

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.

VENEZUELA

Sierra Nevada de Mérida José Betancourt, Edgardo Gómez and Sócrates Pérez climbed the S face of Pico Abanico (4900m) for the first time in directissima. The route follows the prominent pillar that splits the face in two and took 8 hours (25 February 1978).

COLOMBIA

Cordillera Oriental In the Güicán (Cocuy) district of this range, Venezuelans under J. Betancourt made the first ascent of the steep and broken S face of Alto Ritacuba (5464m) and the third of Puntagudo (5018m) and Pulpito Negro (4930m; see accompanying photograph). The last 2 peaks had been ascended in 1957 by Cambridge students and in 1977, by Colombians.

The now very active Colombians climbed several peaks in the area, including new routes on the fine Castillo (5123m) and repeat ascents of the famous rock-tower Pulpito del Diablo (c 4900m), hitherto reserved for experienced rock-climbers. Other Colombian accomplishments include the first ascent of the unnamed ice-peak, c 4900m, NE of Laguna (lake) de la Sierra. As for other Colombian ranges, mention should be made of several ascents to the higher peaks of

117 *Nevado del Pulpito* (Photo: E. Echevarria)





118 The summit of Abasraju (This and next 2 photos: N. Jaeger)

the very attractive Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta by both Colombians and Germans. This range has been now opened by the Colombian government to expeditions.

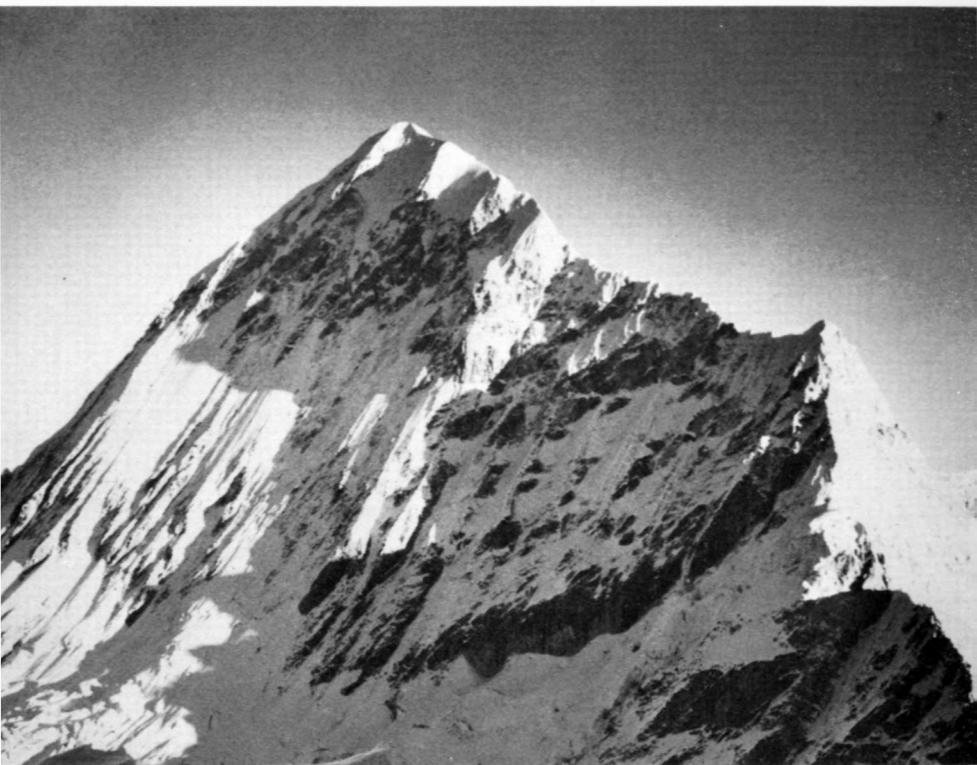
PERU

Cordillera Blanca In spite of the adverse reception mountaineering circles seem to have given to the newly established Parque Nacional Cordillera Blanca, expeditions have continued to flock to this famed range. Noteworthy enterprises for 1978 have however been few. The main one as illustrated in the accompanying photographs, was a *solo* expedition by the Frenchman Nicolas Jaeger; this accomplished the first ascent of Abasraju (c 5600m) and new routes on Nevado de Santa Cruz (6241m, direct SE face), Chacaraju Este (6000m, direct S face) and Taulliraju (5830m, S face and SSE ridge). The upper part of the last route had been opened in May by a group from the Compagnie des Guides de Chamonix, who had also opened the S route of Pisco (c 5800m). Spaniards repeated the NE ridge route of Huascarán (6769m), climbed by their countrymen in 1961, and the Frenchmen X. Bargeas and P. Beguin climbed alpine style the 1966 French route of Huascarán Norte's N face (6654m), on 23 July. Finally, Italians G. Agnolotti and G. Pettigiani made in mid-May the first ascent of Pucamataraju (5520m), in the Rurec valley.

