

No. 142 HIGH ALTITUDE SITES AND IR ASTRONOMY

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ABSTRACT

A reconnaissance is made of the comparative suitability of several U.S. mountain sites for IR astronomical observations. A systematic study of this kind had not been made. Table I is a working list of sites, some of which are described in more detail in the Appendices. The text develops some general criteria for intercomparison. The immense importance of a reduction in the water-vapor content is shown in Fig. 9. It is concluded that two types of sites can contribute: (1) dry sites at intermediate level, safe for manned scientific operations, allowing ready access, having IR and/or microwave facilities; and (2) the driest site(s) on which part-time manned operations are feasible (14,000-18,000 ft.), used during optimum conditions, in part by remote control from a laboratory-base some 5,000 ft. lower, and in part directly. The type-2 site needs cable car or aircraft transportation from the laboratory-base to the observatory. Airborne IR facilities are, of course, the third step in avoiding telluric absorptions. Studies are still needed for several potential sites on modes of access, frost points, cloud cover, and frequency of destructive winds. Calibrations of the free-atmosphere humidity data in Table I are made with direct measures from Pikes Peak, and less complete data on Mt. Lemmon, and some other sites. It is found that for large, isolated peaks the summit H₂O amounts may be somewhat more favorable than given in Table I (probably due in part to the radio-sonde data not recording the driest conditions and in part to subsidence of dry upper air replacing cold air on the slopes.) The tabular 5 percentiles are probably more closely 25 percentiles. The requirements of an IR observatory are developed in Sec. 3, including ways of reducing anoxemia; they differ from those of traditional optical observatories. Selected sites are described in Sec. 4 with additional information given in the Appendices. Fig. 10 probably best epitomizes the complex interdependence of IR site selection problems.

1. Introduction

The present study was, in a sense, begun in 1961 with an aerial reconnaissance of mountains above 8,000 ft in Southern Arizona. The immediate purpose was to find an observatory site suitable for infrared spectroscopy and photometry (planetary and stellar), as well as for lunar and planetary photography and other solar system studies. The reconnaissance was followed in 1962 by ground inspections of a preferred location in the Catalina Mountains, NE. of Tucson, and by tests of image quality with 6- and 12½-inch telescopes. The seeing tests were made jointly by A. Herring and the writer, and will be described separately. They led to the final site selection of the Catalina Observatory, 36 miles

NE. of Tucson. The aerial and ground studies were extended to Haleakala (1962-63), Mt. Agassiz (1963), Mauna Kea (1964), and Baja California (1968); aerial inspections were made of several additional sites.

This paper considers the concept of a *true high-altitude observatory*, with atmospheric water-vapor minimal during an acceptable fraction of the year. Both the IR (1-25 μ +) and mm-region (0.3-3 mm) would clearly benefit from such a site; but excellence is achieved at the expense of hardships and dangers (low temperatures, low pressures, great difficulty of access). There is a point where aircraft must take over, though this point can be moved upward by appropriate technology (Sec. 3 and App. IV).

2. Water Vapor Above High Mountains

IR site surveys are concerned primarily with the atmospheric water-vapor distribution in three dimensions. A summary for the Northern Hemisphere was compiled by Gringorten *et al.* (1966), based on five years of radio-sonde measures. To indicate the nature of these data we are reproducing a few small sections of the AFCRL *Atlas* for two levels: 700 and 500 mb, corresponding to 10,000 ft (3 km) and 18,000 ft (5.5 km), respectively; (cf. Figs. 1-4). Earlier results on the vertical distribution of water vapor for both hemispheres were compiled as charts giving seasonal averages (Bannon and Steele, 1960).

The constant dew-point curves over the Western U.S. run (with some exceptions) roughly EW., for both 500 and 700 mb, with an average latitude separation of roughly 26° for 10°C , measured along the 110° W. meridian starting around 30°N (and excluding July). (The "dew point" plotted by Gringorten *et al.* is defined by a formula valid in the range where dew points (not frost points) exist and is extrapolated beyond. This "dew point" is readily related to absolute content through their Table I). For a dew point of -35°C , a difference of 5°C (or 13° lat.) corresponds to a factor of about 1.6x in the moisture content. For water vapor this corresponds to a vertical displacement of about 3,000 ft, so that for equal H_2O content, high-latitude sites need not be so high. For equally-high mountains and dec. 0° , the optimum geographic latitude (with allowance for the secant law) would, with the above gradient, be 65°N ; for dec. -30° , 35°N . Ignoring the logistics, Mt. McKinley, at high latitude and altitude, would be the optimum ground-based site for stars and planets N. of -10° dec.

The humidities for specific mountains may be estimated by interpolation from the AFCRL *Atlas*; but the results may not always be valid. Mountain chains (e.g. the Sierra Nevada) cause *orographic up-lift* of low-altitude moist air. Isolated peaks (Mauna Kea; Mt. Shasta, California; Pikes Peak, Colorado; Mt. Agassiz and Mt. Lemmon, Arizona) are better, since they more nearly resemble probes in the free atmosphere.

Two further effects will cause deviations. In studying the air flow around Mauna Loa in Hawaii in 1963 (summit 13,700 ft = 4.2 km), the writer noted the strong downdraft at the 11,200 ft (3.4 km) level of the U.S. Weather Bureau Station, 10-15 mph, reportedly depending on the season. At the Station, on the North slope, the down-flow was Northward, bucking the 15-20 mph Trade Wind

from the NE. The downdraft was clearly due to the *radiation cooling* on Mauna Loa, an effect that would be less on smaller mountains. The downdraft will somewhat reduce water vapor at the summit, since the air will be replaced in part by higher air parcels which are drier. This subsidence resembles the flow resulting from a near-stationary barometric high, with outward flow near the surface and replacement at altitude by upper-atmospheric dry air (this effect is included in the radio-sonde averages).

An opposite effect is the increase of daytime moisture content of surface air due to *snow fields and glaciers*. It resembles the effect of a large lake at lower altitude. This tendency toward saturation will be reduced if the summit is a *narrow peak*, enveloped in constantly-renewed air from the free atmosphere; and at night by the downdraft. By the orographic and solar-radiation effects, high mountains are during the day frequently enveloped in clouds. During the night the updraft due to solar heating is replaced by a downdraft due to cooling and the peak may then be completely clear. (High altitude snow fields cool steeply at night due to the near-transparent atmosphere and the high IR emissivity of ice.) *Thus, at the summit, the free-atmosphere humidities will roughly apply during clear nights, or even improved upon by subsidence*, except when strong winds cause the orographic up-lift to predominate. How often this occurs must be determined in each case; the installation of appropriate temperature and frost-point devices, equipped with telemetry, should precede any decisions on telescopic installation. A typical airflow pattern for Pikes Peak is illustrated in Appendix III.

On the basis of the *AFCRL Atmospheric Humidity Atlas for the Northern Hemisphere*, we have computed the total water-vapor content in a vertical column above 30 mountain sites, listed in Table I, considered representative and including extremes. The following assumptions were used: (a) that free-atmosphere conditions pertain at the summit levels, so that direct interpolations for the dew point may be made from the *Atlas* (i.e. that relatively quiet nighttime conditions are not infrequent); and (b) that the scale height of the water-vapor distribution above the summit is the average tropospheric value, 1.6 km^* (Kuiper *et al.* 1967). Two values were used

*For the *lower* troposphere the value may be more nearly 2.2 km (Hann derived 2.3 km at the turn of the century). For the lowest stations the actual H_2O amounts may therefore be 2.2/1.6 times larger than given in Table I; cf. App. II.

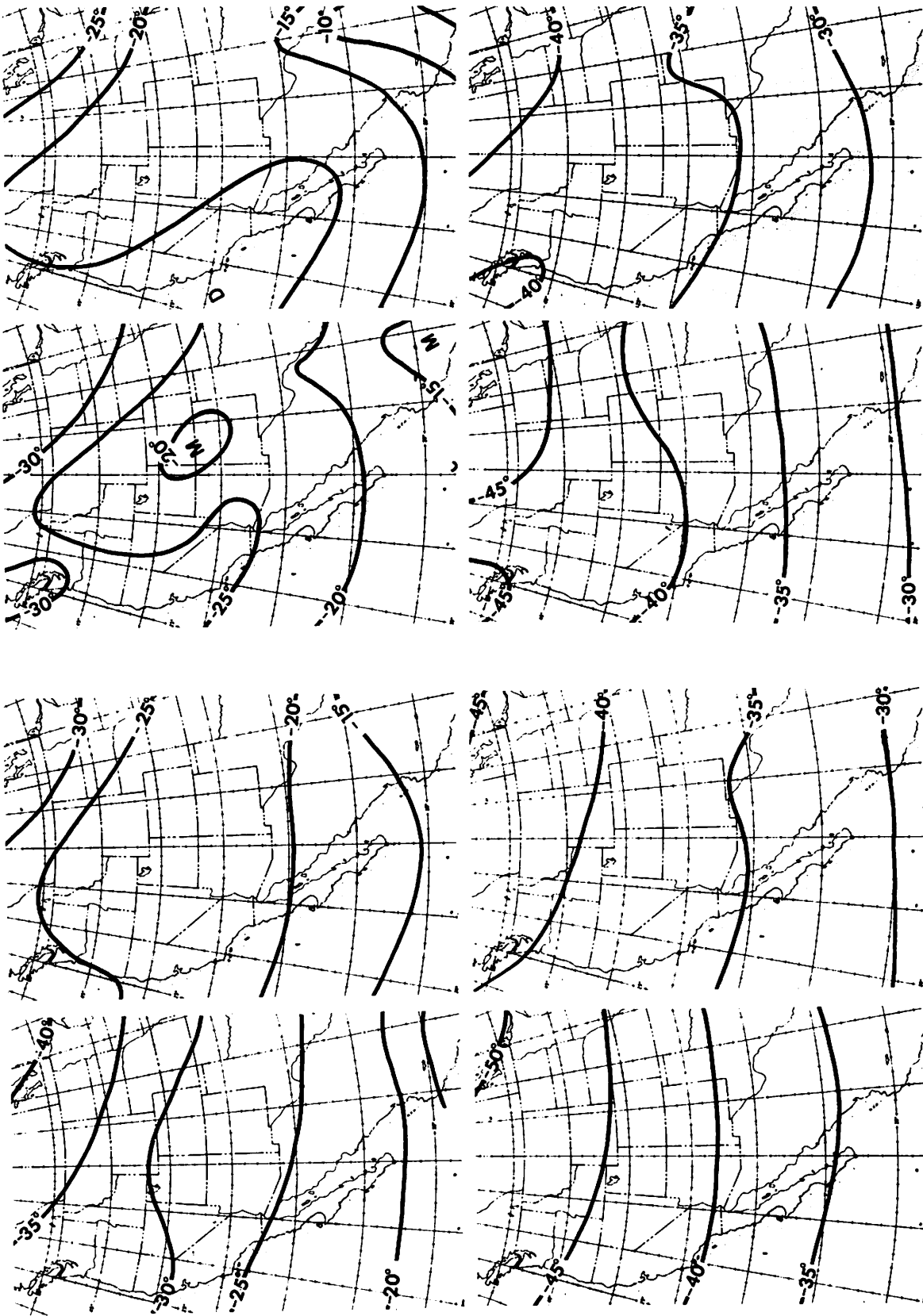


Fig. 2 Same arrangement as Fig. 1, for April. (Gringorten *et al.*, 1966).

Fig. 1 Dew points for the 700 (above) and 500 (below) mb levels; left 5 percentile, right 25 percentile; for the Western U.S., for January (after Gringorten *et al.*, 1966).

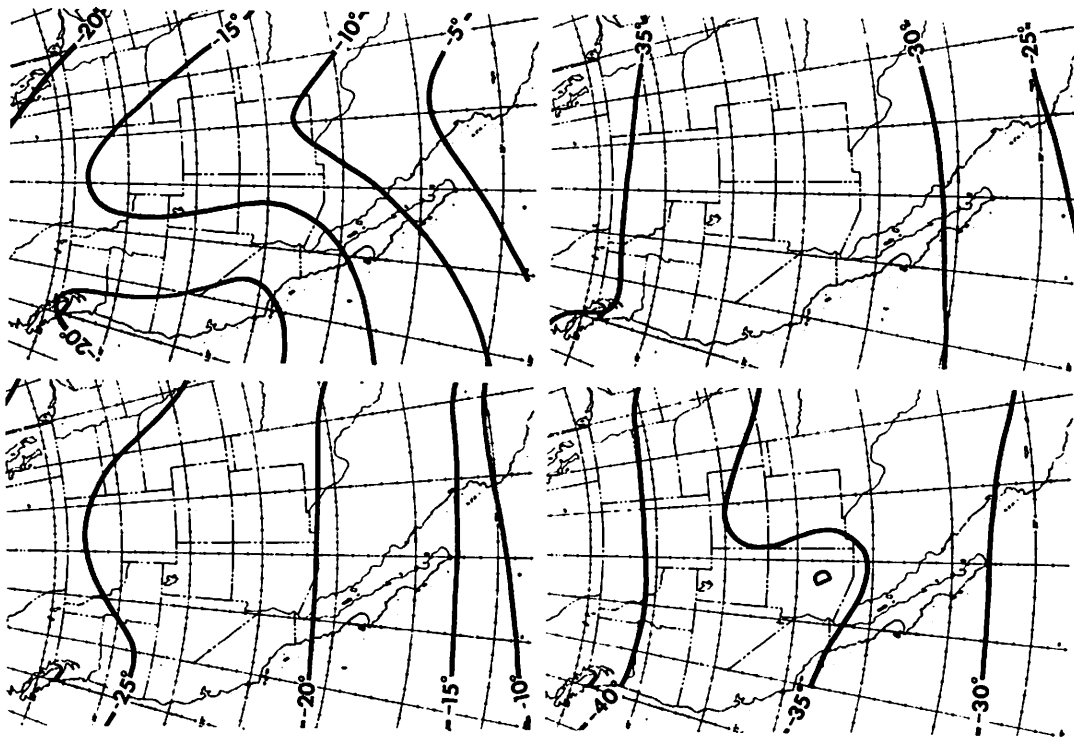


Fig. 3 Same arrangement as Fig. 1, for October. (Gringorten *et al.*, 1966).

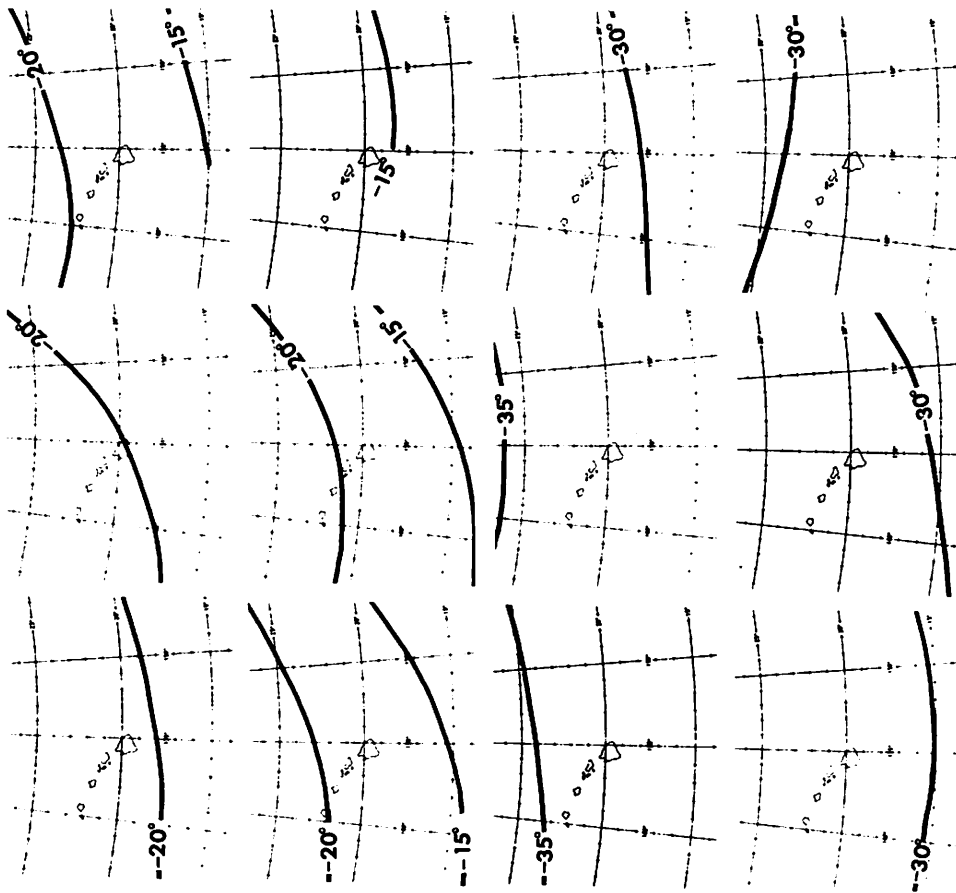


Fig. 4 Dew points for January (left), April (center), and October (right); top to bottom 700 mb, 5 and 25 percentiles; 500 mb, 5 and 25 percentiles; for region of Hawaiian Islands. (Gringorten *et al.*, 1966).

