

been confirmed by the Danish Polar Centre as the new most northerly land on earth. More information at www.2001topoftheworld.com.

STEVE GARDINER

NORTH GREENLAND

Warming Land exploration and first ascent. There is a picturesque valley in the extreme north of Greenland that is reminiscent of the Yosemite in California, with vertical walls topped by ice capped domes and mesas. It is intermittently intruded by glacial arms and is punctuated by a sublime chain of lakes. A 3,000-foot castle peak stands monolithically at its head. The triangular peninsula in which this valley resides is called Warming Land. Our *National Geographic*-sponsored expedition in July made the first crossing of this peninsula from Saint Georges Fjord to Hartz Sund and back again. A subtle divide in the central valley sheds to an eastern and a western river. A second western river feeds from a second picturesque mountain valley adjacent to Saint Georges Fjord. We began at the mouth of this second western river. It appeared uncrossable but for the natural bridges cut into the limestone bedrock. The expedition proceeded across a natural bridge and was on its way. The favor of fortune at that river was to repeat itself throughout.

The weather was fair and an easy route was found through a ridge of pyramids to the central western river. This river led us into the central valley. An advance base camp was established in three days at the eastern lake at the heart of the central valley. From here we set out down the canyons of the eastern river to Hartz Sund. A solo climber made the ascent of the monolith from the west side through a succession of walls, chimneys and shelves. He reached the summit as the first snow storm of the day began to clear. After two more snow storms and 22 hours of exploring all members were back at advance base camp. In good weather we returned to Saint Georges Fjord across the grain of the ridge country and over a fine, high pass at the margin of the western icefields. A maze of corridors through the miniature ice caps led to an ice-dammed lake and the headwaters of the second western river. We discovered another sequence of limestone tunnels in the upper regions of this river. One day down the river took the expedition back to the west coast. We departed from the same alluvial shelf along Saint Georges Fjord where we had arrived two weeks earlier. Personnel included National Geographic writer Gretel Ehrlich, National Geographic photographer David MacLean, CBS correspondent Bill Gasperini, ornithologist Betsy Fejkis, Dr. Miki Rifkin, Dr. Frank Landsberger, Patti Scott, Jeff Scott, Chuck Stielau, and myself as leader.

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