Other ranges. Italians climbed for the first time the SW buttress of a favourite peak of theirs, Trapecio (5644m, Cordillera de Huayhuash). Salcantay (6271m), highest peak in the Cordillera Vilcabamba, was ascended by its S face and SE ridge on 15 June by 6 Yugoslavians. Days later, this route was repeated by Basques, Mexicans, Spaniards and Frenchmen.

BOLIVIA

Cordillera Real It seems to have become the turn of Bolivia's peaks to have new routes



119 Nevado Santa Cruz, SE face



120 Tauliraju

inaugurated on their flanks. An Italian party under Cossimo Zappelli climbed the SW spur of Nevado Chearoco (6127m) and the NE spur of Nevado Ancohuma (6430m); 6 weeks later, another Italian party, under Arturo Bergamaschi, climbed the S face of Chearoco and the S face of Nevado Quelluani (5920m).

CHILE-ARGENTINA

Northern Puna Aside from several Chilean mountaineering-archaeological expeditions, the most important enterprise belongs to a combined Italian-Argentinian group, which included Antonio Beorchia, chronicler of ancient Indian Mountaineering. This expedition entered the largely unexplored S area of Bolivia, but transportation problems severely limited its work. On the return journey expedition members made the first recorded ascents of Cerro del Inca (5660m), Araral (5680m) and Ascotán (5440m). On Ascotán the climbers found traces of previous ancient occupancy.

Clubs of La Serena, Chile, made repeat ascents of several of the higher peaks in the Coquimbo province, as well as the second of El Tapado (5124m) and the first of 3 peaks under 5000m.

Central ranges On the Chilean side of the border the first ascent on 16 February of the SW ridge of Nevado del Plomo (6050m), by members of the Club Andino de Chile is noteworthy. New peaks, still fairly abundant in the area, particularly in the Colchagua province, were also ascended; among the more important of these ascents must be mentioned the rock-towers of Los Dos Gemelos (4750m) and El Quebradizo (4800m).

On the Argentinian side of the border, J. Jansón, E. Porcelana and G. Vieiro, of the Club Andinista Mendoza, opened on Aconcagua (6960m) what has now come to be called the 'ruta argentina'. This, the fifth one on the great peak, runs up 3 steep ice-fields, a rock-wall and connects in the last third with the Polish route, taking on average a SE direction, and with the mighty S face on the left hand side (February 1978).

Patagonia First ascents have been few. Jorge Skvarça (Club Andino Bariloche) made the first known climb of Cerro Jani (c 1900m), located SW of Lago Argentino and an expedition of the same club ascended the striking rock-tower of Dedo del César (c 1900m), at the S end of the continental ice-cap and N of the Paine massif. In the latter, a Chilean expedition of university students made the first ascent of another rock-tower, Aleta de Tiburón ('Shark's Fin'), c 1800m, the second of Trono Blanco (2300m) and for 20 days attempted the 'Fortress', reaching, when a short spell of good weather came, some 40m below the top. A British party under K. Myhill also attempted the same peak. An Italian expedition attempted FitzRoy's NNE buttress. After failing to force a way up, 8 climbers reached the top in 2 successive groups by the S face (1 and 23 January 1978).

The above summary does not include repeat ascents on many peaks in all 7 Andean countries. As a general assessment for 1978, it can be said more difficult climbs are being constantly undertaken, but still concentrating in reduced areas (Central Peru and S Patagonia). One wonders when will be the turn of the S rock-faces in Central Chile and Argentina, long considered unclimbable, because of the poor quality of the rock. A new facet of this upsurge is the new inclination to favour technical climbing. This has been particularly so in the Mérida area of Venezuela and in Central Chile. In the latter country, an intelligent government policy has allowed a large influx of national funds and endowments into all sports. For 1977-78, the Chilean Federación de Andinismo registered more than 300 ascents, from 2000 to almost 7000m, carried out by its affiliates.

