all from Seattle, climbed Niut I (9,082 feet) during the second week of July 1955. We reached the summit of this unclimbed peak near Lake Tatlayoko after a day and a half backpack and a long snow and rock climb. In the second half of our week's scouting trip we drove our car over the still unfinished MacKenzie Highway across the Coast Range, down into the beautiful Bella Coola valley to the fishing village of Bella Coola. Ours was the first passenger car from outside British Columbia to drive over this road, which surely many climbers will use in the future to

reach the snow-clad peaks of the Bella Coola Range, which rise majestically 8,000 feet above the valley floor. It is expected that the highway will be in fair condition for travel in 1956. VICTOR JOSENDAL

*Homathko, Essex, and Queen Bess, Coast Range.* This fine area at the northern tip of the Homathko Snowfield had attracted us since we read the late Don Munday's *Canadian Alpine Journal* account of his first ascent in 1942 of Mt. Queen Bess. He referred to the pointed peak of Homathko and the stately neighbor of Bess, Mt. Essex, both about 10,000 feet high. Six of us flew to Tatlayoko Lake on July 16, 1955. We were Elfida Pigou, Denys Lloyd, Donald Cowie, Derek Fabian, his wife Janet, and I, all of the Alpine Club of Canada. After landing us at the lake, the plane free-dropped our supplies near the lower edge of the Mantle Glacier. We packed in light the 12 miles to the Base Camp at the head of Stonsayako Creek. We took a whole day to cross flooded Nostetuko (or Mathew) Creek and two more for the sidehill bushwhack.

After a reconnaissance we climbed Homathko Peak on July 21. The route was the obvious one: behind the east ridge, up a snow gully to a rotten rib which led to the summit ridge. The rock was rotten and often steep. We crossed many steep gullies with soft snow over ice to reach the peak in 11½ hours. The next day we moved to a camp above steep slabs at 6,500 feet on the north side of the Stonsayako. From it on July 23 we climbed Essex via the south ridge in 12 hours. The going was easy, over four minor summits to a final very steep 600 feet of snow. We made the second ascent of Mt. Queen Bess on July 24. The route followed the edge of the Mantle Glacier in an anticlockwise circle to the foot of the previously unclimbed northwest ridge. The rock was good, and we followed the ridge all the way, reaching the summit snow ridge in about eight hours, where we joined the Munday route. It took another hour to the summit.

PATRICK SHERMAN, *Alpine Club of Canada*

## ALASKA

*Climbing Along the Richardson Highway.* Thirty-one members of the Iowa Mountaineers drove in August 1955, to the Castner Glacier area, one of the most accessible in Alaska. The group reached Castner Creek about 45 miles from Big Delta on August 22. Shortly after our arrival it started to rain, and it continued to rain or snow for seven days with hardly a let-up. The previously arranged air support was impossible in such weather, and on August 23 and 24 large parties carried food and supplies nine miles up the Castner Glacier where we camped the second night. Driving snow drove us back to the Castner Creek camp late the next day, and on August 26 we evacuated this camp leaving 300 pounds of food safely wrapped in plastic bags and housed in tin boxes on the glacier. We pitched a temporary camp at the Army Arctic Indoctrination Camp at Black Rapids (2,314 feet), where we were permitted to dry out our duffel. In the rain on August 27 a party of eight climbed Gunnysack Peak (*ca.* 5,500 feet) a half mile east of camp. The next day Hans Gsellman, Hans and Hubey Schlapschi ascended a major snow peak of about 7,800 feet northwest of the Black Rapids Glacier and on its right bank, apparently a first ascent. After crossing the army suspension bridge over the Delta River and ascending the glacier about five miles, they turned sharply to the right and followed the narrow snow ridge to the summit. The ascent took nine hours. On August 29 a party led by Joe Stettner and John Ebert drove down the Richardson Highway to Isabel Pass and hiked up the Gulkana Glacier to near its head. Because the army road leading to the snout of the glacier was under water, the unanticipated long hike to the base prevented our trying any of the fine peaks in this area. On August 30 a party under Joe Stettner's direction drove south to Phelan Creek just south of Rainbow Mountain. From Phelan Canyon, two miles east of the road, they ascended the peak to the right via the long narrow ridge. They traversed four false summit humps before reaching the highest point. No record of previous ascents was found. A cairn and mountain register were placed on the summit (*ca.* 5,600 feet). On the same day a party of 11 led by John Ebert and Hans Gsellman traversed a major peak to the left (southeast) of the Black Rapids Glacier. Seven miles above the Delta River crossing we turned sharply from the glacier to the east and ascended over moraines and up a canyon about a mile to a snow col. The route then led up a steep snow slope on the right to the main snow ridge and the summit, a mile away. There was no sign of previous ascents. We left a rock cairn and a metal register on the summit, which, according to

