

Selkirks

East Peak of the Gothics, Southwest Face, Adamant Peaks, Northern Selkirks. Fred Beckey, Jan Schwarzburg and I made the first ascent of the impressive southwest face of the east peak of the Gothics (10,640 feet) on July 24 to 26 (V, 5.9, A2). An attempt on the 1700-foot wall by Beckey and me had been cut short in early August of 1980 by a week of snow in an unseasonably wet year. A surprise snowfall during a bivouac on a second attempt that same year forced us to make a hasty retreat down rapidly icing ropes. In 1981 and again in 1983, Sam Streibert joined Beckey and me as we sought in vain for favorable conditions for the ascent. In 1984, with time at a premium, we contracted a logging company helicopter to lift us and our equipment onto the Adamant Glacier, about two hours from the southwest face. On the night of the second bivouac, storm clouds fingered with lightning were seen approaching from the south. With the last vertical lead fixed the evening before, we ascended the lines and arrived at the elusive summit at five A.M. on July 26 as lightning struck the nearby peaks of the Adamants. A rapid descent was begun. On the fourth of 15 rappels, a severe hail squall passed over the mountain, turning the entire southwest face into a waterfall of ice pellets. In mid-rappel, I took a dramatic 30-foot sideward plunge across the slick rock before regaining control and completing the hazardous descent.

ERIC BJØRNSTAD

Canadian Rockies

Mount Fay, East Face. In early March, after waiting for the sun to leave the east face of Mount Fay, Barry Blanchard, David Cheesmond and I began climbing, expecting to spend one night on the face. After gaining height quickly, at the top of the first snowfield we met a nearly vertical pitch of very thin ice. Barry did a fine job. I started the next pitch, mostly a vertical to overhanging pillar of water-ice. After flaming out, I belayed Barry past me and he finished the pitch in the dark. We coasted a way up the next snowfield and made a cave. Although the morning dawned clear, clouds were moving in. When we had got up the snowfield, we climbed more pitches of moderately difficult ice. It began to snow very heavily. While on a vertical pitch, an avalanche, possibly from a cornice high above, roared over us. It missed me but struck Barry on the shoulder, which caused him great pain for the rest of the day. Not wanting to stay in such a place, we climbed fast to the top of the next snowfield. Here, we went up a chimney that offered difficult (5.8) mixed climbing. Barry dug a cave at the base of the chimney while Dave and I fixed rope in it. We were low on food and fuel. After our second night on the face, breakfast was simply a hot drink. We looked for a quick way to finish the face. Directly up was a headwall with lots of slow aid. We decided to traverse right, gain a large snowfield and try to exit out of its upper right side. It was still snowing heavily. To reach the snowfield, we had to

climb many pitches of delicate mixed traversing. Barry had to resort to aid for 80 feet at one point. It was starting to get dark as we reached the far edge of the snowfield. Barry did a superb job in the dark on the next pitch, but we still had at least one more difficult pitch before we could top out. Once more, we dug in. We used no fuel that night, saving it for a cup of hot water in the morning. Our only food was a two-ounce bag of Smarties. The next day we hurried to the top of Barry's pitch and Dave led the final, mixed pitch to the top of the face. We were met by very high winds on the other side. We forgot all about going to the summit and began the long descent down, around and back to Lake Louise.

CARL TOBIN

Mount Alberta, Northeast Ridge. Kevin Swigert and I climbed the northeast ridge of Mount Alberta on August 10 and 11. The climbing was predominantly on rock with the crux, an impressive 1200-foot pillar high on the face. Eight final pitches on steep snow and ice led to the summit. (V, 5.9)

STEVEN TENNEY, *Unaffiliated*

Baffin Island

Mount Thor, West Face. A Japanese expedition climbed a route on the 4500-foot-high west face of Mount Thor. The face had been attempted by Ronald Sacks, Steve Ampter and Michael Sawicky, who climbed 3400 vertical feet before a storm drove them off. The Japanese Teruji Yonei, Ykio Terashima and Norio Hoshino made the climb between June 13 and July 12. They described the face as being divided by three rock bands. They fixed rope for 450 meters to the second rock band, on which they traversed right for a long way. They then turned upward to the third band. They traversed far to the left on this band to meet the north ridge, which they followed to the summit. The final climb took them eight days. The fourth member, Kazue Kumakura, was drowned in a stream crossing during the return. A photograph showing the route and more details appear in *Iwa To Yuki*, N° 105 on page 91.

Ice Climbing in Canada. During the first part of my trip to North America, which began on March 14, I first tackled ice in Québec, Alberta and British Columbia. I made fifteen climbs of the most famous and difficult waterfalls, including La Pomme d'Or (600 meters), Polar Circus (600 meters), Weeping Wall (300 meters), Nemesis (150 meters) and Slipstream (925 meters). The "piolet-traction" technique is extremely spectacular and allows a relatively high speed. It requires two ice axes with sharply inclined points, and the feet move only on the front points of the crampons. Of course there is the problem of choosing the right time of the year, one in which the cold must be intense. I was in Canada with two climbers from Torino, Giancarlo Grassi and Guido Ghigo, with temperatures as low as -30°C . The reason for going to that country is because the waterfalls there are among the most spectacular in the world. Apart