TABLE I
PRECIP. H₂O IN VERTICAL COLUMN (mm)

SITE	LAT. (N)	LONG	ELEVATION		P (mb)	AC- CESS*	PRE- CIP.	SNOW †	JANUARY		APRIL		JULY		OCTOBER		25% ± (9 MO.)
			FT.	M					5%	50%	5%	50%	5%	50%	5%	50%	
Palomar Obs. (Calif.)	33°21'	116°52'	5600	1706	825	A	24	36	1.8	3.4	1.9	4.4	3.5	9.5	2.6	6.1	2.1
National Radio Obs.	38°26'	79°50'	2700	823	920	A	44	80	1.2	4.3	2.6	8.0	12.	20.	3.4	10.	2.4
Kitt Peak Nat'l Obs.	31°58'	111°36'	6750	2064	789	A	12	4	1.7	4.4	1.8	3.7	5.5	10.9	2.3	7.1	1.9
Catalina Obs. (Ariz.)	32°25'	110°44'	8450	2580	740	A	12	5	1.1	2.9	1.4	3.0	5.1	9.7	1.9	5.5	1.5
Mt. Lemmon (Ariz.)	32°26'	110°47'	9190	2800	720	A	12	5	1.0	2.7	1.3	2.8	5.0	9.1	1.8	5.0	1.4
Humphreys Pk. (Ariz.)	35°21'	111°41'	12633	3852	629	O	24	60	0.57	1.4	0.7	1.6	1.7	4.8	0.94	2.1	0.74
Mt. Agassiz (Ariz.)	35°20'	111°41'	12356	3770	636	A*	24	60	.62	1.5	.8	1.7	2.0	5.2	1.0	2.3	0.81
Charleston Pk., Nev.	36°16'	115°42'	11920	3635	647	O*	12	10	.56	1.5	.57	1.85	1.85	3.1	1.1	2.6	0.74
White Mt., Calif.	37°38'	118°15'	14242	4340	590	O*	12	30	.44	1.1	.49	1.2	1.1	1.9	0.7	1.3	0.54
Barcroft Lab. (White Mt.)	37°35'	118°15'	12500	3510	632	A	12	30	.59	1.4	.66	1.6	1.4	2.4	.8	1.6	0.68
Wheeler Pk., Nev.	38°59'	114°19'	13058	3980	618	T*	12	60+	.47	1.2	.65	1.5	1.35	3.1	.8	1.9	0.64
Delano Peak, Utah	38°22'	112°22'	12173	3712	640	T*	16	60+	.57	1.4	.83	1.7	1.6	4.3	.95	2.4	0.78
Mt. Peale, Utah	38°4'	109°2'	12721	3880	626	O*	24	60+	.48	1.3	.90	1.6	1.6	4.5	.93	2.3	0.77
Mt. Nebo, Utah	39°49'	111°45'	11871	3620	648	T*	16	50	.57	1.5	1.0	1.9	1.7	4.4	1.0	2.5	0.86
Mt. Timpanogos, Utah	40°23'	111°39'	11750	3580	652	T*	32	100	.54	1.5	1.0	2.0	1.7	4.5	.96	2.6	0.83
Kings Pk., Utah	40°47'	110°22'	13528	4130	606	O	40	150:	.40	1.1	0.67	1.4	1.3	3.6	0.75	1.8	0.61
Pikes Pk., Colo.	38°50'	105°2'	14110	4300	593	(A)*	24	100	.40	1.0	.7	1.3	1.6	4.2	.81	1.9	0.64
Mt. Shasta, Calif.	41°25'	122°12'	14162	4317	592	O*	80	100+	.35	1.0	.47	1.2	0.93	1.7	.64	1.35	0.49
Mt. Rainier, Wash. ¹⁾	46°51'	121°46'	14150	4313	592	O*	96	400+	.38	0.95	.39	1.2	.88	1.6	.54	1.4	0.44
Mt. Fairweather, Alsk.	58°54'	137°31'	15320	4670	566	O*	32	200:	.16	0.6	.23	0.6	.7	1.6	.25	0.8	0.21
Mt. McKinley, Alaska	63°05'	150°59'	20320	6200	459	O*	16	100	0.07	0.15	0.09	0.20	0.24	0.6	0.09	0.24	0.08
Mauna Kea, Hawaii	19°8'	155°5'	13800	4215	600	A	16	+	1.2	1.5	1.0	1.8	1.3	2.0	1.2	2.3	1.1
Baja California, Mex.	31°0'	115°6'	9280	2830	717	(A)	—	—	1.2	2.6	1.35	2.8	3.5	8.2	1.9	4.7	1.5
Popocatepetl, Mex.	19°0'	98°6'	17887	5450	509	O	—	—	0.61	1.0	0.79	1.4	1.9	2.8	0.81	2.7	0.74
Road terminus ²⁾	19°0'	98°6'	15500	4730	560	A	—	—	.9	1.7	1.1	2.1	2.9	4.1	1.25	4.1	1.1
Mt. Bolivar, Venez.	8°6'	71°1W	16427	5000	540	A	—	—	.6	1.6	1.1	1.7	1.5	2.8	1.6	3.5	1.1
Jungfraujoeh, Swit.	46°5'	8°E	11500	3500	658	A	—	—	.52	1.5	0.6	2.0	1.4	4.1	1.1	2.7	0.74
Mt. Blanc, France	45°52'	7°E	15782	4810	554	O	—	—	0.25	0.9	0.28	0.9	0.6	1.8	0.42	1.3	0.32
Tenerife, Canary Is.	28°3'	16°7W	12000	3660	645	(A)	—	—	1.1	3.4	1.2	2.2	2.3	3.7	1.9	3.7	1.4
Zelenchukskaya ³⁾	43°50'	41°36'E	6830	2080	788	A	—	—	1.9	4.1	2.3	4.2	5.3	9.6	2.2	5.8	2.1
Mt. Ararat, Turkey	39°7'	44°3 E	16945	5165	529	O	—	—	0.42	1.0	0.59	1.3	0.9	2.3	0.7	1.6	0.57
Mt. Everest	28°0'	87°0 E	29002	8840	315	O	—	—	0.09	0.13	0.09	0.16	0.6	1.7	0.17	0.24	0.12

* Accessible by road (A), trail (T), not (O).
 1) Point Success: summit crater unsited.
 2) Road to 15,500' = 4730 m, where snow-covered deep cinders begin.
 3) Future site of 6-meter telescope.
 † These interpolated chart figures must apply to wider areas than the summits. (E.g., Catalina Obs. summit figures are around 40'; cf. Appendices for some other sites.)

for each site, based on the 5 and 50 percentiles: i.e. the "average best" and "median" values.

Exceptional conditions will be better since (a) the radio-sonde equipment does not record relative humidities below 20-35% (cf. App. II) and there the AFCRL *Atlas* uses an average; and (b) on quiet nights there will be subsidence over the summit. The sites may be readily intercompared through the last column of Table I which lists the average of the 5% January, April and October columns. It is, on the basis of the Pikes Peak and Mt. Lemmon data, our best estimate of the 20-25 percentiles for the 9 dry months of the year (the 3 summer months excluded). *The driest nights will be better than these values by a factor of about 2-3.*

In summary, because of orographic effects (cf. App. III, Fig. 30) and the different radiation regimes of day and night, the quantities in Table I must be used with caution even for nighttime conditions. For one high site (Pikes Peak, App. III) the values of Table I can be tested and they appear, if anything, conservative.

3. Requirements for IR-Microwave Observatory

The first condition for a high-altitude observatory is *low atmospheric water-vapor content*. This determines what can be achieved spectroscopically in the regions $1-6\mu$, $7-8\mu$, $16-25\mu+$, and longward of 300μ . These regions open up beautifully when the water vapor goes down and new parts of the spectrum can be explored. At very low frost points almost the entire IR becomes accessible. Also, because of the presence of small amounts of water vapor on Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and late-type M stars, both the telluric H_2O content and its pressure must be held to a minimum even if the Doppler shift is used to separate the sources. *Good seeing* (image quality) is also very important, since the size of the stellar image determines the size of the IR detector required and thus its sensitivity. A third criterion often discussed is *low sky-noise*, considered particularly important in the 10μ region. However, Dr. Low has pointed out that for telescopes up to 1.5 meters aperture, used by him at the Catalina Observatory, he has been able to eliminate sky noise at 10μ routinely to below the level of the photon noise, almost regardless of conditions. Other observers have reported large *systematic* differences in sky noise between different observatories. Certainly, at any *one* site, large variations in sky noise do occur depending on meteorological conditions, such as mixing of different air masses. These variations are

not unlike those found optically (0.5μ) in "seeing," with different observatories having also systematic differences. A better understanding of these differences is desirable and high-altitude sites should be tested for 10μ sky noise.

The *transportation problem* deserves special consideration. Regardless whether the approach is by road, cable car, helicopter, or light airplane, there will be a premium on *low precipitation in the area* and a maximum freedom from clouds. Fig. 5 shows the distribution of annual precipitation over the Western U.S. (U.S. Dept. of Commerce, 1968). The contours of Fig. 5 together with the coordinates give the precipitation column of Table I. Since the contour values increase by steps: 8, 12, 16, 24, 32, 48, 64, 80, 96, etc., the actual values may be up to 1.5x higher than listed. The mean annual snowfall for the Western United States is shown in Fig. 6 (U.S. Dept. of Commerce, 1968). The Mt. Rainier area has over 400 inches, the Shasta area over 100 inches.

In drawing conclusions from Table I, *two limiting cases* remain relevant: (1) the traditional astronomical observatory, with its conveniences (near city, university, airport; good access road, utilities; nearby support facilities, shops, coolants; adequate housing), but (except for the 10μ window) relatively poor IR-mm atmospheric transmissions; (2) the aircraft, flying at 40, or 50,000 ft with a residual of 8-2 microns of precipitable water vapor overhead, with small-to-modest-aperture equipment (12 inches 1967-72, 36 inches after 1972), limited guidance accuracy, limited observing runs (2-4 hours per flight, depending on equipment), with finite risks to personal safety (brittle windows, open port, etc.). Or else, the high-altitude balloon, with non-standard equipment adapted to the low ambient pressure and temperatures, with the usual command, guidance, and telemetry problems. In a given project, airplane flights can be made at the rate of two or three per week; balloon flights, at the rate of two or three per year. The cost in either case is about $\$10^4$ per flight, not counting preparations by the scientific team; while the capital outlay for base facilities may be $\sim \$10^6$.

The *efficiency* of IR observation from aircraft, within limitations stated, is close to 100%. On some 30 flights on NASA's CV-990, the writer obtained definitive scientific results on all but one or two preparatory test flights. Ballooning involves greater risks, including the possibility of damage to or loss of equipment; but allows observation for several hours at 120,000 ft (36 km) and above, not other-



Fig. 5 Distribution of Annual Precipitation over Western U.S.

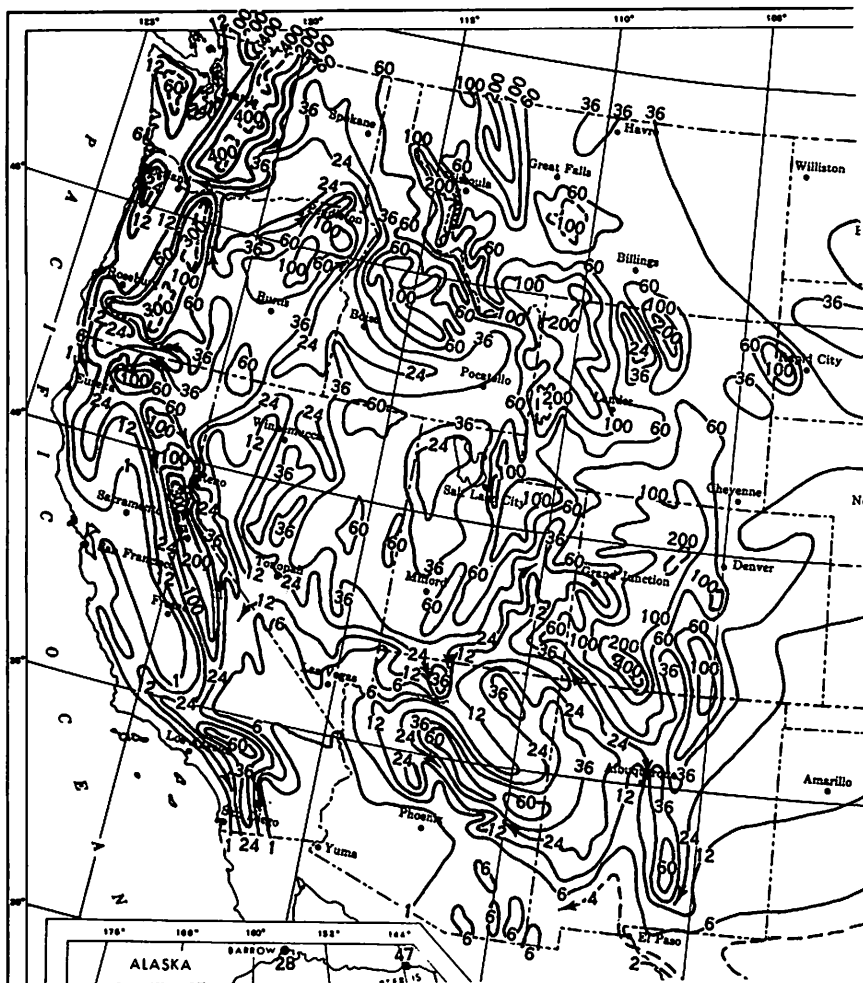


Fig. 6 Mean Annual Snowfall of the Western U.S.

wise achievable on modest budgets; and involves no risk to scientific personnel. The degree of efficiency of observatory operations is too well known to require much comment here. Among the merits of an observatory are: large telescope with good image quality, possibility of extensive preparations of attachments on the spot, and accessibility. However, because of the complexities of the lower atmosphere, there are interruptions and the quality of the data is variable.

In considering a high mountain site the needs of microwave (mm) astronomy must be included. Some measurements may be made from aircraft with small telescopes, in spite of the low resolution; but most problems require larger telescopes which cannot be flown from aircraft. The absence of destructive winds will be a prime criterion.

The sites listed on Table I are of two kinds: (a) those which are or can be made accessible by a road on a year-around basis and would be operated much like optical observatories; and (b) those for which an access road or tunnel and its year-around maintenance would be too costly. For the latter group *cable cars* can be used at a minor fraction of road or tunnel expense; or, aircraft or helicopters. The conveniences of an optical observatory will be lacking and continuous use cannot be assumed, any more than from aircraft or balloons. One may install automatic equipment for alerting the team at the base that observing conditions are improving (cloud cover, wind velocity, frost point). Efficient transportation to the summit must then exist. To illustrate: the Jungfrauoch Observatory, at which the two important Liège Atlases of the IR solar spectrum



Fig. 7a Cable car to Pic du Midi Observatory.



Fig. 7b Cable car to Mt. Bolivar above Mérida, Venezuela.

have been recorded, had during the data runs about three clear days per month. It is reached by cog railway and tunnel and has no convenient base nearby. Only the runs with the lowest humidity will be published. Because of unavoidable hardships at high altitude, required personnel presence must be minimized, which means an alert system and *good transportation from a base equipped with laboratory facilities*. Aircraft have limitations and hazards, but may be the only way feasible at very high altitude. Cable cars have been the safest regular means of transportation at moderately high altitudes. Chair lifts are used for heavier traffic (skiers), but are not safe in bitter cold and strong winds (even a 20 min.

power failure can be fatal to occupants). A cable car installation is also capable of *moving items of several tons and almost indefinite dimension* to the summit (by replacing the cabin with a platform). The cost of a cable car installation goes up with roughly the cube of the pay load; there is no known limit. The cable car serving the Pic du Midi Observatory has safely operated for over 30 years (Fig. 7a). If the elevation difference with the base is much above 1 km, more than one run is used in sequence; e.g. four between Mérida and Pico Espejo (15,867 ft, 4,840 m), near the summit of Mt. Bolivar (16,427 ft, 5,000 m) in Venezuela (Fig. 7b).