available maps, appears to be about 8,000 feet. We called it "James Peak" in honor of the youngest expedition member, seven-year-old James Ebert. We descended the west snow ridge about a thousand feet and then glistaded down a series of snow slopes to a narrow canyon which we followed to the right to the Black Rapids Glacier. We arrived at the Delta River at about 9:00 P.M. in a heavy downpour. This ended our climbing.

JOHN EBERT

*University Peak, St. Elias Range.* A first ascent of this 15,030 foot peak (at the time the highest unclimbed peak in North America) was completed June 19 and 20, 1955 by Keith Hart, Leon Blumer, Sheldon Brooks, Tim Kelley, Norman Sanders, and Gibson Reynolds. The party was flown into the foot of Hawkins Glacier on June 9, 20 miles from the peak. Ten days, seven camps, and one air drop at Camp 6 enabled the climbers to reach the summit via the north ridge. A 13,500-foot peak ("Mt. McCall") between Mt. Bona and University Peak was also climbed by Kelley, Brooks, and Sanders. Mt. Bona was also ascended by a new route from the south on June 24. This was a third ascent.

R. HOUSTON

## PERU

*Cordillera Blanca.* A group from the Munich section of the Deutscher Alpenverein climbed in the summer of 1955 in the Cordillera Blanca de Huayhuash, the same region where American Alpine Club members operated a year before. They had a remarkable record with six climbs higher than 19,500 feet, three of them first ascents and nine climbs higher than 16,500 feet, five of these firsts.

From a base camp on Lake Parron at 13,700 feet they established a high camp at 18,200 feet on the Caras Glacier moraine. On June 14 Hermann Huber, Alfred Koch, and Helmut Schmidt climbed the 19,767-foot Nevado Caras de Parron. The icy southern summit slope was 60 degrees, and the peak so sharp that only one climber could stand on the top at a time. The next day Koch and Huber climbed the east ridge of the neighboring Nevado de Caras de Santa Cruz (19,751 feet), but they had to bivouac within a few feet of the summit. They descended the 60-degree south slope. An attempt on Pyramid was prevented by bad weather. Next they attacked the rugged granite spire, the Nevado Agujas (18,208 feet). This climb failed some 850 feet from the summit on the afternoon of June 26 because of climbing difficulties. They turned to the nearby Cerro de Parron, whose 17,464-foot summit they reached at 5:30 P.M. On July 15 Schmidt and Koch made the first ascent of the 20,210-foot South Peak of Huandoy



above the Quebrada Yanganuco from a bivouac on the 19,200-foot saddle. Huber, with a Peruvian porter, meanwhile made the ascent of the 20,853-foot West Peak, which had been ascended a year before for the first time by our members Ortenburger, Irvin, and Matthews, and of the 20,981-foot main (North) peak, a third ascent. On July 19 Koch and Huber made the fourth ascent of the Nevado Pisco (18,875 feet), and on August 2 Huber, Schmidt and the Peruvian porter Pedro Méndez, reached the 22,205-foot summit of Huascarán, Peru's highest peak, just a day before Hoppenon, Walton and Sowles' ascent.

