

Cerro Mariano Moreno and Cerro Pirámide, Southern Patagonian Icecap. In the summer of 1972-3 Argentines Jorge Aikes and Eduardo Rodríguez and the Germans Martin Schiessler and Günther Sturm made two new routes, the south and the southwest ridges, of the south peak of Cerro Mariano Moreno. The previous season Aikes and Rodríguez climbed Cerro Pirámide.

Lautaro. Eric Jones, Mick Coffey, the Argentine Ernesto O'Reilly, and I crossed the southern Patagonian Icecap, covering a total distance of 300 miles on ice and taking 52 days in all. During this time Cerro Lautaro (11,089 feet) was climbed for the second time* and two volcanoes were discovered. One of these was climbed and named Cerro Mimosa after the ship that brought the Welsh settlers to Patagonia. The following recounts the ascent of Lautaro on March 2:—The evening was fine. Eric Jones had risen at 1:30, 3:00 and 5:00 P.M.; each time the mountain was covered by mists. This was our third week on the icecap and Cerro Lautaro—Eric Shipton's "elusive volcano"—loomed 6000 feet above the tiny tent. Our first two attempts were thwarted by mists and driving ice. New tactics were called for; Eric Jones, Mick Coffey and I left at eleven P.M. whilst it was dark and climbed part way up the mountain by torch light. By five A.M. we had reached a col at 9000 feet. The three of us started to traverse around the ice slopes towards the Pacific, now just visible in the west. A gradual pink glow caught some of the higher ice flowers and Eric was quickly transposed into a world of back-lit, strangely carved, rosy ice trees. Two fissures of the volcano were smoking. Odious fumes of yellow sulphur made my throat feel weak. We had a brief rest whilst discussing the best route to the summit. First we roped down across a dangerous avalanche slope that showed signs of recent snow slides. Then across and up another slope, this time 55° but with usable jugs of ice for handholds—at least the majority were usable; others snapped with alarming suddenness and a fall would have resulted in severe cuts to the body. On the last rope-length, we climbed up ice overlying mud, a new and bizarre experience—if your foothold broke, you started scree glissading downwards. From the summit we could see 200 miles in each direction. To the west lay the Pacific, deep and azure blue. Closer the fjords flowed from the icecap

* In Buenos Aires the English climbers were told by some one, but by neither Peter Skvarca nor Luciano Pera, the first-ascent party, that the Argentines had not made the summit but had been turned back 150 meters from the top by nauseous sulphur fumes pouring out of five vents surrounding the summit. For that reason, the British reported in good faith they had been the first. There is no doubt in the mind of the Editor that the Argentines reached the summit of Lautaro on January 29, 1964 as reported in *A.A.J.*, 1964, p. 223. The Editor has carefully examined the Argentine summit photographs and there is no doubt of their having stood on the highest point.

through Chile and into this vast ocean. To the north and south the Andes stretched forever. In the east, Fitz Roy and Cerro Torre dominated the skyline. Sulphur fumes made our stay inhospitable. More vents poured out smoke and the mountain was coming to life. Cerro Lautaro was annoyed with these tiny figures that had dared to penetrate its mantle of ice and fire. Two days later we skied across to Cerro Mimosa, which had sulphur fumes pouring out near the top. The next day we started the return journey south toward the Viedma Glacier and eventually Lago Viedma. Knowing about the notorious Patagonian wind, we had a "reserve" parachute to pull the sledges back across the icecap. Although the winds were in fact quite gentle, they pulled the two sledges and the climbers along at a steady 15 knots for 40 miles before the wind dropped in the afternoon. By then we were at the back of Cerro Torre.

LEO DICKINSON, *Alpine Climbing Group*

Paine Towers, East Face of the Central Tower. A South African expedition was in the field from November 1973 to January 1974. Paul Fatti, leader, Roger Fuggle, Michael Scott, Merv Prior, Richard Smithers and the American Arthur McGeer climbed the east face of the Central Tower via the huge dihedral that runs up the right side of the face, which is 4500 feet high.

GREGORY MOSELEY, *South African Alpine Club*

Patagonia, An Early Assessment of the 1974 Season. (This letter was written on February 8, 1974. Since no detailed information is available as we go to press, we have included this incomplete report.—*Editor.*) Yesterday Carlos Comesaña arrived from the south with extraordinary news: the Italians have climbed Cerro Torre from the west. Comesaña got the news from Don Whillans, whose Anglo-American group is attempting Torre Egger, the second highest tower of the same massif. The Italians are from Lecco and are led by Casimiro Ferrari. They further number eleven (Pierlorenzo Acquistapace, Gigi Alippi, Mario Conti, Daniele Chiappa, Giuseppe Lafranconi, Ernesto Panzeri, Claudio Corti, Dr. Sandro Liati, Giuseppe Negri, Angelo Zoia and Mimmo Lanzetta). They made the ascent* January 13. No other expeditions seem to have

* Ferrari, Chiappa, Conti and Negri reached the top. From the "cap", high point in 1970 and a prominent point separated from the main tower, they descended, slabbed around the principal pyramid and climbed up a rock arête and at times an ice couloir. Thus they reached a 150-foot ice and snow wall, above which is the cauliflower-like first balcony. Vertical and overhanging ice steps led diagonally upwards until they reached the summit point above the great roof on the south. (A later communication from Sr. Arko.)