The inaccessible sites in Table I that appear to

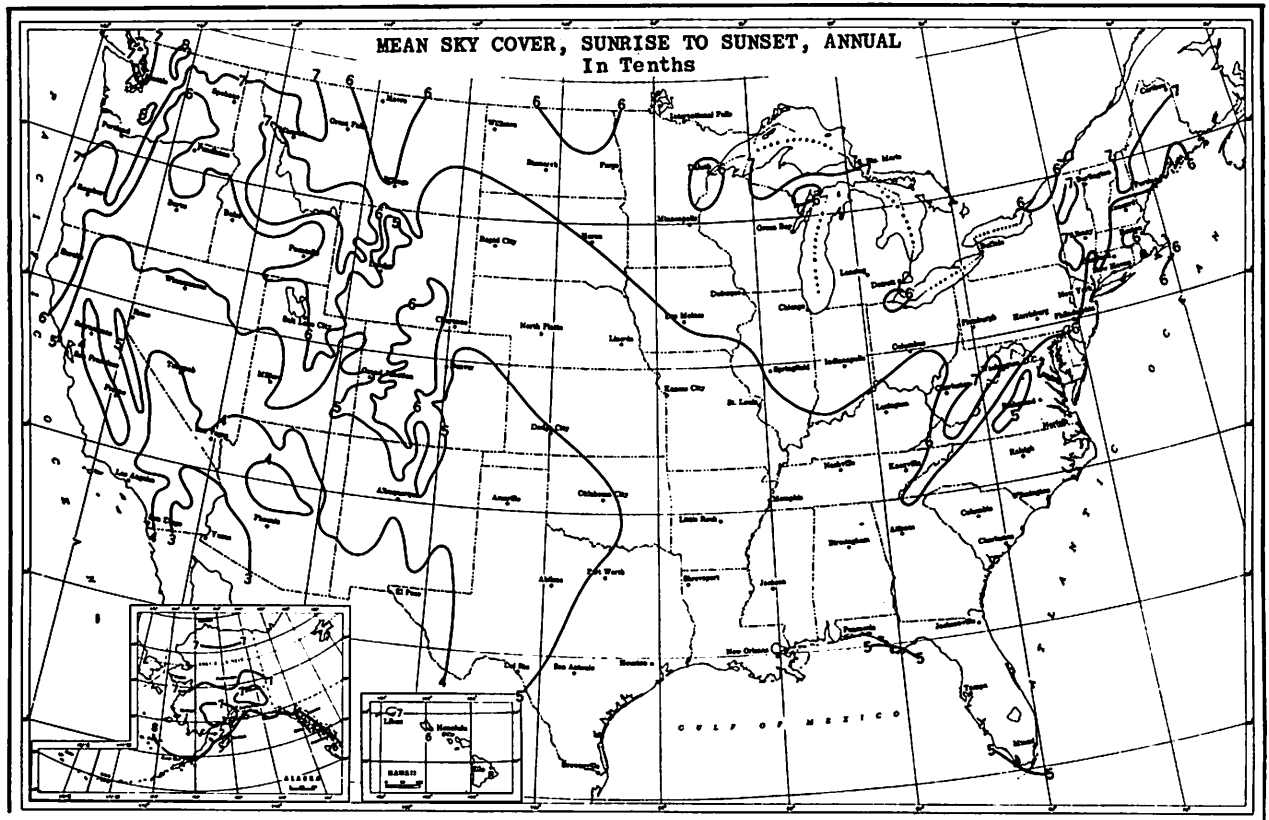


Fig. 8 Distribution of daytime sky cover over Western U.S.

merit further study are marked by asterisks in the "Access" column; several can probably be dropped after initial comparisons have been made. The criteria are: (a) nighttime temperature, frost point, percentage of clear skies, annual precipitation both at summit and on slopes; (b) feasibility and approx. cost of cable car installation (presence of exposed rock, continuity of slope, courses of avalanches and glaciers); (c) alternative support by helicopter; (d) feasibility of observatory construction (presence of exposed rock for foundations, snow load; small-unit designs may be required, cf. (b) and (c)); (e) good seeing. (Criterion (e) requires studies of the flow pattern around the summit.)

The amount of clear weather may be estimated from the Weather Bureau charts of fractional daytime sky cover; cf. Fig. 8 for the Western U.S. The nighttime sky cover over high mountains is likely to be more favorable.

Operation around 14-18,000 ft is possible under strictly controlled conditions; regular use of oxygen is important since, without it, night vision and other biological functions are seriously impaired. Astron-

omers should be adapted a few days beforehand to 8-10,000 ft elevation at the base-laboratory, and only persons admitted to high altitude who have passed a heart examination and stood up well at the 9,000 ft level. The body needs oxygen for work, keeping warm, and digestion of food. An overload on any one, or in combination, can be serious or fatal (e.g. the use of alcohol is dangerous since it competes for oxygen). Electrically-heated suits must be used for nighttime operations (the writer has never felt so completely chilled as during open-air tests on Mauna Kea).

The following data on loss of human efficiency vs. duration of high altitude exposure are of great interest (Armstrong, 1943, p. 275, Table 22).

Exposure (hours)	Loss of Efficiency					
	0%	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
1	9*	12	14	16	18	20
6	9	12	14	15	16	18
18	9	11	13	14	15	16

* Elevations in 1,000 ft; 100% = unconsciousness.

This would show that limited manual operation up to 17,000 ft is possible with the observers returning to the base-laboratory after an hour or so; and that all-night operations are possible up to about 14,000 ft, provided that the observers thereupon return to the base for their rest. This checks with my personal experience on Mauna Kea, with Hale Pohaku (9,200 ft) used as a base (no extra oxygen was ever used in our 1964 operations). "In contradistinction to the relatively mild or even total absence of subjective symptoms while at high altitude, the after effects may be quite severe." . . . "Prolonged passive exposures to altitudes of less than 9,000 feet or short exposures of a few minutes to altitudes of 18,000 to 25,000 feet, if promptly and completely relieved, are usually entirely free from distressing after effects." . . . "It has recently been found that a moderate degree of oxygen-lack affects night vision to the extent that at 9,000 feet such vision is reduced to about half and at 16,000 feet without oxygen the eye may be as much as ten times less sensitive as when adequate oxygen is breathed." . . . "Exposure to an altitude of 15,000 to 18,000 ft for a period of 2 to 6 hours may be followed by a very severe intractable headache, nausea, vomiting, dizziness, mental confusion, muscular weakness, and even complete prostration." . . . "Chronic altitude sickness may develop from repeated exposure to altitudes as low as 12,000 feet" . . . (Armstrong, *op. cit.*)

Reference is made also to the recent summaries (Hock, 1970, and Baker, 1969), the first concerned, among others, with the maximum relatively-safe altitude for human existence: "The highest inhabited settlement in the world is a mining camp at 17,500 ft (5330 m) in Peru." . . . "The miners rebelled against living in a camp built at 18,500 ft, complaining that they had no appetite, lost weight, and could not sleep. It seems, therefore, that 17,500 ft is the highest altitude at which even acclimatized man can live permanently." (Hock, p. 53) . . . "As the climbers moved up from 13,000 to 19,000 ft and beyond, the number of red cells in the blood increased continuously for as long as 38 weeks." (*op. cit.* p. 55) . . . "The physiological adjustments of the permanent mountain dwellers are similar in kind to those developed by sojourners in the mountains after a year of residence there. Furthermore, even mountain natives sometimes lose their acclimatization to high altitude and incur soroche (chronic mountain sickness), which is characterized by extreme elevation of the relative number and mass of red cells in the blood,

pulmonary hypertension, low peripheral blood pressure, enlargement of the right lobe of the heart and ultimately congestive heart failure if the victim remains at high altitude." (*op. cit.* p. 56).

It may be added that the FAA regards 8,500 ft the safe ceiling for unpressurized aircraft, with the 10,000-ft level limited to about 30 min. duration. The NASA CV-990 rings a bell when the cabin pressure drops below the 9,500-ft mark. Many persons, two prominent astronomers among them, have suffered heart attacks at 9,000-10,000 ft. Experience at the High Altitude Solar Observatory at Climax, Colorado, 11,100 ft, confirms appreciable altitude effects on the observers, even though they work in daytime in full sunlight. All this does not imply that one should not observe above 10,000 ft; rather that then a new set of rules will apply, the more urgently the higher one must go and the longer one must stay.

Supplementary comments based on the most recent medical experience are quoted in App. IV.

The practical needs of IR astronomy will probably be met by a *combination of facilities*:

(1) Sites accessible by road (except during major storms), with absence of destructive winds (> 120 mph), having *at night* during an acceptable fraction of the year amounts of atmospheric water vapor of 0.5-1.0 mm; suitable for use of extensive IR and microwave facilities; accessible through a nearby airport and with adequate base facilities (offices, lab, shops, coolants, etc.).

(2) One or two sites having night temperatures < -35°C (i.e. very low absolute humidities) during an acceptable fraction of the year; equipped with a modest-size IR telescope with stationary focus, probably placed largely underground, suitable for Fourier Transform Spectroscopy and broad-band energy measurements; serviced by cable car or aircraft from a laboratory-base some 5,000 ft lower, *with an increasing proportion of IR operations conducted by remote control from the base* (after having been started manually, if needed, by staff returning to base afterward, with observations monitored through a cable link, terminating the runs by remote control; and with the staff resting at the base). This will require development of semi-automatic astronomical equipment.

(3) From aircraft or balloons, at 50,000 ft (15 km) and above, measurements of energy curves and Fourier Transform Spectroscopy of brighter sources.

Mauna Kea, Mt. Agassiz and Mt. Lemmon fall into Category 1, with Mauna Kea equipped with an 88-inch telescope; and Mt. Lemmon partly de-

veloped, having an altitude that poses no problems to most persons even if adapted to sea-level conditions. Mt. McKinley, Mt. Logan (App. IV), Mt. Shasta, and possibly Pikes Peak fall into Category 2, with further technical and meteorological data needed to establish priorities. The efforts required to develop sites of Category 2 must be balanced against the capabilities and budgets of Category 3. It may be assumed that most IR operations require not one observer, but often a team of three; and that one should never ascend to high altitude alone.

Orographic effects may cause cloud caps or cloud trains near the summit where lower altitudes would be clear. This is one reason why optical and IR astronomical facilities are best separated, at different elevations; the other being the obvious increased strain and reduced efficiency of observers at high altitude. On nights of low humidity (those of chief interest to IR astronomy) the summit will be clear.

The potentialities of the two types of IR observatory, as compared to the airplane, are illustrated by the laboratory spectra reproduced in Fig. 9, kindly obtained for this paper by Dr. D. P. Cruikshank and Mr. A. Thomson. The assumptions are based on the 25 percentiles of Table I, last column.

IR Observatory, Type 1 (e.g., Mt. Lemmon, 1.3 mm H₂O, 720 mb). Since our laboratory runs

were made at $p = 70.5 \text{ cm Hg} = 940 \text{ mb}$, and since strong absorptions increase roughly as \sqrt{pN} , the water vapor in the path was decreased to 1.0 mm (cf. Fig. 9a).

IR Observatory, Type 2a (e.g., Mt. Shasta in January), 0.35 mm H₂O at $p = 592 \text{ mb}$ or 0.22 mm at $p = 940 \text{ mb}$ (cf. Fig. 9b, which has 0.19 mm); this would be at the same time the *best* condition to be expected on Mt. Lemmon.* A lunar spectrum taken with the 61-inch Catalina Telescope (el. 8,250 ft) reproduced in Fig. 9e is intermediate between 9a and 9b.

IR Observatory, Type 2b (Mt. McKinley, Alaska, or Mt. Logan, Yukon), about 0.10 mm H₂O at 459 mb or 0.05 mm H₂O at 940 mb (cf. Fig. 9c, having 0.045 mm).

Aircraft at 40,000 ft. with 0.006–0.010 mm H₂O (typical NASA CV-990 flights), (cf. Fig. 9d, which has twice, 0.014 mm).

In judging the traces a useful criterion is to demand that the telluric absorptions be less than 0.5; because that allows the ratio spectrum planet/sun or planet/moon, to retain reasonable precision. No pre-

*The author has encountered this condition *once* at the McDonald Observatory, in Jan. 1947, when the depth of the 1.4μ band in α Orionis with resolution 80 was only 0.25. The temperature was -20°C . Dr. A. Adel has informed me that 0.2 mm has exceptionally been noted also at the Lowell Observatory. This should occur much more frequently at nearby Mt. Agassiz, 5,150 ft. higher.

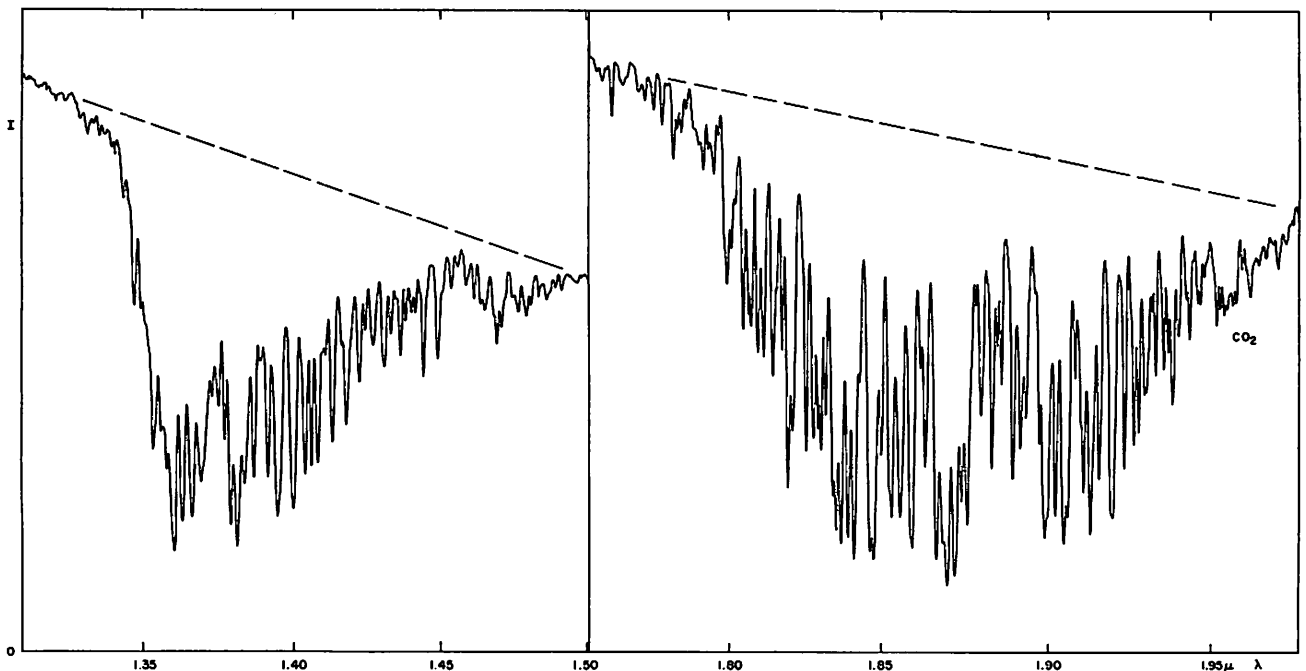


Fig. 9a Laboratory spectra of 1.4 and 1.9 μ bands of H₂O, total air path length 159 meters, 940 mb, 1.0 mm precip. H₂O (equivalent to 1.3 mm at 720 mb).

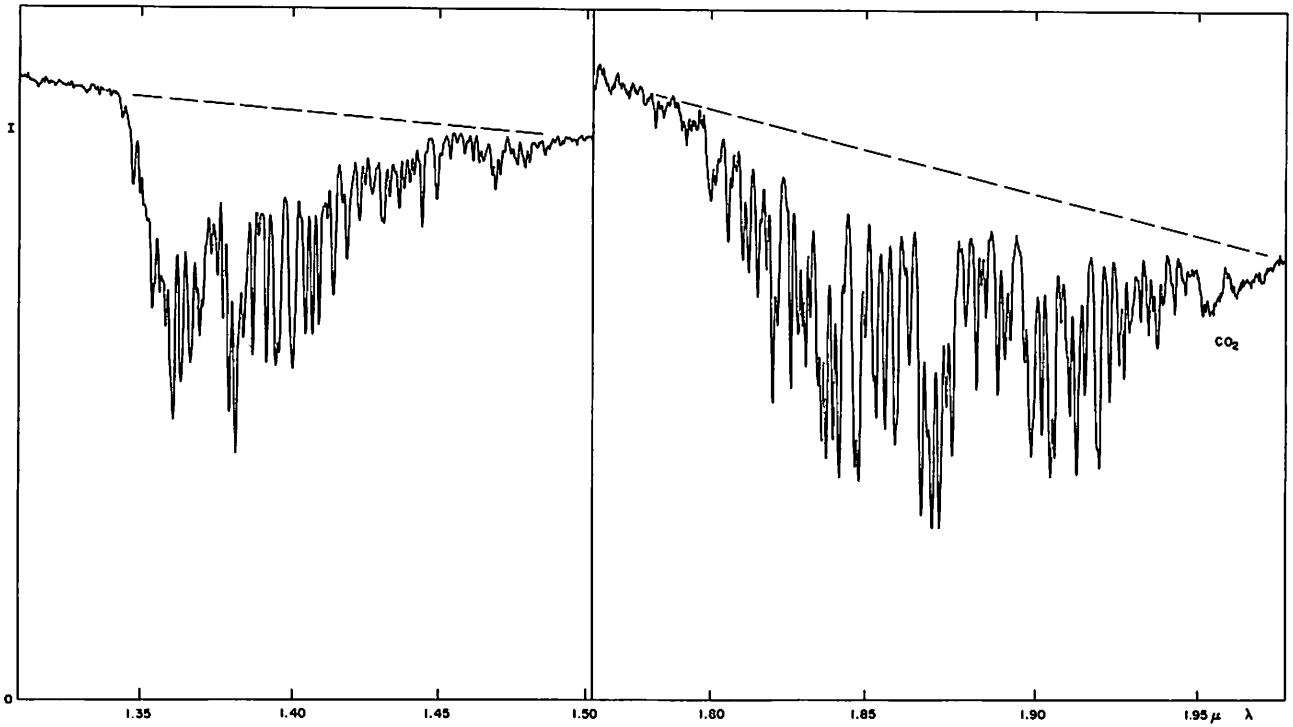


Fig. 9b Laboratory spectra of 1.4 and 1.9 μ bands of H₂O, total air path length 35 meters, 940 mb, 0.187 mm precip. H₂O (equivalent to 0.30 mm at 592 mb).

