

the base of the route. We climbed the south side of the buttress, whereas the first-ascent party in 1954 climbed the north side, to attain the ridge crest at 10,200 feet. The snow and ice were excellent but more difficult as we approached the crest, where we set up Camp I. Beyond, the Coxcomb was a very spectacular, narrow, icy, corniced ridge. The first real obstacle was the first rock pyramid, which stopped Dr. Cook in 1903. In 1954 Beckey and crew climbed this rotten rock, while we climbed steep ice beside it, doing only two pitches of mixed rock and ice. Camp II at 12,500 feet was at the base of the crux of the climb, the second pyramid. Beckey climbed around this on the north in a great sloping cirque, a loaded avalanche slope. We climbed steep ice and rotten rock on the pyramid's west face. Beyond this we followed narrow ridges to Camp III at 14,200 feet. We again ascended steep ice to avoid rock, good this time, to pass the last major problem. The first-ascent party in Korean boots would have had problems front-pointing; hence their choice of rock over ice. Ridge climbing and more steep snow and ice brought us to the great plateau at 18,200 feet and our last camp. Rehmer and Snyder reached the North Peak on May 14, 1982. The northwest buttress is an extremely beautiful route with much challenging climbing and no people!

GARY BOCARDE

Mount McKinley, Wickersham Wall, Second Ascent of the Canadian Route. On May 5, Rick Wyatt, Evelyn Lees, Kelly McKean and I departed from the Kahiltna Landing Base, bound for the north of McKinley to attempt an alpine-style ascent of the Canadian Route on the Wickersham Wall. After five days of glacier travel we made camp on the Peters Glacier approximately half a mile below the Tluna Icefall. Using the advice of Ben Read, who had crossed the Peters the preceding year, we enjoyed a safe and straightforward passage around the infamous dangers of the icefall by passing on the northwestern border of the glacier, alternating between the northern moraine and the verge of the glacier itself. Using this route we had no difficulty with crevasses. The next day we started up the Wickersham via a new variation which ascends directly up a huge icefall spilling over the Jeffery Ridge below Jeffery Point. We made our first camp up against the ridge to avoid the gigantic ice avalanches which continuously strafe the north face. In spite of this precaution we were nearly buried by a large slide that evening. One of the main goals of our expedition was to support Rick Wyatt in an attempt to ski the Wickersham Wall on nordic ski equipment. That first afternoon he successfully skied from Camp I down to the Peters Glacier, a distance of 1200 vertical feet. The second day, anxious to escape from the constant avalanche danger, we climbed directly up onto the Jeffery Ridge and up and over Jeffery Point. From there on our route followed the meandering, and sometimes subtle, ridge crest which provides relatively safe passage through the serac walls of the face, and onto the upper slopes at 13,000 feet. On the ninth day of climbing (including two rest days), McKean and I reached the North Summit of McKinley (19,470 feet). We found that in