Publications for 1978 include 3 issues of the first Colombian mountaineering journal, *Campo Abierto* (Bogotá), *Revista Peruana de Andinismo* no 12 (Lima), *Revista Andina* and *Anuario de Montaña* (Santiago).

Guide-books

The Southern Cordillera Real R. Pecher and W. Schmiemann (Chur, Switzerland, 1977, by Plata Publishing Co Ltd, 13 plates, 14 sketches). 'Mountaineering and Skiing in Bolivia', is the subtitle of this small book (English text). As it is, it is of limited value. Nearly all climbs refer

to standard routes and are more for *le jet et la montagne* type of mountaineers. Heights are only approximate. Peaks cited are few. Information regarding access, roads, interesting places, standard camps, etc, is very good, not to be obtained from any other source. With all its limitations, this guide is vastly better than no guide at all.

Yuraq Janka Guide to the Peruvian Andes, Part 1, Cordilleras Blanca and Rosko John F. Ricker (Alpine Club of Canada/American Alpine Club, 1977, pp xii, 180, maps, photos and pull-out panoramas, npq). In 1974, a guide to the Cordillera Raura was published in the *American Alpine Journal* and this has now been followed by John Ricker's major work on the Cordilleras Blanca and Rosko in book form, in what is hoped will be the first of a series. It can be said straight away that it will be indispensable for anyone travelling through or climbing in the area. The book is divided into 3 main parts. The first covers the whole of the Andean region in Peru, with sections on early mountaineering in the region, the Indian inhabitants and general expedition hints. The second covers the particular features of the Blanca, including weather, glaciation, access, etc, whilst the third and largest section gives details of every mountain in the range in 15 sub-sections, from Champara in the N to Caullaraju in the S, with Rosko tacked on at the end. The information given includes a description of each mountain group with heights, and then individual routes with approach, brief description of route, date and participants for the first ascent, time taken and literature references. An extensive bibliography and section on the Quechua language completes the book. This invaluable guide and work of reference also contains a 32-page section of excellent photographs and 11 fold-out panoramas, plus 4 maps on 2 large loose sheets at a scale of 1:100,000.

POLAR REGIONS

Ned Gillette, Doug Wiens, Allan Bard and Chuck Schulz completed a 450-mile ski trip round the N end of Ellesmere Island. Each man pulled his own fibre glass sled and no food caches or air drops were used in the 52-day trip. The trip was partly on frozen ocean (with 20 to 40ft pressure ridges in the Robeson Channel) and then latterly on the interior ice-cap, which rises to 1500m; 7 peaks up to 2100m were climbed. See *Mountain* 60 14 for further details.

A Canadian party visited the Pangnirtung Pass region in Baffin Island in August 1977. Barry Nelson, Ken Hunter and Frank Gordon were repulsed by stone-falls on the S face of the W rib of Mount Turnweather, after climbing some 400m of 55° ice and snow, and 6 rock-pitches at 5.9. Hunter and Gordon were later successful on a rock-route on Gauntlet Peak which involved 21 pitches at 5.9 and above.

Off Belay (36 35) contains an account by Jim Savage of the first crossing of Bylot Island, off the N coast of Baffin Island by a 5-man Canadian team in the summer of 1977. The expedition ascended 20 peaks of around 1800m, the highest being Angilaak Mountain (2062m). An article by another expedition member, Rob Kelly, appears in *Canadian Alpine Journal* 61 44.

La Montagne et Alpinisme (111 266) includes a general article on Spitzbergen by Jean-Louis Georges, which gives a bibliography and references to previous expeditions, although both are to French sources. The peaks are relatively modest in size, the highest being Perriertoppen and Newtontoppen at 1717m. *Les Alpes* (2/1978 65) also contains an article on an expedition to Spitzbergen in 1975, written by M. Liechti.

BRITISH ISLES

Early 1978 saw a change in the editorship of *Mountain*; Ken Wilson retired to pastures new after 8 years in the chair, having been responsible for the first 58 issues of a magazine which set a high standard from the start and which in a short time developed a considerable and deserved reputation both at home and internationally. It is a testimony to Ken Wilson's energy that his job has been taken over by 2 people. Tim Lewis is the new editor and Geoff Birtles is filling a new post of business manager. In 1978, the new team have carried on with the successful formula developed by their predecessor, the motto apparently being 'Business