

to a large glacier and some very spectacular peaks. One snow peak (c. 5700 feet) and two minor summits were climbed, but an early season blizzard prevented further ascents.

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*Middle Fiord, Axel Heiberg.* The British Army Axel Heiberg Expedition 1972 was composed of Surgeon Lieutenant Commander P. N. Dilly, Captain M. T. King, Lieutenants J. W. Chuter, P. R. West, F. S. MacKenzie, D. A. Malcolm and R. J. Ebdon, Sergeant K. Scaife, Corporal B. R. Lane, Lance Corporal M. Lane and Sapper D. F. J. Lewis with me as leader. The aims of the expedition were to explore and climb virgin peaks in the Princess Margaret Range at the head of Middle Fiord on the west coast and to carry out a simple scientific programme on behalf of British universities and a wildlife survey on behalf of the Canadian Wildlife Service. We were airlifted via Thule and Resolute Bay and arrived on June 27 at Base Camp close to the end of the glacier; we received an airdrop on the glacier itself, which we named "Airdrop Glacier". The initial plan was to go to Drop Camp, pick up rations for ten days and then split into three parties. West, King, Ebdon and I were to go south to the Swiss Range, Dilly, M. Lane, Scaife and Lewis were to go north toward Li Fiord into what we later called the "Scaife Glacier Massif", while the rest were to set out a week later onto the icecap proper. After the first phase, on July 13 we eight moved back to Drop Camp but thick mist prevented a move until the 15th. Dilly's group went into the Swiss Range while my party broke new ground at the head of the Airdrop Glacier in what we called the "Hercules Massif". On August 9 Dilly's party left Drop Camp for Base Camp in the rain. Lewis and Scaife fell into a crevasse, from which it was possible to rescue Lewis but Scaife tragically died from his injuries. Climbing statistics are as follows: Swiss Range, 24 first ascents; Hercules Massif, 7 first ascents; Scaife Glacier Massif, 12 first ascents; icecap, 4 first ascents. The Swiss Range is a main ridge with a host of supporting ridges. We approached from the Iceberg Glacier but a view from the southwest indicated an approach from this direction might have been easier. The peaks varied from 5700 to 3400 feet. The peaks of the Hercules Massif are mainly rounded if approached from the west and are superb for ski-mountaineering. These peaks ranged from 6700 to 5470 feet. The Scaife Glacier Massif provides a mixture with an easy approach on skis to within a few hundred feet of the summit and then a rock finish. These mountains were from 5560 to 3150 feet in altitude. The highest mountain in the area, White Crown (6750 feet) rises above the icecap. It had been previously climbed by landing 500 feet below the summit by helicopter. Our ascent was the first from sea level. The other icecap peaks varied from 5300 to 4860 feet.

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