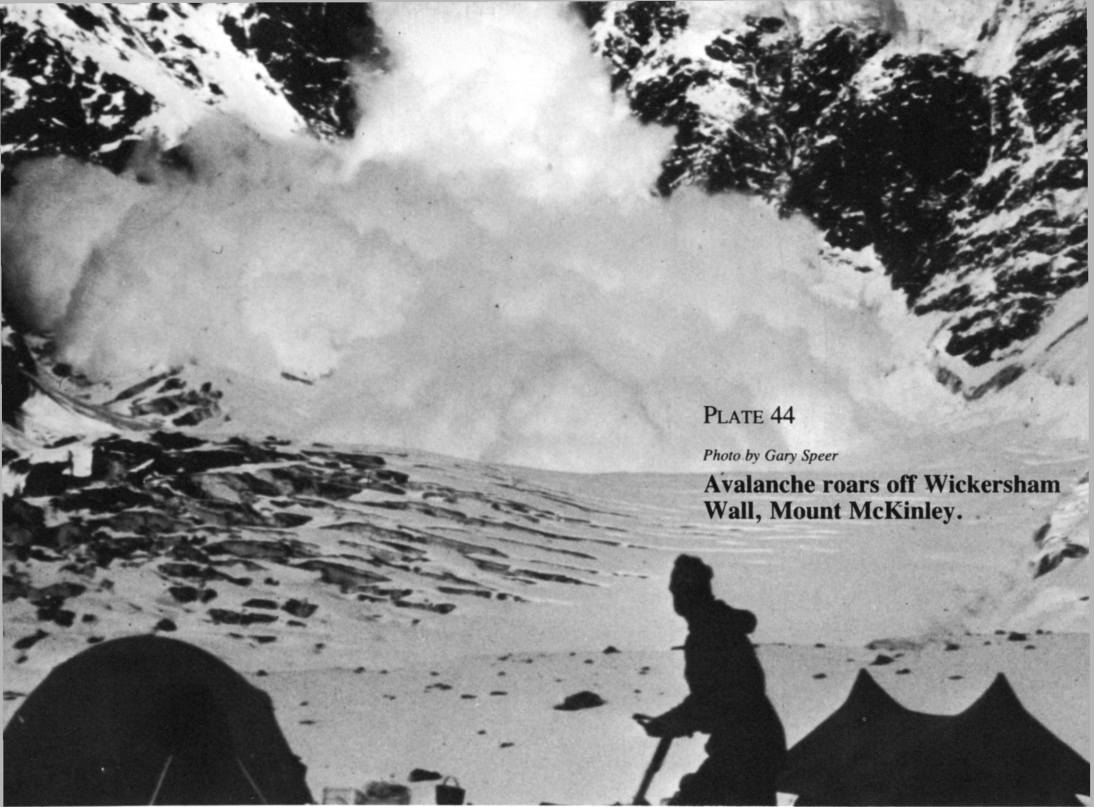


PLATE 44

Photo by Gary Speer

Avalanche roars off Wickersham Wall, Mount McKinley.



PLATE 45

Photo by Tim Gage

Hutnak and Speer at 12,500 feet on Wickersham Wall.

May, contrary to the opinion of most climbers, the sun shines on the Wickersham Wall during most of the day, leaving it in shade for only a few hours in the afternoon. Our summit day provided the worst conditions of the climb, with a lenticular cap forming on the summit, accompanied by characteristically extremely cold temperatures and high winds. Several hundred feet below the summit, Lees, suffering from the cold, and Wyatt, seeing that a ski descent would be impossible under such conditions, elected to turn back, hoping to come up again when the weather cleared. McKean and I continued to the summit. On the way down, Lees fell on a long snow-and-ice slope above our camp at 16,620 feet. Having traded her ice axe for a ski pole, she was unable to make a self-arrest and tumbled nearly 1000 feet before stopping, suffering a fractured wrist and hair-line fracture of her pelvis. This incident, of course, precluded Wyatt's ski attempt, and regretfully we evacuated Lees to the 14,000-foot camp on the West Buttress where she was airlifted to Anchorage three days after her fall.

CHRIS NOBLE. *Utah Explorers*

Mount McKinley, Wickersham Wall, Canadian Route Variation. In late May Tim Gage, 17-year-old Markus Hutnak and I returned to attempt McKinley's Wickersham Wall. We were successful in climbing a new variation of the Canadian route (*A.A.J.*, 1964, pages 43 to 46). Our first attempt in 1982 had failed at 10,000 feet. Last year our team had seriously considered a new route. On the map the east side of the wall looked feasible, but David Roberts of the 1963 Harvard team said that he had observed there "the most spectacular avalanches he'd ever seen in his life." The same is true of any new route between the Harvard and Canadian routes. Despite our 100-pound packs, we moved fast from Wonder Lake and in three days were at our former Base Camp east of the wall on the moraine a few miles from the terminus of the Peters Glacier. We ascended the Peters to where the Jeffery Glacier joins it. There are several areas on the Jeffery between 6000 and 7000 feet that could be a problem. Short sections are threatened by avalanches. After July 1 the lower Jeffery would entail difficult route-finding because of crevasses. Within a week of leaving Wonder Lake we had established Camp I at 7000 feet but were tent-bound by a storm for nearly three days. On June 3 we reached 8500 feet, where another blizzard pinned us in the tent. By morning it was much better. Hour after hour we zigzagged through the upper Jeffery icefall, fixing rope on the steeper sections. At 10,000 feet, in another blizzard, we dug a huge cavern and pitched the tent inside. There were still 1000 feet of icefall. Camp was moved to a small spur at 12,500 feet on what Brad Washburn calls the "steep pitch." Above 13,000 feet the climbing was crevasse-free, but a new bugaboo replaced the crevasses: rock lurked under the snow, making it unpredictable. As we moved camp up to 15,000 feet, our eyes kept darting left. "If we traversed, we could cover some new territory and add 3000 more feet to this climb of the wall." The following day, after returning to a cache at 14,400 feet to bring up our last load, we decided definitely for the variation. June 15 was our summit day. The long