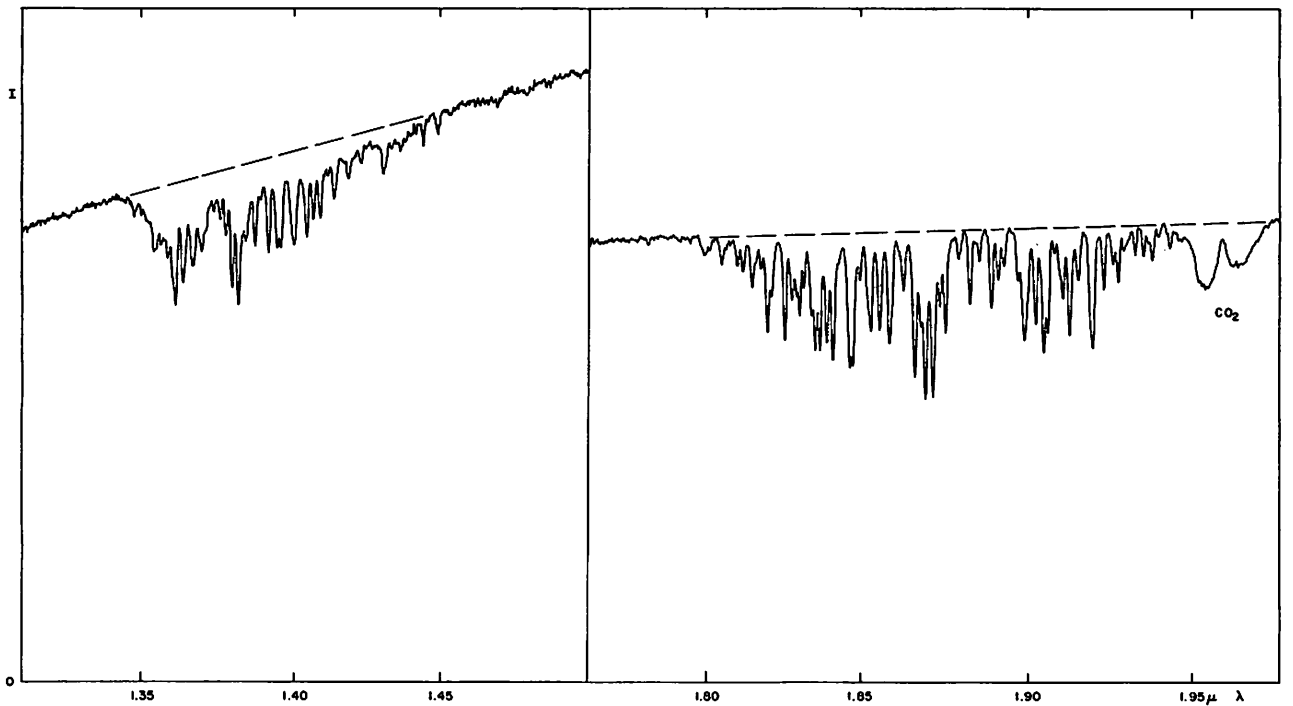


Fig. 9c Laboratory spectra of 1.4 and 1.9 μ bands of H₂O, total air path length 7.6 meters, 940 mb, 0.045 mm precip. H₂O (equivalent to 0.09 mm at 460 mb).

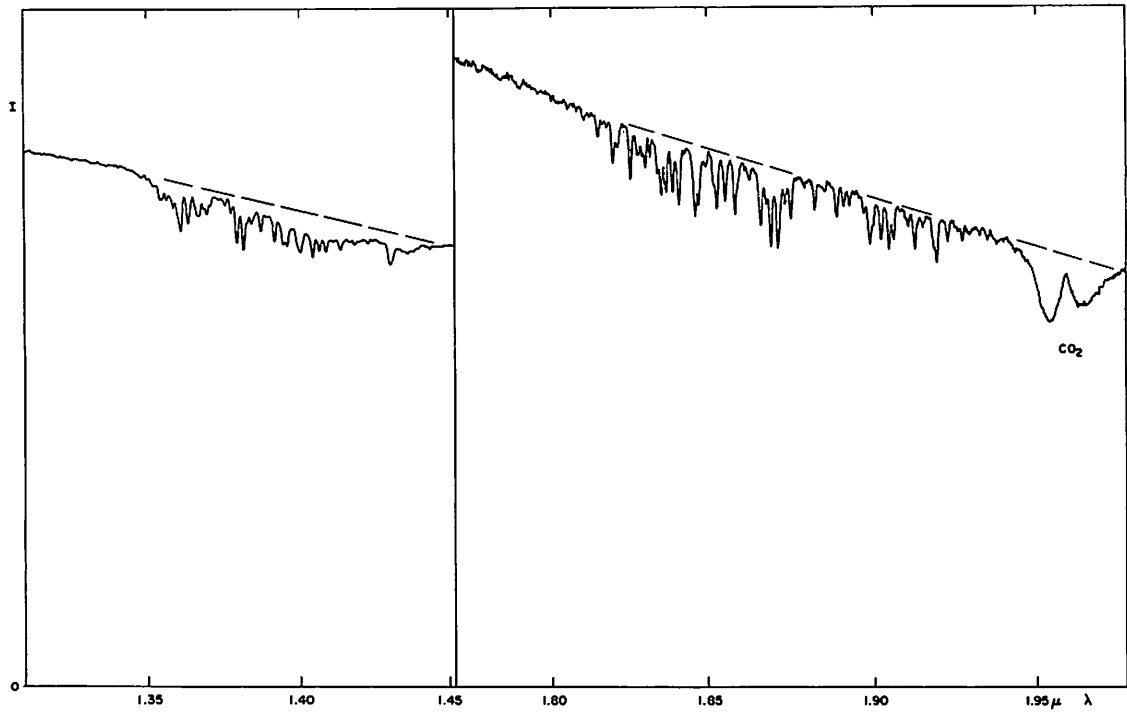


Fig. 9d Laboratory spectra of 1.4 and 1.9 μ bands of H₂O, total air path length 2.4 meters, 940 mb, 0.014 mm precip. H₂O.

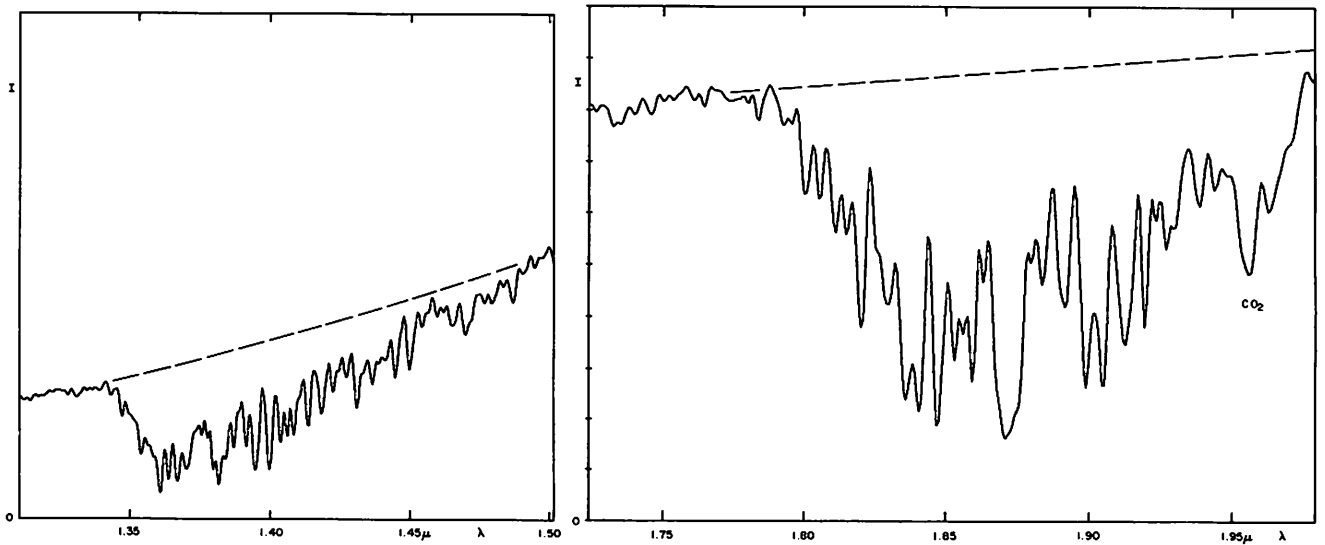


Fig. 9e The 1.4 and 1.9 μ H₂O bands of a lunar comparison spectrum, 61" telescope, el. 8250 ft, 20 Nov. 1969; mid position 0^h34^m E, + 6°44' dec.; airmass 1.1, T = +2°C, rel. hum. 0.16.

what can be done on Mt. Agassiz on Mt. Lemmon, given *time*. (This is not to say that time is always available.) Suppose one wishes to produce an atlas of stellar spectra, with H₂O equivalent less than 1.0 mm. Then 12-15% of the nights on Mt. Lemmon can be used; some 42% of the nights on Mt. Agassiz, some 47% on Mauna Kea, over 60% of the nights on Shasta, and all clear nights on Mt. Logan or Mt. McKinley. On the other hand, if one wishes to work *only* at less than 0.3 mm equivalent H₂O, Mt. Lemmon and probably Mauna Kea would be unsuited, Mt. Agassiz would yield about 3-4% of the nights, Shasta 16-18%, and Mt. Logan in July 30%, in winter (if accessible) all clear nights. It should not be overlooked, however, that the favorable comparison for Mt. Logan or Mt. McKinley is paid for by the extreme altitude which reduces the "equivalent H₂O content." The more moderate altitude, the greater accessibility, and the more southern latitude of Mt. Shasta, would appear strong arguments for its ultimate year-around use. Additional comparative data and commentary are found in App. IV.

4. Comments on Some Mountain Sites

The following U.S. sites are accessible (cf. Table I): Mt. Lemmon, near Tucson, Arizona; Mt. Agassiz, near Flagstaff, Arizona (which has a chair lift operating all year, to be replaced by a cable car in the near future); White Mountain, California, Barcroft Laboratory (helicopter); Pikes Peak, Colorado (summertime only); and Mauna Kea, Hawaii.

Mt. Lemmon is becoming available as a site for IR astronomy later in 1970*. A map, photographic coverage, and descriptions are found in Appendix I. It is favored by a good record of clear skies, a dry climate, unusual accessibility, and low wind velocities. Because of Tucson, there is no need for a new base at lower altitude.

Mt. Agassiz was studied during four visits in 1963 and some later; and from time to time from light aircraft. The U.S. Forest Service has designated the area as "recreational." An extensive development program is now under review that could benefit future scientific operations. In 1963 the author made an informal proposal to NASA for a partly-underground 60-inch telescope installation on Mt. Agassiz of the Newtonian type. An improved version (more compact) of the Cassegrain type is reproduced in Appendix II. No new base is needed because of the

proximity and altitude (7,000 ft) of Flagstaff, with adequate facilities.

The staff of the Space Sciences Laboratory of the University of California (Berkeley) has made systematic studies of White Mountain, California; not at the 14,200 ft summit, which is rather inaccessible, but at the existing Barcroft Laboratory, at 12,500 ft. A report has been issued (O'Connor, Welsh, and Tayeb 1969) describing observations extending over 18 months, of percentage cloud-cover, surface measures of water vapor, and radio-sonde (balloon) atmospheric water-vapor profiles. The authors note a concentration of water vapor in the lowest few-hundred meters above their Laboratory (possibly due to daytime evaporation of snow); and some remaining uncertainties in the absolute H₂O vapor calibrations (that have troubled other ground-based measures as well). The site is remote as is apparent from maps; and occasional very high winds occur (a dome housing a Cal. Tech. test telescope was damaged by winds in excess of 120 mph).

Pikes Peak, Colorado, is interesting because of its detachment, 60 miles to the E, from the main chain of the Rocky Mountains; and accessible from Colorado Springs, which has a branch of the University of Colorado. It is approached either by a toll road, operated by the City of Colorado Springs; or by a cog railway opened in 1891, privately owned (runs daytime, May-October only). The writer has inspected the summit area as the guest of the City Manager of Colorado Springs, twice by car. Two maps and some photographs are reproduced in Appendix III. The site is capable of development for scientific programs; R. Millikan conducted cosmic ray experiments in 1923, and many other scientific expeditions have taken place during the past century. A considerable body of meteorological information has been collected over 22 years of near-continuous observation during three periods between 1874 and 1966; cf. Appendix III. The railroad, which ascends 7,540 ft, cannot be operated in winter-time because of snow and ice on the track. The road is cleared May 1-Oct. 15, but could be plowed at a modest charge during the winter if required.

Mauna Kea is well above the inversion layer and the fair-weather ocean cloud cover; cirrus (visible some 25% of the time), stemming from the high-altitude return-flow from the tropical convergence, and occasional storms, set limits to IR observations on an otherwise excellent site. Considerable data exist on Mauna Kea, starting with our test results of 1964; the latter will be described in a separate *Com-*

*A Users Group of interested universities was organized Feb. 2, 1970, on an interim basis.

munication. An attractive and suitable base exists at Hale Pohaku (9,200 ft) which can be further developed; it is normally within easy reach (20 min. by jeep) of the summit.

Tenerife in the Canary Islands is being developed by an English IR research team (not at the summit, listed in Table I, which is volcanic).

Mt. Rainier and Mt. Shasta have in Table I comparable amounts of water vapor. Both are dormant volcanoes. Mt. Rainier's rim is free of snow in summer (Fig. 33a) because of its intrinsic heat; temperatures as high as 79°C have been measured. Moxham *et al.* (1965) recorded temperatures up to 33°C with a radiometer (3° beam width) overflown at 16,000 ft, in spite of the resulting averaging with the snows. The precipitation on the slopes of Mt. Rainier at the middle altitudes (5,000-10,000 ft) is enormous; at the base near Paradise (5,500 ft) the annual precipitation averages 100 inches, with annual snowfalls recorded up to 80 ft (30 ft packed). Mt. Rainier has 41 glaciers (map in App. IV). The cloud cover in the area is high, 0.8 according to Fig. 8. Without major development, Mt. Rainier could not be used for IR astronomy; a base at an intermediate level would itself pose serious problems of access (cf. App. IV).

Mt. Shasta is a National Forest, unlike Mt. Rainier which is a National Park. The glaciers are small in total area, a few percent of Mt. Rainier (map in App. IV); while the precipitation and snowfalls are much less. The fractional cloud cover in the area, according to Fig. 8, is around 0.46. The more Southern latitude (by 5°4') would benefit planetary observations, as well as increase percentage sky coverage. The average precipitation at the town of Mt. Shasta (3,540 ft) is 37 inches; the average snowfall, 115 inches; the mean daytime sky cover, 48%; the annual mean number of clear days, 163, and of partly cloudy days, 85. Thunderstorms occur on the average of 13 days per year, heavy fog on 7 days. Volcanic hazards appear minor or absent; a few hot springs occur near the summit (Williams, 1932). The southern slopes are nearly bare in summer (App. IV). The mountain is promising for IR developments. A good base exists at 7,500 ft (App. IV), from which a cable car to the summit could be constructed at a very modest cost.

Table I shows that Shasta and Pikes Peak are nearly equal in mid-winter, but that Shasta is better the rest of the year. The fractional cloud cover of the two areas are about 0.51 and 0.46, favoring Shasta (Fig. 8). The average cloud cover observed at the

summit of Pikes Peak is 0.40; the Shasta figure appears unknown. Comments on Mt. Logan (Canadian Yukon, 60°32'N, 140°27'W, 19,850 ft = 6,055 m) are found in App. IV, a site possibly suitable for special programs.

Acknowledgments. I am indebted to A. Thomson and C. Benner for assistance in the computations of Table I; to Dr. D. P. Cruikshank and Mr. Thomson for the laboratory spectra of Fig. 9; to Mr. F. de Wiess and Mr. C. L. Edwards for the design of Fig. 21; to Mrs. F. Larson for a literature search of relevant maps and published data; and to Mr. S. Larson for assistance in the composition of the figures. Prof. Drummond Rennie contributed important comments on this paper, quoted in App. IV.

APPENDIX I

*Mt. Lemmon**

Mt. Lemmon is the most accessible of the sites in Table I over 9,000 ft. Working there involves no appreciable strain though the altitude is felt.

The Base is reached by an excellent county road that terminates at the ski lift area, 1.8 miles from the Base entrance. The final 1.8-mile approach-road (and 800 ft rise) is in good condition. Snow clearance by Pima County is up to the ski lift; the Base is responsible for its own snow clearance and that of the 2-mile approach. The Base is supplied with commercial power and telephone, has its own water system (1 million gallon storage, in two tanks), and large storage facilities for diesel fuel. There is a helicopter pad just outside the gatehouse. Reference is made to Figs. 11a-b for maps of the Mt. Lemmon Base, and Figs. 12-16 for aerial views taken on March 7, 1970. A detailed map is available.