In August they climbed the 16,400-foot main summit of the Chaccha group in the Cordillera Negra, reconnoitered the northern slopes of Chacaraju, and climbed 16,700-foot Pucaraju, two 16,500-foot peaks of the Pyramid group and across the Rio Morañon, Acrotamba (15,750 feet). In September they reconnoitered the as yet unexplored Cordillera Raura, where they climbed the 10,000-foot north peak of Yarupa and 18,000-foot Pucaroura.

*Sierra Vilcabamba.* On July 21 the Germans, Dolf Meyer and Martl Schiessler, climbed the Nevado Chamas Chico, which is over 16,500 feet, but had to turn back the next day on the Nevado Chamas Grande (19,350 feet). Meyer alone later climbed Coropuna.

*Cordillera Blanca.* A Peruvian group left Huaraz on August 3 to spend the night at Camp Ishinca at 16,400 feet. The next day they climbed high on Palcaraju (19,750 feet), but did not reach the summit. The group, which included four women, were as follows: José Ayllón and his wife, Alberto Morales Arnao and his sister Elena, Elsa Garrido Klinge, Elena Lumbreras, Jorge Lumbreras, Mariano Romero, and Fabian Suazo. On the same day Jorge Fernández Stoll and César Morales Arnao reached the 18,537-foot southwest summit of Lasuntay.

## BOLIVIA

*Cordillera Real, Huayna Potosí Group.* The Chileans Sergio Alvarado and Oscar González made the second ascent of Cuntin Coto (18,280 feet) on September 5, 1955.

## CHILE

*Paine Group, Patagonia.* Although the Patagonian peaks are low when compared to the more northerly Andes, they rise sheer from sea level into murky and stormy skies and are often fantastically rugged and massive. Their glaciers end in ice cliffs in the sea. The towering granite spires of the Paine group have seen much climbing activity in the last several years. In December 1953 an Argentine expedition of the Club Andino Bari-

loche entered the region, hoping to climb Paine Principal, whose altitude is reported at varying figures from 9,000 to 10,000 feet. They were harassed by even worse than normal weather and had only two really good days in a month. Avalanches thundered down throughout their stay. Their reconnaissances revealed no easy route. On January 4, Birger Lantschner and Heinz Kaltschmidt attempted the highest of the Cuernos (Horns) of Middle Paine, a difficult rock spire. The late hour and a storm turned them back about 300 feet from the summit (7,800 feet). On January 15 Otto Meiling and Kaltschmidt made their second attempt on Paine East, which they reported to be 9,050 feet high, and climbed it by the southeast ridge. This is the only mountain in the region which had been previously climbed, having been ascended in 1937 on the northeast ridge by the Germans Teufel and Zuck. The expedition's final attempt on Paine Principal over Paine West ended in tragedy when Heriberto Schmoll and Tonchek Pangerc were overwhelmed by an avalanche that broke off a hanging glacier above and swept the whole slope. Their bodies were not found then or in a second expedition sent out to search in April. Meiling and Augusto Vallmitjana were again in the region in November 1954, reconnoitered the western cliffs of the group on which they thought there were four possible routes and reached 7,500 feet, below the col between Paine Principal and Paine North.

An expedition of the Federación de Ski y de Andismo de Chile, under Eduardo Meyer, came to climb in the Paine Group in mid-January 1955. They attempted unsuccessfully the main peak and its 300-foot lower northern neighbor on their northern and western slopes above the Olguín Glacier, where they established three camps. Bad weather and vertical rock plastered with snow stopped them still 400 feet below the col between these peaks. They reported that mushrooms of ice would have guarded the summit slopes, had they gotten higher. On February 10 they changed their objectives to what they called Paine South (apparently the Argentines' "Paine West") and the summit that lies between this and the main summit, for which they give altitudes of 8,530 and 9,050 feet, respectively. Two days later from a 6,000-foot bivouac they climbed a couloir on the west face to a col between the peaks; on one vertical stretch of rock they used three pitons. From there they climbed first the South (or West) Peak and up the eastern ice face to the other central summit.

*Central Chile.* On December 8, 1954, Jorge Chaparro and Raúl Vouriot made the first ascent of 13,616-foot El Paso.

