

named one, Mount Sergeant Robinson (10,650 feet). However, the highest areas of these mountains have not yet been visited by mountaineers. Although the northern edge of this section of mountains has been known and partially mapped since 1898 and has allured many passers-by since the completion of Glenn Highway in World War II, the Matanuska River has drowned several persons and is an effective barrier to casual summer mountaineering. Bodenburg Butte (881 feet) and Lazy Mountain (3720 feet) at the western end of the ellipse are so easy that their climbs are unrecorded and Matanuska Peak (6119 feet), the first significant mountain eastward was climbed by 1938. (Babcock, Hackney, Ireton and a dog made the first winter ascent March 12, 1967). Kings Mountain (5809 feet) protrudes impressively enough from the northern edge of the range that at least two parties crossed the river to climb it in the 1940s, and more ascents have been made since a toll cable was installed by the lodge at its base. Its first winter ascent was made by Hackney and Ireton in a party led by Babcock on March 4, 1967. Winter mountaineering with the advantage of crossing the Matanuska River on the ice has just caught on this year. On February 12 my wife and I made the first ascent of Pinnacle Mountain (4541 feet) in this manner, our ascent being by the west ridge, and three attempts were made on Peak 8290, which at just six miles from Glenn Highway is the closest mountain over 8000 feet to any road in Alaska, but is, we believe, unclimbed despite the spurious claim of a hunting guide to have "been up their lotsa times and shot a goat right on top." The best and highest climb yet made in these mountains was done July 3 by D. P. Johnston, John Samuelson, and Hans Van der Laan when they made the first ascent of "Skybuster" or "Ice Cream Cone Mountain" (8675 feet) by its northeast ridge, the highest mountain for a dozen miles in any direction. (See account below.) The only named summit in the group not yet mentioned is Mount Wickersham (7415 feet), which is unclimbed though easily accessible by the Matanuska Glacier, but many virgin peaks await worthy climbers and good names.

J. VINCENT HOEMAN

*"Ice Cream Cone Mountain," Chugach Range.* After a hair-raising crossing of the murky, rushing Matanuska River in a delapidated rowboat, John Samuelson, Hans Van der Laan and I followed fine, three-foot-wide moose freeways up the east fork of Carpenter Creek, over gravel bars and on the second day, still unroped, up the glacier at its head to 6400 feet. We were away from camp at six A.M. on July 3. We climbed for half a

mile diagonally upward on the hanging glacier that clings to the right side of the jagged ridge, then along the ridge except where forced back onto the hanging glacier to avoid the rough crest. Because the 45° ice was overlain with eight inches of snow, we should have belayed. Finally the rock of a steep section melted into the mists above. Below, rock and snow pillars plunged valleyward like the Eigerwand. We dug out our iron and proceeded. A 120-foot pitch over snow and rock led to a 70-foot couloir. I groped up the third lead, having to brush away eight to ten inches of snow to find piton cracks. More of the same led to a 40-foot chimney which split a nearly vertical band of rock. The back wall was ice and offered holds to the crampons we still wore. The side walls, though well iced, offered rock holds. I suppose this section would be F6 under good conditions, but it was more difficult as we found it. After emerging from the chimney, I followed a comparatively gentle snow rib for 50 feet to the level ridge crest. Beyond, the ridge went on endlessly in a series of false summits. We reached the summit (8675 feet) at ten P.M. The wind and wet falling snow that had been with us most of the day increased and so we bivouacked four hours before rappelling to the comfort of high camp. The walk out and the river crossing took two more days. NCCS IV, F6.

DAVID P. JOHNSTON

*Mount Gannett, Chugach Range.* At first light on March 18 on a completely clear day Gary Hansen, Bill Long, Frank Nosek and I were flown to the upper end of one of the spurs of the Knik Glacier. From our landing spot at 7000 feet we went directly up the northwest ridge of Mount Gannett (9620 feet). A climb of about three miles across firm snow brought us to the summit, where we left a register. Cat-like tracks were seen in the snow heading up to about 8600 feet, but positive identification as to whether they were lynx, wolverine or what was not made. We were back at camp just before sunset but because of the wind we were unable to fly back until the next morning.

HANS R. VAN DER LAAN, *Mountaineering Club of Alaska*

*P 6410, Chugach Range.* Karen Courtright and I finally got through irresistible blueberries up the south fork of Eagle River to make on August 26 the first ascent of P 6410 via the southeast ridge. We skirted gendarmes by following a talus shelf and a rotten couloir on the northeast side of the ridge. NCCS II, F5.

DAVID P. JOHNSTON