

surveyed. We made ski crossings of the Weddell Glacier and of Ross Pass and the first ascent of two unnamed peaks between the Cook and Heaney Glaciers. Geological work was carried out on all trips away from the Royal Bay base. The film crew recorded expedition activities, the local wildlife, old whaling activity and the influence of the recent conflict on the island. During a stopover at Grytviken the team also traversed the Petrel Peaks and Mount Hodges.

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## ANTARCTICA

*English Coast and Eastern Ellsworth Land, 1984-5.* On December 11, a seven-person U.S. Geological Survey party, including Pete Rowley, *leader*, Karl Kellogg, Tom Laudon, Dave Lidke, Mike O'Neill, Janet Thomson and me, flew from McMurdo Station to FitzGerald Bluffs on the English Coast. We completed a geological reconnaissance of the English Coast and in late January, 1985 made a 270-mile snowmobile and ski traverse southeastward to the Barendt Mountains of eastern Ellsworth Land. In addition to the geological work, first ascents were made of several prominent peaks: Schwartz Peak via the east face and south ridge by Kellogg and me on December 27; Mount Thornton, a large snow dome capping an extinct volcano, via the south face by Kellogg, O'Neill and me on January 13, 1985; Mount Rex via the north ridge by Lidke, O'Neill, Rowley and Thomson and via the east face by me on January 15. In the Barendt Mountains, Lidke and I made the second ascent of the northwest ridge of Mount Chandler and I climbed the easy south ridge of Mount Suggs, both on January 26. The summit of Suggs was a 10-foot-high mushroom whose top I reached via several exposed moves on its southwest corner. On January 5 Kellogg and I attempted Mount Benkert, an 1800-foot ice-plastered volcanic spire, which rises directly from the frozen sea near Spaatz Island. We climbed 50° snow granular ice on the north face to the crest of the west ridge. Benkert's lower west peak is home to nesting snowy petrels; as we worked along the narrow ridge crest, these beautiful, all-white birds swooped past us. About 150 feet below the summit, we were stopped by a fantastically corniced section of the arête. Benkert is easily the most impressive peak in the entire southern Antarctic Peninsula. Its first ascent will be a real prize, though the approach is formidable. On February 4 we were picked up at FitzGerald Bluffs and returned to McMurdo Station after 56 days in the field.

WALTER VENNUM

## ASIA

### Bhutan

*Jichu Drake or Tsherim Kang Tragedy.* Our 13-man expedition left Italy on August 21. We were flown in a small plane of the Bhutanese Airline to Paro at