

is even more precious than usual, for the Brooks Range is rapidly losing its primitive quality. The oil companies have moved in efficiently—the land is nearly theirs.

JACK MILLER

*The Tusk, Juneau Icefields.* Because of a time limit, our mini-expedition to the northwestern portion of the Icefields was hurried by helicopter to the upper Taku Glacier. Our objective was unclimbed Tusk (c. 6700 feet), which actually towers atop an isolated north-trending ridge which flanks the Battle Glacier: not only a climbing problem, but a possible approach nightmare. Several of Austin Post's aeriels gave it the resemblance of Bugaboo Spire's north side, only in a more glacierized region. On August 2, just as the weather was closing down, John Rupley, Dave Beckstead, Ray Ketcham and I made the climb, with Illa Rupley hosting our camp. Fortunately a long glacier traverse, then steep névé on the west flank provided a narrow route to the north corner. Here two class-5 pitches brought us to a summit ridge, long but simple. After being pinned in the tents 6 days, Rupley and Beckstead made some climbs on the Snow Towers, to our south, while Ketcham and I skied to Maynard Miller's J.I.R.P. Camp Ten. Here we were treated to gracious alpine hospitality before departing from this magnificent "land of the spirits."

FRED BECKEY

*Juneau Icefields.* On August 10 John Rupley and I climbed the east ridge of the Snow Towers. After seven leads of friable rock we were on the northeast point, the lowest of the three-summitted peak. NCCS III, F5. On the way back to our camp south of the Tusk, we scrambled up the middle summit of Tricouni Peak.

DAVID L. BECKSTEAD

*Mount Nesselrode, Northern Boundary Range.* In August the first ascent of Mount Nesselrode (8100 feet) was made by a party including Aylmer Thompson, A. Clough, John Schuff, Heidi Goodwin, Simon Waldram, Lock and Lance Miller and me.

MAYNARD M. MILLER

*The Cats Ears, Devils Thumb.* The Cats Ears is a spectacular double tower mounted on the west face of the Devils Thumb. It was climbed in July by Paul Starr, Fred Douglas, and me from Vancouver, British Columbia. Our approach was from Petersburg by a short float-plane hop to Scenery Lake—thence over a low col into the Witches Cauldron, a wild and desolate chasm between whose branches the Thumb erupts. This glacier, whose ice stream is tilted back toward the chasm headwall, was our base and airdrop site, a day's pack from the lake. The climb was

made from here in two bivouacs, with one entire day required on the final 800-foot spire. Rock on the tower itself was good, and there was only minor aid despite steepness. The route, however, was devious and not obvious, requiring nine leads on the east side. Incidents included one fall and a major, unprovoked landslide which took out half our bivouac ledge a couple hours before we were to reoccupy it in descent. Two other class-5 rock peaks were climbed further south toward Scenery Lake, and on one of these we experienced the major earthquake which shook Alaska this summer. A memorable sensation! There are many technically difficult unclimbed peaks in the Thumb area, and some nice routes on the Devil itself.

RICHARD R. CULBERT

*Colonel Foster, East Face.* The main attraction of this wall is that it is quite likely the largest on Vancouver Island—about 3300 feet high. It was climbed in September by Fred Douglas, Paul Starr and me by a buttress leading to the highest peak of the many-summitted massif. Rock was fairly good and generally easier than had been expected, with trivial aid. Only one bivouac was required. This peak, however, is a long, complex and demanding climb by any known route. (First visited in 1968 by Mike Walsh solo!) It required the balance of that day to get off the beast. Other buttresses on the north part of this wall may offer sustained difficulties on good rock.

RICHARD R. CULBERT

### **Washington—Cascade Mountains**

*Snow Creek Wall, Country Club Route.* Thwarted by bad weather, and somewhat put-off by the overabundance of people heading for the north side of Mount Stuart, we sighted instead on nearby Snow Creek Wall for our after-Christmas adventure. On December 30-31, P. Ekman, J. Ossiander, J. Weis, and I made the first winter ascent of the Country Club route. Conditions were such as to make the climb rather different from the usual summer romp, and it took us two days going alpine style to complete the eight roped pitches to the top, two of which were quite severe (ropes were also used below the first pitch due to almost continuous powder snow slides coming off the top of the wall). The pitch leading to the Northern Dihedral makes a 165-foot rope a definite asset. The climb was mostly mixed, and crampons were worn at all times.

MANUEL A. GONZALEZ, *Unaffiliated*

Other winter climbs include the Esmeralda Gully and Gerhardt's Crystal Blue Persuasion as well as the annual attempts on the North Ridge of Mount Stuart.