The solar 4-meter spectrometer, used in the NASA CV 990 in 1968 for the Arizona-NASA Atlas of the IR Solar Spectrum (*LPL Comm.* Nos. 123-5, 160, 161, 163-5, 1969), was installed on Mt. Lemmon in March 1969 and used to obtain back-up spectra for the CV 990 Atlas (in part for purposes of wavelength scale and identification; in part for extension beyond 3.1 μ). This installation is shown in Fig. 17.

The sky on Mt. Lemmon, when clear, is usually deep blue, the top of the haze layer in S. Arizona being normally not over 7,000 ft. Condensation trails are no serious problem; when they are seen they are usually short and vanish promptly. The wind veloci-

* Named for Dr. J. G. Lemmon (Lemmon Herbarium, Oakland, Cal.) who ascended the Mt., June 1882.

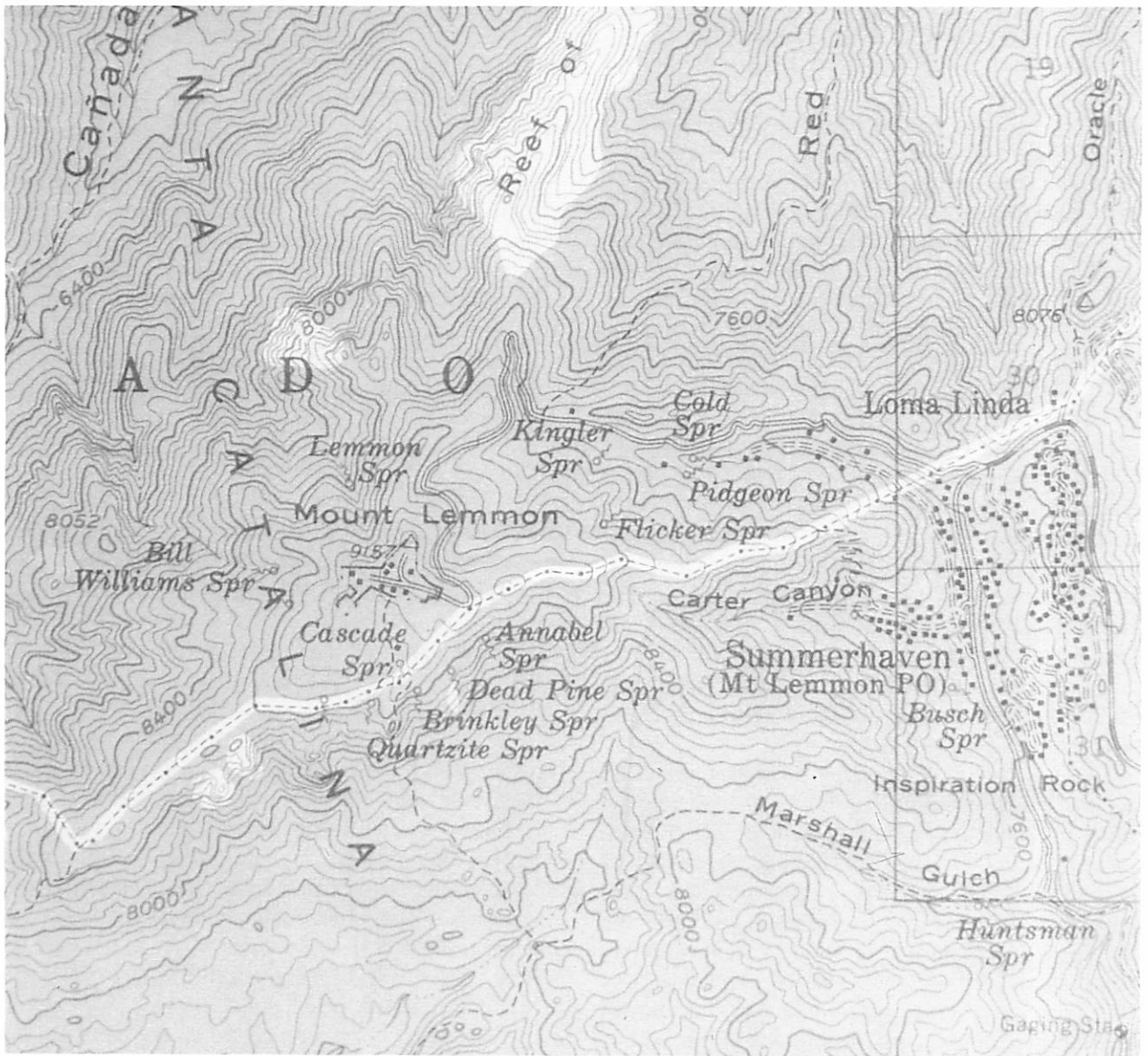


Fig. 11a Section of topographic map of Mt. Lemmon summit area. Some buildings at nearby Summerhaven are summer cottages (part-time occupancy). Contour interval 80 ft.

ties are usually low to moderate. During the monsoon (end June to mid-September), observing conditions are poor. The rest of the year is satisfactory. The proximity of Tucson with its extensive astronomical facilities (40 miles by excellent road) is an asset and a great convenience.

With the aid of pilot balloons the writer has investigated the airflow pattern over the Mt. Lem-

mon summit on a typical clear Spring evening (after sunset), with a West wind of about 10 mph. The flow pattern was considered satisfactorily regular, with no major turbulence apparent. On the basis of experience with other summits the astronomical image quality is expected to be good to excellent. Direct image tests have begun.

Daytime water vapor measurements on Mt. Lem-

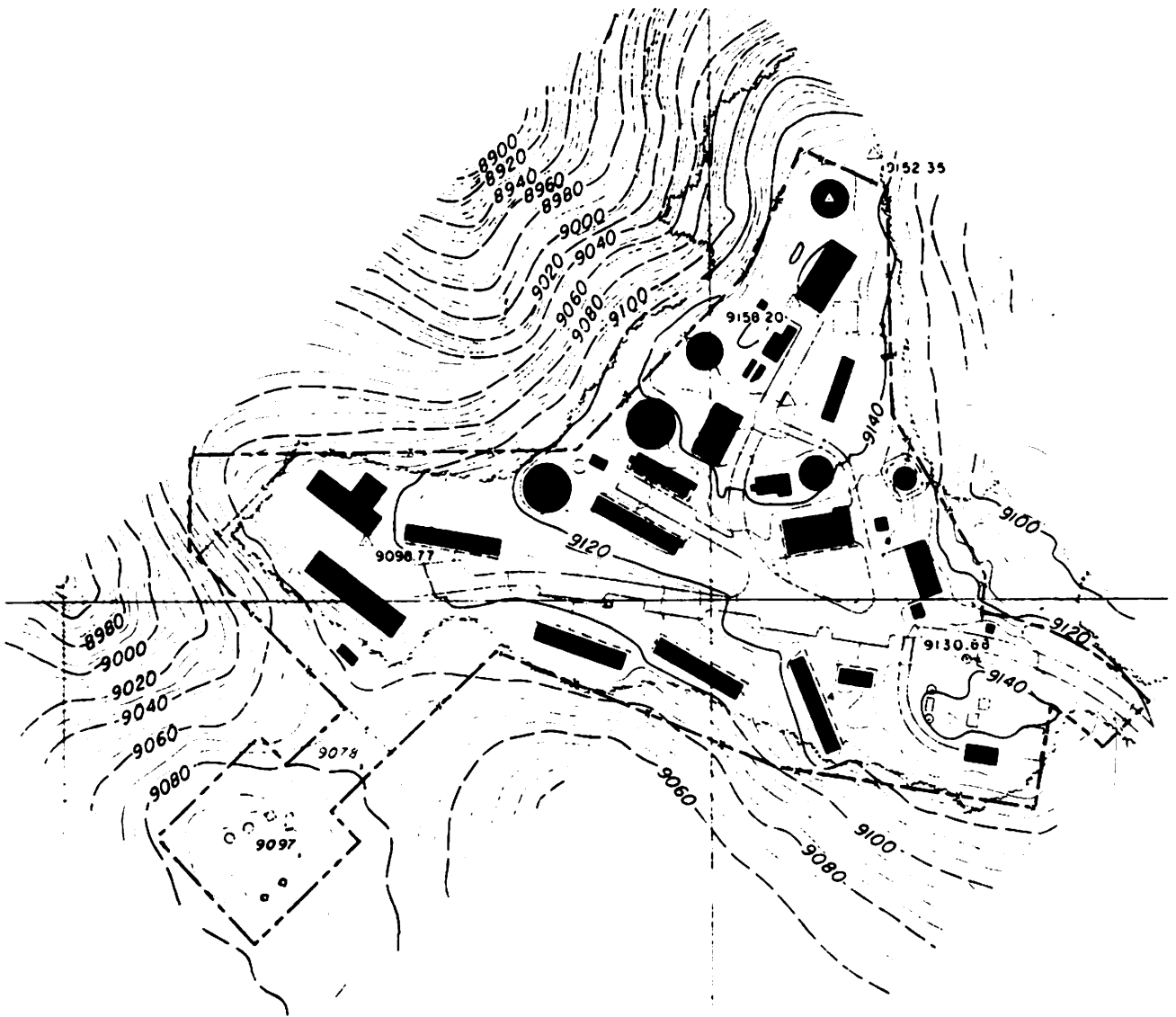


Fig. 11b Survey of Mt. Lemmon summit made in 1950's for ADC Radar Base. Contour interval 5 ft.

mon were made during the IR solar observations (cf. Fig. 17) using a device constructed by Dr. F. Low and Mr. A. Davidson. These and similar measures made on other mountains are collected in a forthcoming *Comm.*, together with a new calibration of the Low device (which basically confirms Dr. Low's original calibration).

Reference is made to an unpublished study "Site Selection Study, Final Report, for University of Minnesota-University of California (San Diego) 60-inch

Infrared Telescope," compiled by N. Woolf, University of Minnesota, for comparison between Mt. Lemmon and other U.S. high-altitude sites. This report was received after the present manuscript was completed. Its conclusions are based on a survey conducted by Dr. Woolf and his staff, entirely independently of the study described here. It pays special attention to medical and logistical considerations. It endorses the use of Mt. Lemmon for future IR operations by university-type organizations.



Fig. 12 Mt. Lemmon Base and Catalina Highway, seen from ESE, with Picacho Peak (3,382 ft) left, in low-level haze, 40 miles beyond Mt. Lemmon.



Fig. 13 Close-up of Mt. Lemmon Base, from WNW. Two radar domes deflated. Cf. Fig. 11.

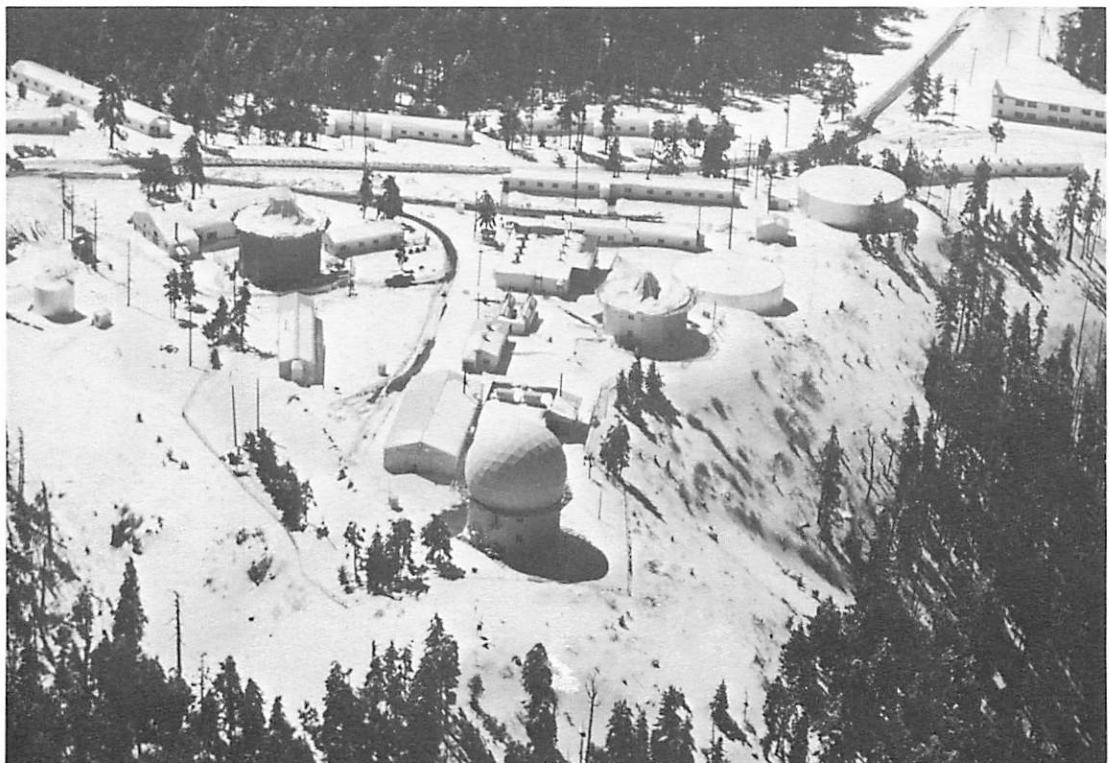


Fig. 14 Mt. Lemmon Base, seen from NNE (two radar domes deflated). Cf. Fig. 11.

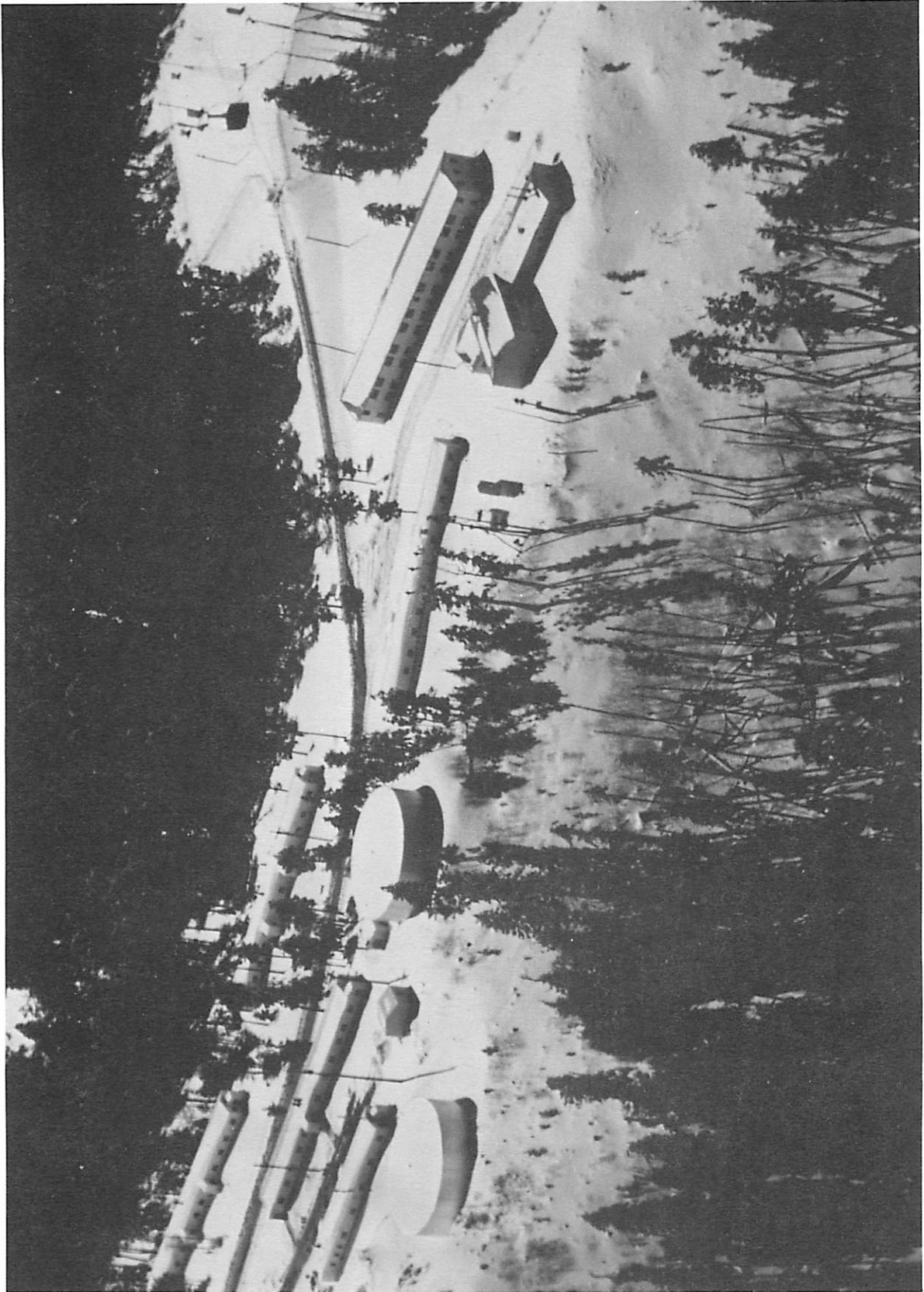


Fig. 15 West Section of Mt. Lemmon Base, seen from N. Cf. Fig. 11.

