FALLING OFF A CORNICE
Alberta, Rocky Mountains, Mt. Assiniboine

Aliester (Bugs) McKeith and two companions were climbing the north face of Mt. Assiniboine on 17 June 1978. About 1500 hours, McKeith went on alone toward the summit in blowing snow with intermittent visibility, while his companions belayed up the final steep section. When they reached the ridge, they found McKeith’s tracks ending where a cornice had broken off. He had fallen down the 750-meter east face, and his body was found at the foot three days later. (Source: Banff Crag and Canyon, 4 March 1978)

Analysis
McKeith was a very experienced climber, but had made a classic mistake. (Source: T. Auger)

FAILURE OF BOLT ANCHOR
Alberta, Rocky Mountains, Cascade Mountain

Cameron Cairns (20) and Randy Clark (24) had climbed Cascade waterfall on 3 March 1978 and were rappeling down it. Cairns descended about 30 meters to easy slopes. Clark followed him, but when he was about a third of the way down the anchor failed. He fell about 20 meters, then tumbled some hundred meters further down hard snow and was killed immediately. (Source: T. Auger)

Analysis
The rappel anchor was a single 3/8-inch sleeve bolt with a drilled Cassin pin for a hanger. It failed when the limestone around the bolt cracked away leaving a disc-shaped depression. It is bad practice to trust a single anchor, and this is especially so in the friable rock of the Rockies. There was another bolt nearby and, though it would have been hard to reach and would have required several feet of sling, it could have been used. (Source: T. Auger)

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STRANDED ON ROCK, INEXPERIENCED
Alberta, Rocky Mountains, Mt. Louis

Three young climbers, Phil Smith, Scott Duncan, and Ron Carmichael, started up the standard southeast face route of Mt. Louis early on 25 June 1978. It requires about 600 meters of moderate to exposed climbing and is slightly devious. Their progress was very slow, and they decided to bivouac without gear some