*Volcano Llanin, Lake District.* Two Italians, Enzo Mazzoldi and Giovanni Wiese made the first ascent of the formidable south face of the

Volcán Llanin (12,388 feet) on the Chilean-Argentine border on February 19-21, 1955. The face had been previously attempted various times. On November 17 Otto Meiling and Dinko Bertoncelj of the Club Andino Bariloche made another new route on Llanin's south face to the west of the Italian route after traversing Cerros Crespo and Cajón Negro. They claimed that their route was easier than the Italian one.

### ARGENTINA

*Ojos del Salado.* We were startled to read in the press that on January 22, 1955, a group of the Argentinian Asociación Tucumana de Andismo had made an ascent of a peak higher than Aconcagua. They claimed that the Ojos del Salado was the highest point in the Americas and some 300 feet higher than Aconcagua. Since the altitude of this peak, which lies on the Chilean-Argentinian frontier above the Laguna Verde at about 27 degrees south latitude, is given in the National Geographic Society's map of South America as 22,539 feet, and in the Encyclopedia Britannica (1944) as 22,402 feet, we were interested in receiving further information on how the climbers, Señores Jaime Femenías, Manuel Luis Cordomi, Gerardo Türpe, Wilfred Köppens, Orlando Bravo, and Rodolfo Benvenuto, had determined the altitude. In their association's "Boletín Informativo No. 16" of June 1955 they quote an official altitude of 6,690 meters (21,949 feet), but feel that the peak for which this altitude is given is not the true peak which they climbed. They state "with respect to the altitude of the mountain nothing definite can be said because the deficiencies in the instruments used do not reflect an objective measurement. The divulged altitude of 7,100 meters (23,295 feet) is simply an estimate based on the altitude of the final camp, and the hours of ascent to the summit." Although we congratulate the climbers on the ascent of a very high mountain, it seems hard yet to accept their estimate of altitude arrived at in this inexact manner. Two other later ascents have been recently reported.

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[Still further confusion concerning the altitude and even the location of the peak has recently been added by an Argentine newspaper account (La Razon, Feb. 7, 1956, Buenos Aires) that not only places the altitude at 7,260 meters, but once again moves the location of the peak. This article states that the first ascent of the mountain was actually completed in November of 1951 by two men from the Club Andino de Jujuy (Guillermo Pomo and Francisco Solana Quintana). This group estimated the height as 6,870 meters. The ascent by Prof. Bravo mentioned above, moved the altitude to over 7,100 meters and the peak into Argentina (27° 10' S, 68° 35' W). The latest expedition in February of 1956 was composed of 25 people from Chile led by Captain René Gajardo. This group moves the peak back into Chile (20 kilometers from Copiapó) and places the altitude at 7,260 meters, 130 meters higher than Aconcagua. Both of the latter expeditions agree that Ojos del Salado is the highest volcano in the world as indicated by lava and steam vents near the summit. Needless to say much more accurate information must be received before the final location and altitude of this high peak can be settled.—R. C. H.]

*Cerro Chimberí.* This 18,000-foot peak at the head of the Río Cochuna in the Nevados Centrales was climbed early in 1955 by Jaime Femenías, Flora Albornoz, Perico Pérez Cherp, Gerardo Türpe, Guillermo Muntaner, Ernesto Gómez Agote, Alfredo Bolsi, and Susana Olmos.

*Río Blanco Group.* In January 1955 Jorge and Sergio Domicelj, Juan Guthmann, Fredy Klayman, and Carlos Stegmann of the Centro Andino, Buenos Aires, climbed in the Río Blanco Group, which lies just to the south of Aconcagua. From a base camp at 10,300 feet in the Quebrada de Vargas they established a Camp 1 at 14,000 feet and Camp 2 on the Upper Río Plomo Glacier at 16,000 feet. The Domicelj brothers and Klayman made the third ascent of 17,036-foot Cerro León Blanco, while Guthmann and Stegmann attempted 17,373-foot Cerro Río Blanco, where they failed because of bad weather. Storms drove them back to their base, from which some four days later the first three made the first ascent of a 15,708-foot peak on the Chilean-Argentine frontier about two miles north of Cerro León Blanco. This they called Cerro Gustavo. The other two meanwhile made the second ascent of the Cerro Central (17,205 feet) from Camp 1.