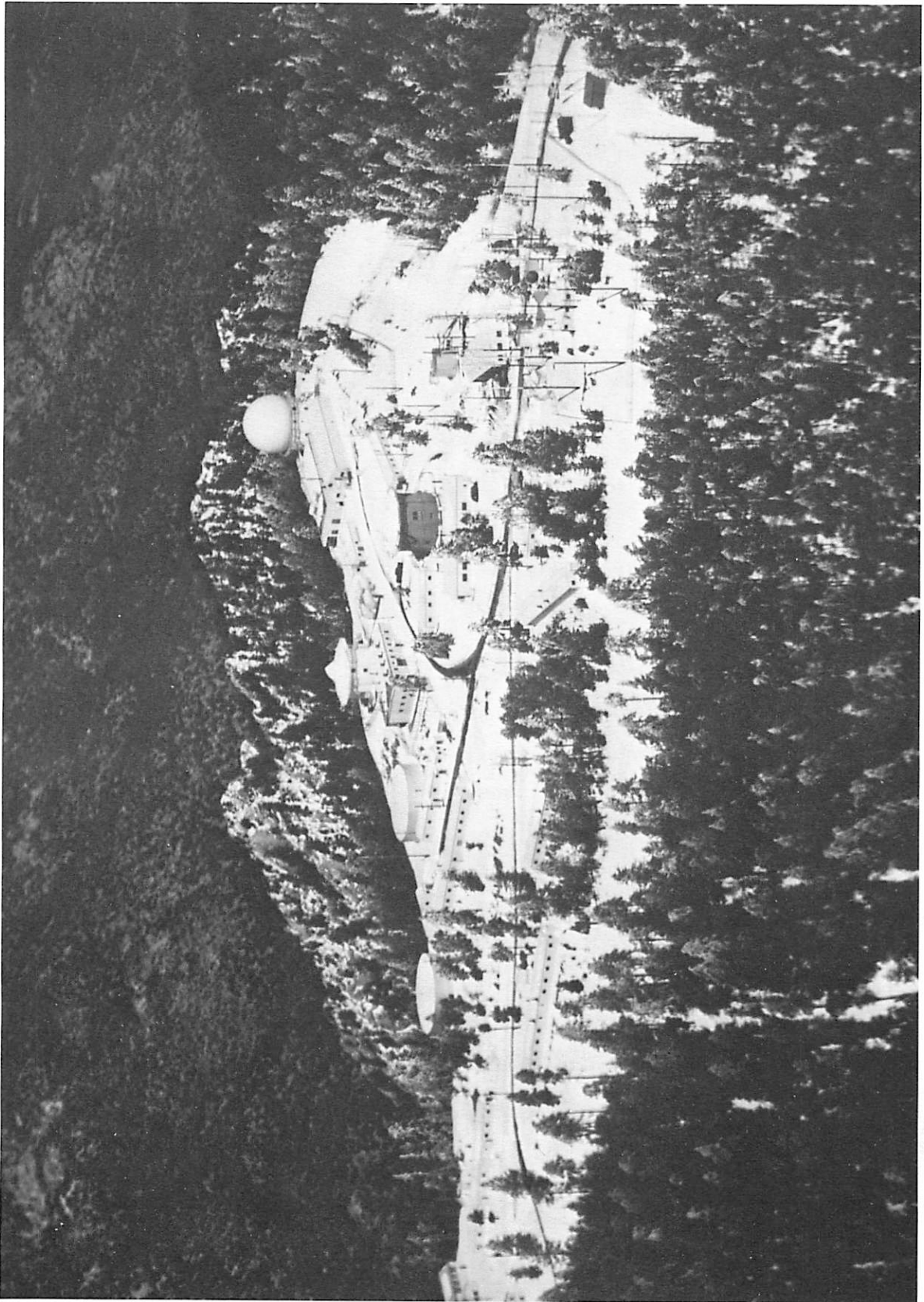


Fig. 16 Mt. Lemmon Base, from S. Cf. Fig. 11.

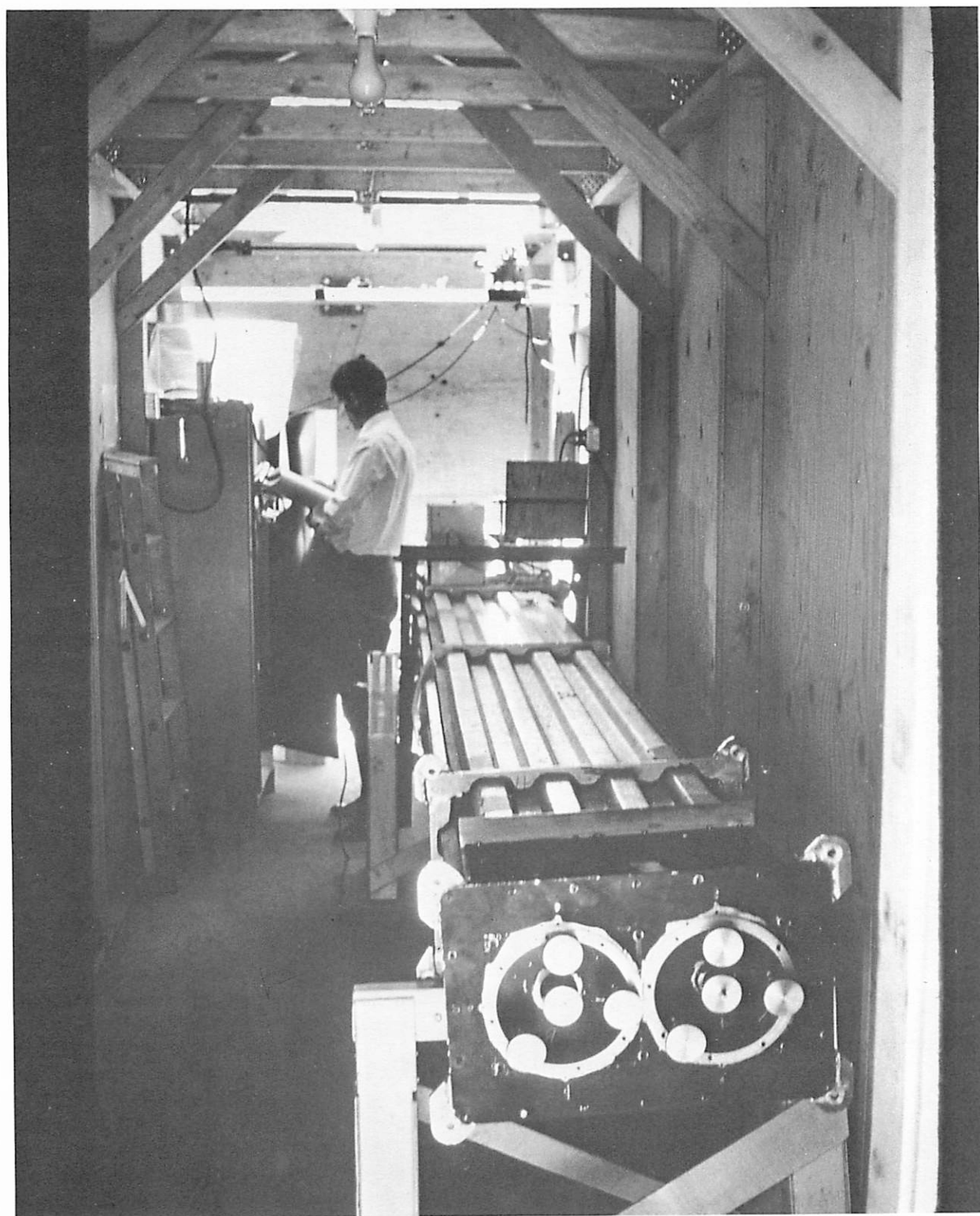


Fig. 17 Solar 4-meter spectrometer mounted on Mt. Lemmon, April 1969.

APPENDIX II
Mt. Agassiz, Arizona

Mt. Agassiz can be reached most of the way through a chair lift from the Snow Bowl (9,530 ft), 15 miles by good road from Flagstaff. The topographic map of the summit area, showing the ski lift, is reproduced in Fig. 18; Fig. 19 gives a general view.

The Lowell Observatory, itself located at 7,200 ft, had from 1926–34 a Station on the San Francisco Peaks, E of Mt. Fremont (Fig. 18) at about 11,500 ft; but found that on the coldest and driest nights at the main observatory the conditions for Martian spectroscopy were at least as good as at the Station *when it could be reached*. This problem has already been touched on (pp. 135–136): if a site cannot

be reached during the optimum conditions (often after a heavy snowfall) it loses much of its significance. (The Station had a 12-inch and a 15-inch reflector, used together, with a roll-off roof building. Living quarters were a dugout, now caved in).

The present Peaks are about 3,000 ft lower than the original volcano whose main crater area eroded during the Pleistocene (Robinson, 1913). Major effects of glaciation are evident and some slopes are rock slides.

The Mt. Agassiz chair lift terminates at 11,608 ft (3,540 m), 750 ft (230 m) short of the summit (cf. Figs. 18 and 20). The LPL staff made several ascents soon after its completion (fall 1962). The LPL observer, Mr. A. Herring, spent part of the night of Feb. 13, 1963 at the terminus, using his 6-inch

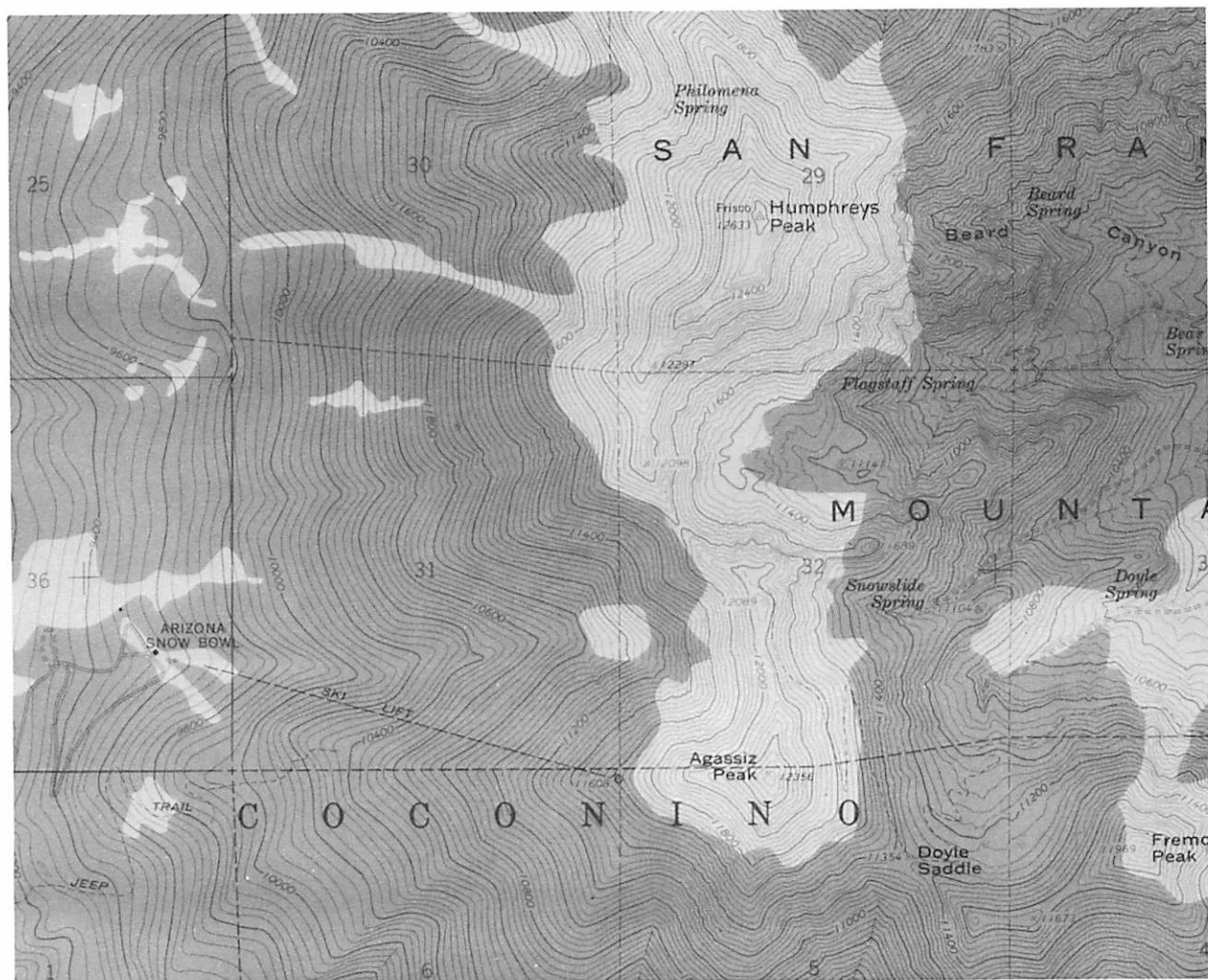


Fig. 18 Topographic map of summit area of San Francisco Peaks, Arizona. (Scale 1:24,000). Vertical lines 1 mile apart.



Fig. 19 View of San Francisco Peaks from SW, Mt. Humphreys left, Mt. Agassiz center (cf. Fig. 18). Early Fall.



Fig. 20 Mt. Agassiz, seen from W. Linear marking across center is track of chair lift which terminates just below summit.

reflector, by special arrangement with the owner of the ski lift. He rated the seeing 6-7 (very good), but a N wind with gusts at 30-40 mph. caused the telescope to be unsteady. The temperature was $18^{\circ}\text{F} = -8^{\circ}\text{C}$, the transparency good but not exceptional. Other visits were made by LPL engineers in 1962-63, who discussed load limits on the chair lift (1,500

lbs, when seats are removed) and with the bulldozer (4,500 lbs). The writer inspected Mt. Agassiz on Nov. 18, 1963, as guest of the owner of the ski lift, Mr. Bainbridge, who arranged for a special run and accompanied me to the summit; and who clarified much on possible observatory operations.

Inquiries into the water-vapor content above Mt.

Agassiz were also made. I am indebted to Mr. C. H. Reitan of the Institute of Atmospheric Studies, author of a study of the distribution of water vapor over the U.S.A. (Reitan, 1960), for an analysis of this question, based on radio-sonde data obtained at Phoenix, Arizona, and Las Vegas, Nevada, whose average should be representative for Northern Arizona. In his memo of 20 February, 1963, Mr. Reitan wrote as follows (condensed):

"An estimate of the upper-level dryness may be made from the frequency of 'motor boating,' which means that the moisture content is less than the threshold of detection of the humidity element in a radio sonde. It is a function of the temperature:

T	+10°	0°	-10°	-20°	-30°	-40°C
Rel. Hum.	18%	20%	24%	25%	30%	34%

From the observed frequency of 'motor boating' at the 650 mb level (Mt. Agassiz), one can compute the percentiles of these tabular humidities, using the mean monthly temperatures with altitude from U.S. Weather Bureau Tech. Paper 32 (a ten-year summary)." The result is given in Table II, in which W is the amount of measured water vapor in the column between 675 and 325 mb (95% of the total above 675 mb and about 1.2x the amount above 636 mb, which is wanted). It is noted that the W values in Table II are not unlike the 50% values for Mt. Agassiz of Table I. It may be added that the annual average H₂O scale heights, computed from the monthly averages at 650 mb and at 350 mb compiled by Mr. Reitan, are 2.27 km for Phoenix and 2.18 km for Las Vegas, somewhat larger than the 1.6 km tropospheric average adopted in Table I.

