

*Asgard, Baffin Island.* The Auyuittuq National Park guide states that one could be excused for not wishing to return if the "summers" of 1972 or 1974 had been experienced. Quite naturally then, Les Ellison and I concluded that if the daily 1978 storms were perfectly normal, than '72 and '74 must have been *really bad*. Only later did we discover that 1978's weather was the worst in memory! In fact, the far north had all sorts of nasty surprises for us. Les' flight out of Chicago was delayed by—you guessed it—*bad weather*, while mine developed engine trouble . . . in midair. Our separate journeys up the ice on Pangnirtung Fiord were even more memorable, what with 10-foot gaps to bridge and vast melt-water lakes to ford (Ever see a Ski-doo swim through 10 inches of water?). On the other hand, the slog up the interminable Weasel Valley was only punctuated by the brief entertainment provided by Les when he fell through the ice along the river with his 133-lb. pack. The climbing was considerably better, however, for we only got caught in three storms on two climbs. Anticipating a quick trip up the 4000-foot Scott-Hennek route on the east face of Killibuck (since the sun was out), we merrily set out on July 12 in EBs and quickly joined a snowstorm at the foot of the final 1000-foot headwall. For the next half day we traversed left around the mountain, wandering up and down wet friction slabs in the murky fog, telling jokes, and having a grand time! Asgard, at least, was an improvement. Our initial step was to set up an Advanced Base Camp on the Caribou Glacier in the pouring rain. Then, a deceptive clearing trend invited us to the foot of the south face of the south summit just in time for the daily cirrus clouds to appear. Another stormbound day in the tent and clearing trend saw us at the foot of the face again . . . along with more cirrus clouds! Since neither of us felt like snowshoeing back to the soggy tent, and it was getting late in the month (July 17), we figured we might as well climb the fool thing. Our route followed a prominent band of rotten basalt dikes and chimneys (not unlike the north face of the Grand Teton) to a broad series of dirty ledges 1500 feet below the summit. There, we cowered for 10 hours while storm No. 1 enveloped us from the southeast. But it was all worth it, for the following day "dawned" magnificently clear—and it was to be our summit day. Superb 5.6-5.8 chimney and crack climbing on the right side of the face allowed the use of EBs all the way, although we switched to sterner stuff for the treacherous descent (a steep snowfield) and, per Murphy's Law, another approaching storm. And what a storm—50 hours of steady rain! But the frosting on the cake was the march out, for despite the fact that it was late July, the ice in the fiord was still there, impassable to both Ski-doo and canoe. There were lighter moments, however, and they can be perhaps best exemplified by our discovery that one of the visiting English climbers, a dentist, had forgotten his toothbrush!

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