*Portillo Group.* Francois Boucher, Julio Corradi, Jochen Groos, Nestor Sanes, Carlos Urien and Paul Ulens of the Centro Andino Buenos Aires spent the week of January 20 to 28, 1955, climbing in the Portillo Group. They made first ascents of the South Face of Cerro Punta Negra (15,748 feet), of Pico del Amorcito (16,732 feet), of three peaks which they named Cerro Fiala (18,373 feet), Cerro del Oso (16,404 feet), and Cerro Pirquitas (18,044 feet) and of three lesser mountains. They also made the second ascent of all summits of the Tres Picos del Amor (18,054 feet).

*Dos Picos, Cordillera del Río Tigre.* Three expeditions visited this rugged region, which lies about 80 miles south of Bariloche, west of Cholila. The members of the Club Andino Esquel, who made the first ascent of the south (highest) tower of the Cerro Dos Picos (8,300 feet), Señores Eggmann, Hardt, and Porcel, said that the ascent was "serious but without very great difficulties." Señores Cazaux and Michel of the Centro Andino de Buenos Aires several weeks later climbed the northern tower, which they classified as exceptionally difficult. In March and April Dr. J. J. Neumeyer, Dr. Venzano, Birger Lantschner and M. Marqués of the Club Andino Bariloche explored this region further, during which they made the first ascent of a peak they called Cerro Orion.

## ARCTIC

*Spitzbergen.* There was a number of expeditions active in the mountains of Spitzbergen in the summer of 1955. An Austrian group from the Edelweiss Club in Salzburg under Dr. Walter Frauenberger of Nanga Parbat fame traveled as far as Bethasnia Bay of the inner Eisfjord with a party from Cambridge University. Thence they continued to Claas Billen Bay, where they landed at Brucebyen and established a base five days up the Stubendorff Glacier. They made 40 first ascents of peaks up to 5,575 feet and did extensive topographical and glaciological work. A Munich group was active on Western Spitzbergen between the Kreuzfjord and Liefde Bay and Woodfjord. An Austrian group made four ascents, the highest Nordensköllfyell (5,250 feet) which took only 18 days from Linz to Linz and involved no air travel.

## A GEOLOGIST IN THE ARCTIC

Our member, Fred H. Roots, is one of our very few professional geologists with Arctic, Antarctic, and high mountain experience. After studying at the University of British Columbia, summers' field work with the Canadian government, a member of the Norwegian-British-Swedish Antarctic Expedition, 1949-52, further study at Princeton, then at Cambridge University and work at the Scott Polar Research Institute (where he married the assistant director), he is now with the Geological Survey of Canada. The following, taken from a letter to Henry Hall written in October 1955 covers that year's field season in the Arctic:

"Operation Franklin," as we called this year's effort in the Arctic Islands, was great fun and, I think, a worthwhile project all round. I'm not sure whether I outlined our plans to you last spring or not. What we tried to do was to make a big loop through the northern and western islands of the Arctic archipelago (the Queen Elizabeth Islands), using a combination of ski aircraft, dog teams, helicopters, and of course quite a bit of hobnails and snowshoes. Things turned out pretty well according to plan. The first of us went to Resolute Bay, Cornwallis Island, in April and after digging out the stores shipped there last year we spent May and June establishing the main camps and fuel caches, using a ski-DC-3 and dog teams. There were three main bases, in addition to the headquarters at Resolute Bay, and they were to be occupied in turn: one on the southwest corner of Ellesmere Island, one on Ellef Rignes, one on eastern Melville Island. In addition there were main fuel dumps on Devon, Cornwall, Axel Heiberg,

Loughead, and Bathurst Islands; and smaller dumps were established at many other places as the season progressed. During this time, dog-sledging trips were made on Ellesmere, Ellef Ringnes, Melville, and Somerset Islands, to determine the basic geological stratigraphy; the last dog parties did not return until the end of June (when we brought them back, dogs and all, in a helicopter). The helicopters, two Sikorsky S-55's, arrived in early June and immediately set about distributing parties at places we had already picked from air photos. We had nine field teams, each of two men; what with the helicopter crew, radio men and cooks, there were 30 in the gang altogether.