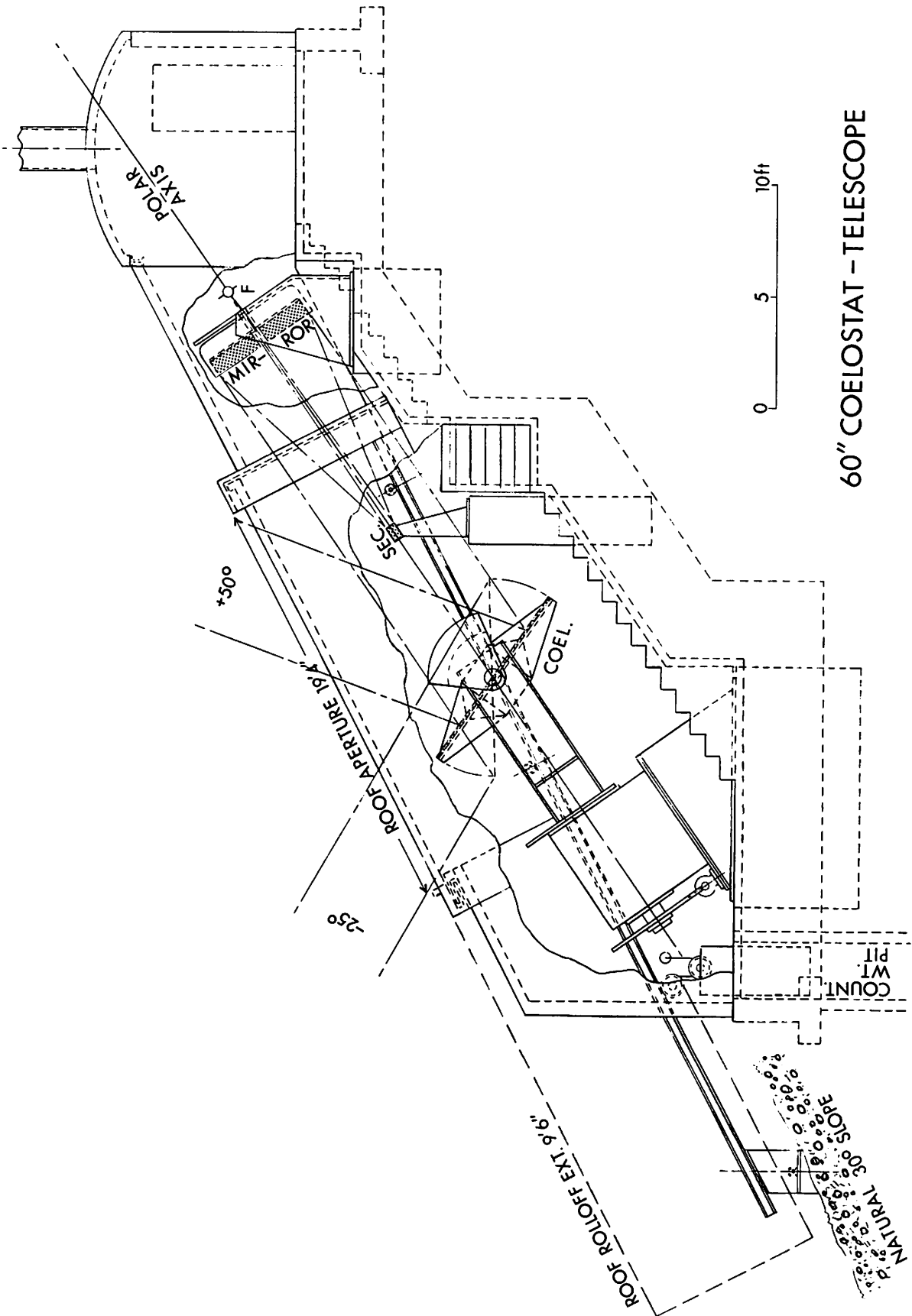
TABLE II

Frequency of motorboating at 650 mb level in N. Arizona (C. H. Reitan)				
Month	Phoenix % motorb.	Max. W. (mm)	Las Vegas % motorb.	Max. W. (mm)
Jan	40%	1.7	38%	1.5
Feb	51	1.6	39	1.5
Mar	50	1.7	40	1.5
April	39	2.1	24	1.9
May	35	2.5	16	2.2
June	38	3.4	36	3.0
July	6	3.8	12	3.7
Aug	7	3.7	21	3.5
Sept	23	3.5	26	3.3
Oct	43	2.8	44	2.6
Nov	51	2.3	44	2.1
Dec	54	1.9	51	1.7

The author proposed to NASA with his memorandum of 27 July 1963 that a duplicate of the inexpensive 28-inch telescope (later described in *LPL Comm.* 111, 7, 47-51) be placed on Mt. Agassiz as a first step toward the creation of a *high-altitude station* in the U.S. Later that year a modified proposal was made that appeared to meet objections to prominence on a mountain designated for recreational purposes. However, because of more immediate pressures at this Laboratory (*Ranger, Surveyor, Mars spectroscopy*), no prompt execution was foreseen. *With the advent of Fourier Transform Spectroscopy, the needs for a high-altitude IR observatory have enormously multiplied.* The design shown in Fig. 21, *a, b*, is a Cassegrain version of the concept proposed in 1963 in Newtonian form. The Cassegrain version is more compact, and avoids light losses due to cross polarizations. The spectrometer room can, of course, be enlarged and a small shop added. Fourier Transform Spectroscopy has been using large Coudé installations (sometimes with severe light losses due to multiple reflections). In Fig. 21 the stationary focus requires only three reflections, two of normal incidence. The flat can be of selected plate glass.

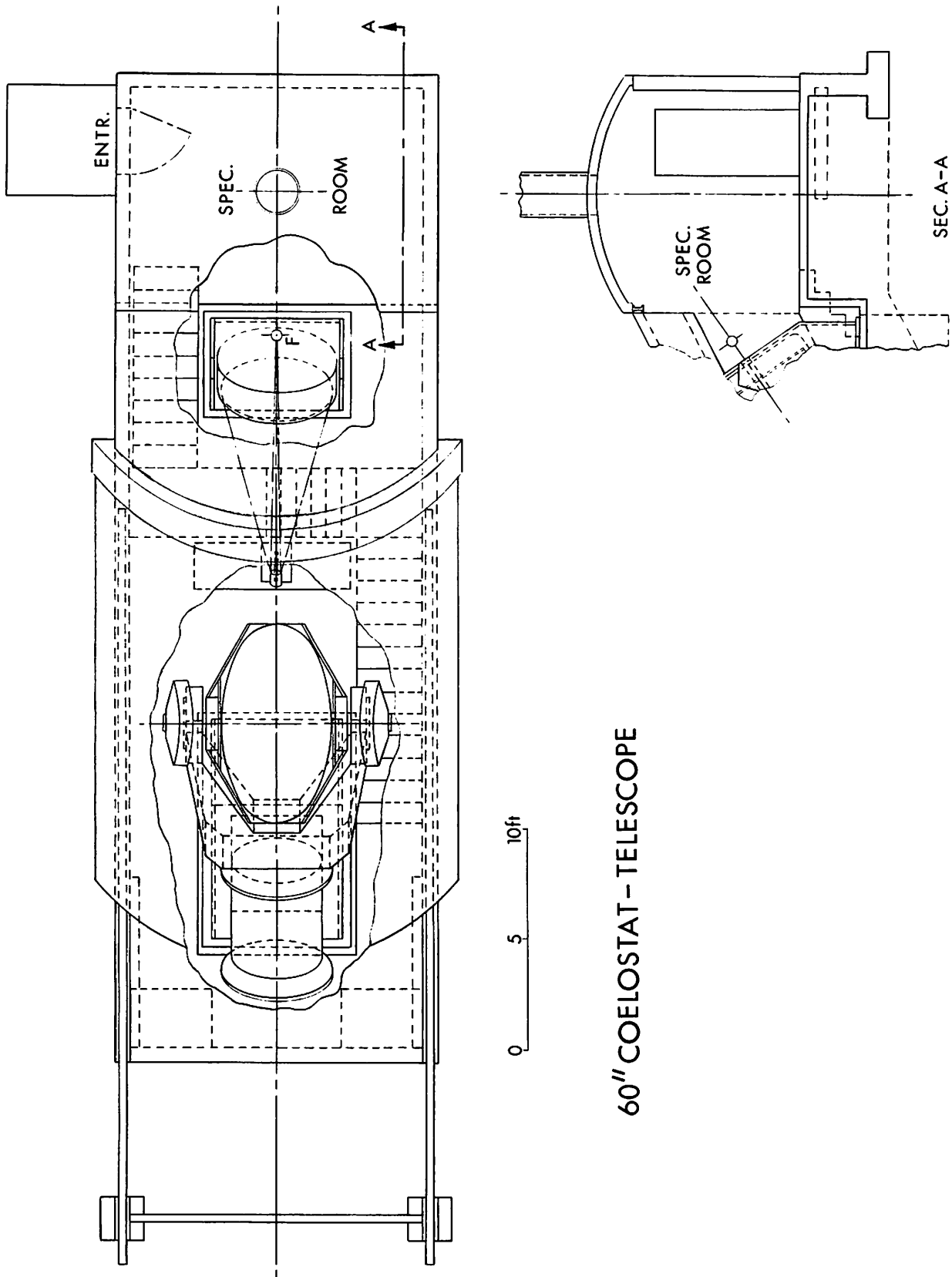
At the Snow Bowl the accumulated winter snowfalls reach about 6 ft. Mt. Agassiz's summit has usually around 1 ft because the snows blow off. The snows fall between early October and late April. The percentage clear weather, outside the 3 months' summer monsoon, is reportedly high, both at the Snow Bowl and the summit (around 80%). At the summit winds are typically around 20 mph and are not known to have exceeded 85 mph. Southward 30° slopes (cf. Fig. 21) are available both at the terminus of the present chair lift and at the summit. Especially after the present chair lift has been replaced, and the summit is directly accessible by closed cable cars year around, the site will take on a special interest for IR astronomy.

In Table I the H₂O content over Mt. Agassiz is geometrically intermediate between Mt. Lemmon and Mt. Shasta. The ratios in the *efforts* required of establishing IR observing stations cannot yet be fully assessed. For the immediate future, both Mt. Lemmon and Mt. Agassiz can clearly contribute, each in their own major way.



60" COELOSTAT - TELESCOPE

Fig. 21a Design of low-profile 60-inch telescope installation with spectrometer room (elevation). No component weighs in excess of 3000 lbs (F. A. de Wiess).



60" COELOSTAT - TELESCOPE

Fig. 21b Same as 21a, in plan view.

APPENDIX III

Pikes Peak

The mountain seen from the north is shown in Fig. 22. The topographic maps of the summit area are found in Fig. 23*a* and *b*. In summertime the temperature is comfortable and the summit is reached (by over 350,000 visitors) either by Route 250 or a cog railroad installed in 1890 (Fig. 24); but this is a time of high humidities. The railroad can, of course, not be used 6-8 months of the year with snow and ice on the tracks. In mid-winter the daytime temperature is around -16°C , with night temperatures recorded down to -39°C . The summit snowfall is not as heavy as in the central Rockies and most of it blows away to lower levels because it is dry. Rarely more than 1 ft remains on the summit. Glen Cove (Fig. 25), cannot normally be reached from the summit during the observing season (Oct.-May). Other parts of the road are shown in Fig. 26. Above the gate at 7,700 ft (Fig. 27) the road is closed Oct. 15-May 1 but could be cleared by the City of Colorado Springs by arrangement. Observing on Pikes Peak will mean in practice having local overnight accommodations. Summertime experience at the restaurant (Fig. 24; staff ~ 35) has shown that all but 10 percent of young adults are able to be there for some weeks; it takes about three days to acclimatize.

Helicopter transportation to the summit has been used. Commercial electric power (now reaching Glen Cove) will be installed in buried cables by late 1970. The Fitzsimons General Hospital of Denver has an active High Altitude Lab. at the summit (Fig. 28).

The meteorological data for Pikes Peak are unusually complete. The Signal Corps carried out meteorological observations from January 1874 through June 1888, published in *Harvard College Observatory Annals*, XXII (1889). I am indebted to Dr. J. W. Berry, ESSA-WB State Climatologist, Denver, Colorado, for a summary of data with his letter of February 5, 1969, transmitted by Dr. P. M. Kuhn of ESSA, Boulder, Colorado. The temperature results, listed by month, are found in Table III. Line 6 of the Table gives the total precipitation in inches averaged over the same 15 years, taken directly from the *Harvard Annals* volume referred to. Lines 7 and 8 of Table III give the average hourly wind movement on the summit for each month, around midnight (0-1^h A.M.) and noon (12-13^h).

Reference to the original *Harvard Annals* publication on Pikes Peak is of extraordinary interest. The "Extract from Daily Journal," on pages 459-475, is a very remarkable piece of scientific literature, containing many items that must be pondered by anyone intent on establishing an IR observatory on a high mountain. Three summarizing sections of the Introduction (*op. cit.* p. xi) are quoted:

"Severe and prolonged wind-storms are unusual on Pikes Peak, and the days are comparatively infrequent when the mean hourly velocity equals or exceeds fifty miles per hour. The most remarkable wind-storms were those of September 28-29, 1878, when the mean velocity for twenty-four hours was 71 miles, and December 25, 1883, when the mean velocity was 70 miles per hour. The highest extreme velocity recorded at Pikes Peak was comparatively low, being 112 miles, May 11, 1881.

"The mean annual cloudiness on Pikes Peak is 40 per centum, ranging from 33 per centum in November to 74 per centum in July. The tendency is to an excess of cloudiness during the late spring and the late summer, with the least amounts from September to January, inclusive.

"Pikes Peak is celebrated for its electrical storms. Many interesting details of these are given in the observer's journals. The storms only occur when the air is moist; the most favorable condition is during the time a light, soft snow is falling. When the hands are held up sparks emanate from the tips of the fingers. At such times with considerable wind the anemometer cups look like a circle of fire. Each flake of snow as it alights on a mule's or burro's back gives a spark like a fire-bug . . ."

Even more detailed reports were obtained by the U.S. Weather Bureau during the period September 8, 1892, through September 30, 1894 (when its Station on Pikes Peak was closed). The results have been published in the *Reports of the Chief of the Weather Bureau* for 1893 and 1894. Of interest are the snowfalls recorded for the two years, September 1892 through August 1893, amounting to the enormous figure of 763 inches (19.4 meters); and September 1893 through August 1894, in the amount of 343 inches (8.7 meters). These Volumes also give readings of temperature, wind direction, and wind velocity for every hour of every day during the roughly 2-year observing period, an extraordinary collection of information. During the Weather Bureau occupation two persons were on duty continuously, with tours of duty each lasting two weeks (except when weather prevented relief from ascending the mountain). Special attention was paid to the correct design and emplacement of the snow gauge



Fig. 22 Pikes Peak seen from the north. Crystal Creek and Catamount Reservoir, 5 and 6 miles from the Peak, in foreground as well as road leading to summit. Timberline about 11,500 ft.

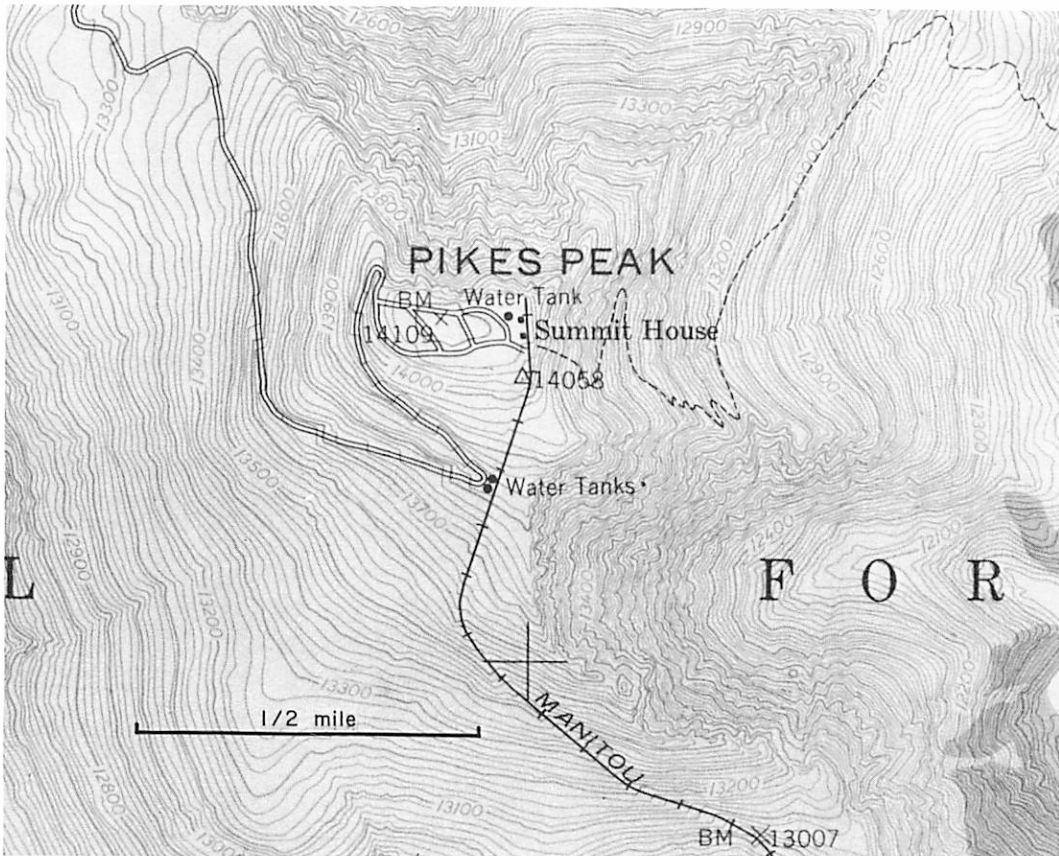


Fig. 23a Topographic map of Pikes Peak summit, contour interval 20 ft (1951).