Most of the work settled down to foot traversing, with camp moves made by helicopter; but in the more mountainous areas of folded rocks we found ourselves packing the camps as usual. But the helicopters made even backpacking luxurious by Coast Range standards. We would fly over the route first, selecting the route in detail, and picking out campsites, where we would leave a cache of food. Then it was just a matter of walking or climbing from cache to cache, and rock and fossil specimens collected could be left behind in caches. At the other side you would wait for the helicopter, and then fly back, checking the geology of any doubtful areas, pick up the specimens—it really was a delightful way to get around. The S-55's always carried lots of food and camping gear, so when the weather closed in, as it did on nearly every long flight, it was just a case of sitting down and waiting it out in comfort.

The Arctic summer is always poor for flying, with persistent fog and low cloud, and this summer was a little worse than average in most parts. So we spent more than a third of the time "grounded" because of poor visibility. But the work was not hampered unduly, and the circuit of the islands was completed, except that we did less on Melville Island than we had hoped.

From the geological and topographic standpoint, one of the most interesting features of the summer was the investigation of the mountain system that runs across the islands, from Melville across Bathurst, up through Axel Heiberg and Ellesmere and across the north end of Greenland. This has been officially named the Innuitian System, and certainly ranks with the Appalachians and the Cordillera as one of the three great mountain systems of North America. From a mountain-lover's standpoint the most attractive island in this system is Axel Heiberg. Here the peaks rise to about 7,500 feet, directly from narrow fiords that reach deep into the island. The mountains are higher in parts of Ellesmere, but they are big and blocky, and large parts of the "high

country" there are rather plain icecaps; but Axel Heiberg is a nice balance of sharp peaks, twisting valley glaciers and ferocious little icefalls, while down below are relatively green meadows and quite a high population of muskox and caribou. And the rocks are interesting—fantastically exposed folds and twists of strata, whole mountains of brilliant white gypsum, banded yellow and black sediments, red lava flows and any amount of good hard black coal, so that you can enjoy a campfire 1,500 miles north of the treeline. Axel Heiberg and that part of Ellesmere just east of it have the most good summer weather of any spot known in the Arctic Islands—day after day of blue skies while the rest of the archipelago was smothered in clouds. It is no ordinary island—a great place for a holiday.

HENRY S. HALL, JR.

### EUROPE

*Monte Rosa, Alps.* In the 1955 *American Alpine Journal* (pages 126 to 132) I have read the article by Guy M. Everett, "A Fight for Life on Monte Rosa." As he says, he was bound for the "Cresta Rey" of the Dufourspitze. He had "read the scanty details given in the guide book and looked at the drawings." Although not specified, I suppose it concerns my *Guide Book*. The "Cresta Rey" (route 198) is a simple rock rib, straight forward and without gendarme. Its description does not imply any details. You simply follow to the top of the Dufour. Mr. Everett's story is quite clear to me: he tried the so-called "Cresta Piacenza" (route 195) which is far longer and much more difficult than the "Cresta Rey" because of its many gendarmes. These two ridges (at their foot) are about one kilometer apart from one another and it sounds rather curious that Mr. Everett could confuse them.

As you can see in the Addenda to my Guide, page 275, this route 195 was followed for the first time on July 20, 1907, by Mario Piacenza and the guides Jean-Joseph Carrel and J. B. Pellissier, but Piacenza never published anything about this fine climb. The only testimonial is contained in Carrel's guide book where Piacenza writes that they took 23 hours from Bétemps to the top. Knowing the strength of this party you can imagine that this route is not easy. This testimonial was published in 1952 (in my *Guide Book*) after almost half a century. I suggested to call this bridge "Cresta Piacenza" in remembrance of the famous Italian climber and explorer. Piacenza is still alive and does well deserve this honour.

MARCEL KURZ