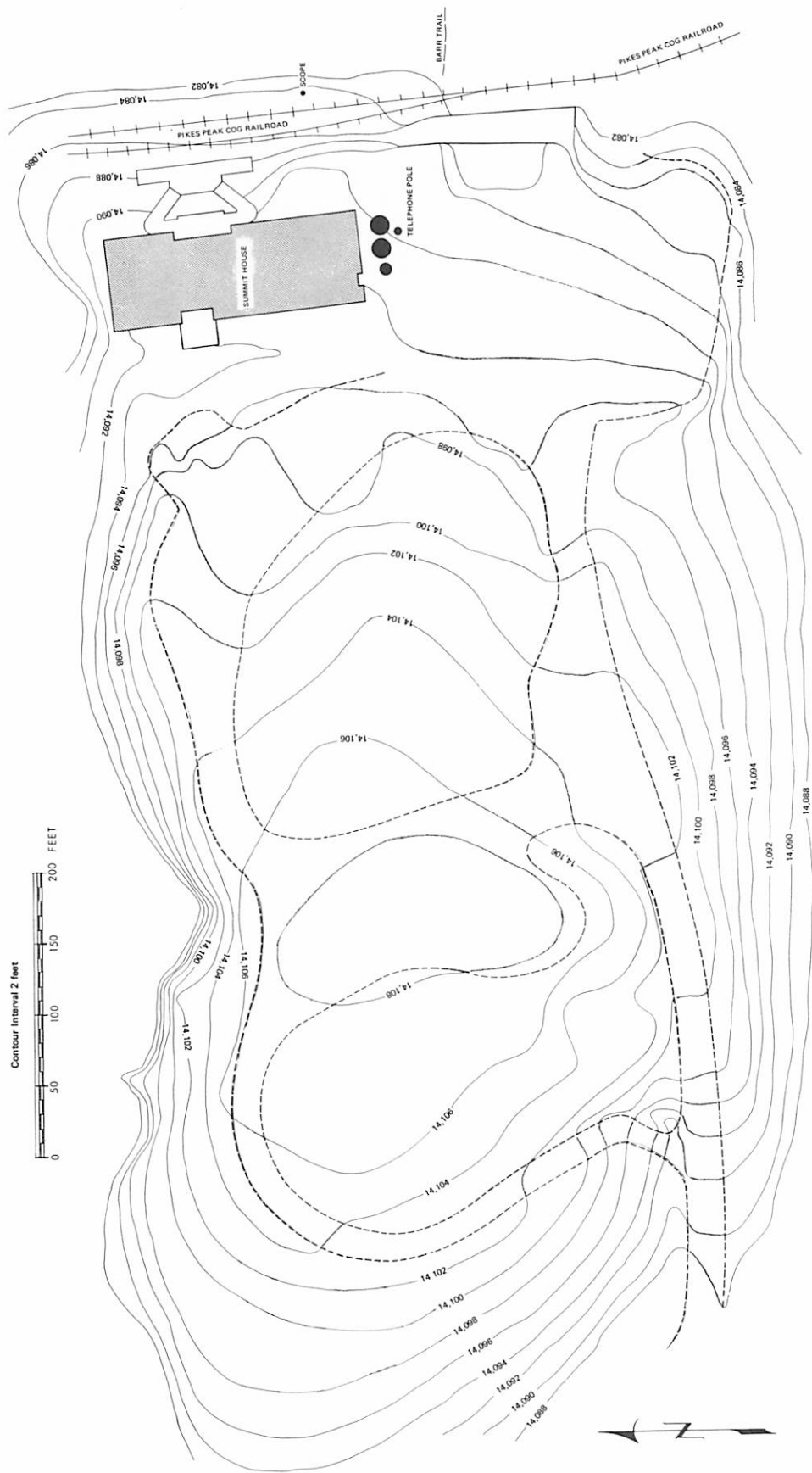


Fig. 23b Recent survey of summit, 2 ft contour interval. (Published with permission; prepared in 1970 by the Cartography Unit of the MITRE Corporation, Bedford, Mass. from the Dewerif-Meydrech (Pike National Forest Office) survey of 1965 and USGS quadrangle, 1:24,000, 1966).

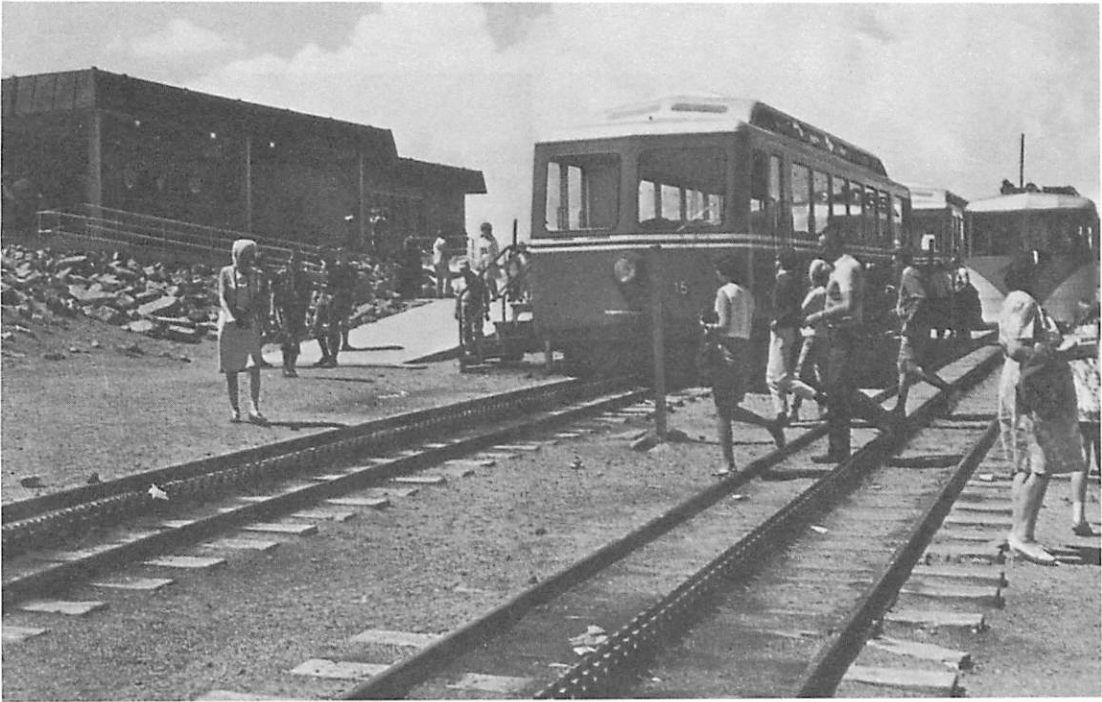


Fig. 24 Pikes Peak terminal station of diesel cog train (which climbs grades up to 25%).



Fig. 25 Glen Cove, April 1969, store and restaurant (no hotel), 11,500 ft, only facility on Pikes Peak Road.



Fig. 26 Views of road near 13,000 ft level, not safe except in summer.



Fig. 27 Entrance gate of Pikes Peak National Forest; metal barriers discourage unauthorized entry.

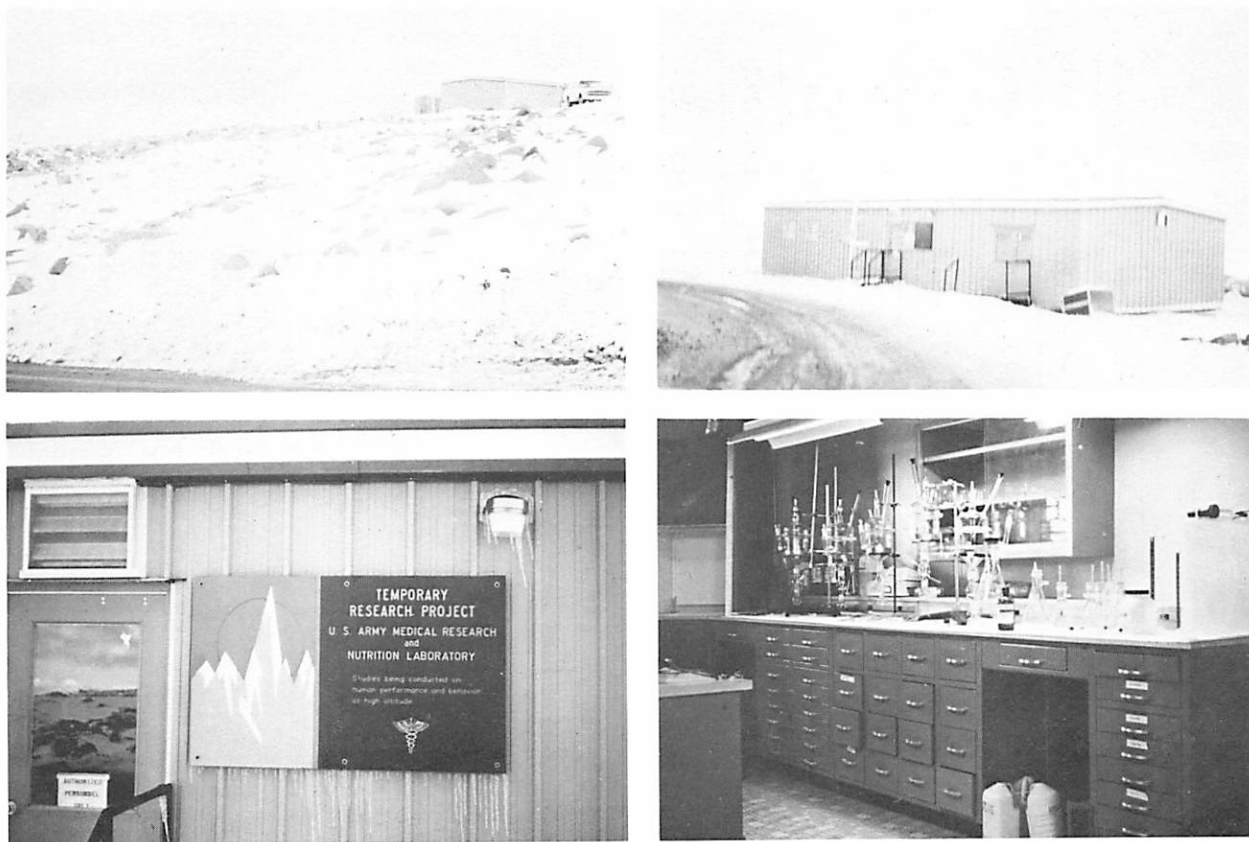


Fig. 28 Pikes Peak Lab. of Fitzsimons General Hospital.

(*op. cit.* 1893, p. 232). This Volume also reproduces photographs of both the U.S. Signal Corps Station in 1885 and the U.S. Weather Bureau Station, 1892.

Dr. P. M. Kuhn of ESSA was able to add further to the Signal Corps and W. B. data from measurements made 1960–1966 under ESSA auspices in which maximum and minimum thermometers were used as well as thermographs. The results are given in Table IV. The frost points give an important check on the free atmosphere values of Table I. The measured 50 percentiles are on the average considerably *more favorable* (by about 1.4 times) than those in Table I; whereas the 10 percentiles are even more favorable than the 5 percentiles shown in Table I (by a factor of 1.6 on the average) so that the latter average 25–30 percentiles in reality.

I am also indebted to Mr. John D. Goodlette, Manager, System Engineering on one of the NASA projects of the Martin Marietta Corporation of Denver, for a discussion on the air flow around Pikes Peak. As President of the Soaring Society of Denver

and an expert soaring-plane pilot himself, he has much personal experience with this circulation problem, as well as cloud conditions over Pikes Peak at different times of the year. He stated (April 1969) that between December 15 and February 15 the Peak is frequently clear, with temperatures at the summit level approximately 0°F (-18°C). With his letter of June 25, 1969, Mr. Goodlette sent a sketch which, with his permission, is reproduced in our Fig. 29 (vertical exaggeration 5-fold). The lenticular clouds referred to are of the type shown in Fig. 30, also due to Mr. Goodlette. He adds that the lenticulars rarely last longer than to about 10 p.m. local time, though he feels reasonably sure that the wave itself remains during the nighttime hours. These observations are obviously of great interest, not merely for IR observations, but astronomical image quality.

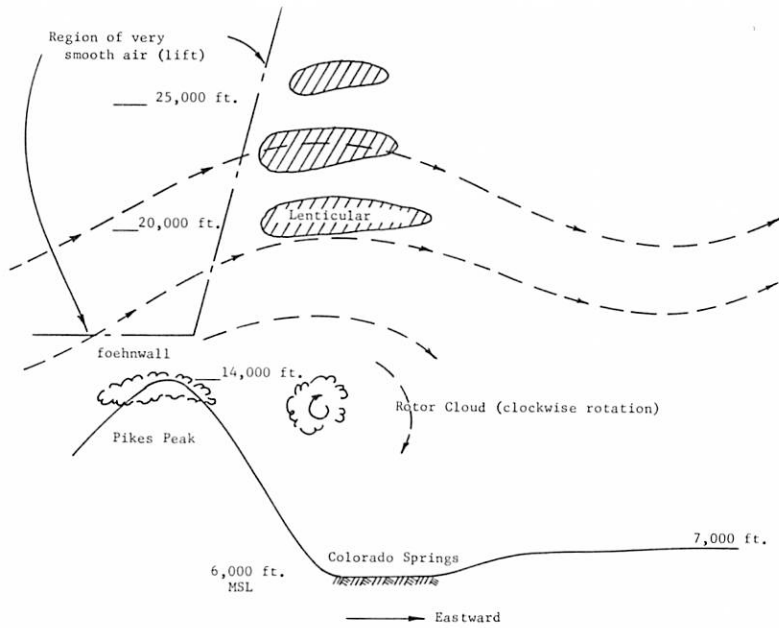
The frequency of condensation trails must be assessed in view of Pikes Peak's proximity to main line EW air routes. In daytime they are seen rather frequently.

TABLE III
TEMPERATURES IN °C, MEANS AND EXTREMES, PIKES PEAK, COLORADO
1874-1888

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	ANNUAL
Average Daily Maximum	-13.1	-12.0	-10.0	-6.3	-1.2	4.9	9.1	8.3	4.1	-2.0	-8.6	-11.2	-3.1
Average Daily Minimum	-20.1	-19.2	-17.0	-14.0	-8.7	-3.1	1.1	0.4	-3.8	-9.3	-15.2	-17.7	-10.6
Average Monthly, based on mean of Max. & Min.	-16.6	15.6	-13.5	-10.2	-4.9	0.9	5.1	4.4	0.2	-5.7	-11.8	-14.4	-6.8
Extreme Maximum	-1	-2	6	4	8	17	18	17	13	14	2	-1	18
Extreme Minimum	-38	-38	-34	-29	-22	-17	-8	-9	-14	-27	-38	-39	-39
Precipitation (inches)	1.56	1.39	2.11	3.78	3.68	1.77	4.46	3.92	1.77	1.41	1.84	1.49	29.2
Average Wind Movement													
MPH 0-1h A.M.	28.0	27.1	28.1	24.1	24.0	21.9	14.1	14.2	19.3	24.5	25.1	24.8	22.9
12-13h	26.2	22.9	21.7	17.2	17.7	16.0	9.4	9.4	13.0	17.2	22.1	22.3	17.9

TABLE IV
AVERAGE AIR TEMPERATURES AND FROST POINTS, 1960-66, PIKES PEAK
(COURTESY ESSA)

MONTHS	PART OF RECORD USED	T (AIR)	T _f (MEAS.)	T _f (TABLE I)	COMPLETELY CLOUDY (DAY & NIGHT)	Nr. OBS. IN 6 YRS.
Dec - Jan - Feb	All	-16°C	-29°C	-23.9°C	23%	91
— — —	10% driest	-25	-39	-33.2	12	91
Mar - Apr - May	All	-11	-27	-21.3	28	120
— — —	10% driest	-21	-35	-27.8	12	120
Jun - Jul - Aug	All	7.5	-9	-8.6	81	83
— — —	10% driest	3.2	-18.5	-18.5	26	83
Sep - Oct - Nov	All	-6.5	-20.5	-17.4	30	121
— — —	10% driest	-19.0	-30.0	-26.2	15	121



- Notes:
1. Appearance of lenticulars and rotor depend on specific humidity distribution as a function of time and position. They form and disappear quite rapidly upon occasion. Rotor quite violent always because it is a vortex filament. It is always low, however, and should be out of LOS.
 2. Foehnwall (cap cloud) is a spill-over of upslope fog when humidity allows formation of fog on westward facing slope.
 3. Nights tend to be clear in absence of general winter frontal passage. Clouds seldom last beyond sunset + 2 hours. Westerly winds 20-50 knots are typical throughout diurnal cycle. Thermal heating during daytime can destroy a weak wave, but not a strong one.

Fig. 29 Vertical east-west cross section of atmosphere through Pikes Peak up to 28,000 ft, with explanatory notes (courtesy Mr. John D. Goodlette).



Fig. 30 View toward Pikes Peak, the horizon with overlying lenticular clouds, after sunset (April 1967).



Fig. 31 View of Mt. Rainier in background (just 100 miles from Mt. Hood in foreground), with Mt. Adams, 12,307 ft at right, and Mt. St. Helens, 9,671 ft at left. Columbia River behind dark land mass beyond Mt. Hood. July 30, 1968.

APPENDIX IV

Mt. Rainier, Mt. Shasta, Mt. Logan

Mt. Rainier, with its 41 glaciers and snow cover to low levels, is a magnificent mountain, dominating the entire State of Washington when seen from high altitude (as the writer had the privilege of doing several times from the NASA CV-990, Fig. 31). Fig. 32 shows the topographic map of part of Mt. Rainier; Figs. 33a and 33b show an aerial and a ground-based view; the former illustrates the effect of the volcanic heat on the center rim, referred to in the text. Conceivably, a cable-car line could be installed on Success Divide and Cleaver to Point Success (used in Table I). Reference is made to excellent photographs of Mt. Rainier in *National Parks of the West* (Sunset Books 1965).

Mt. Shasta in N. California also stands alone, at least 5,000 ft above any other mountain within a radius of 75 miles. Its topographic map is shown in Fig. 34. In summer its slopes are mostly bare (Fig. 35), and climbed by hundreds of people. Take-off point is the Sierra Club's Shasta Alpine Lodge, at 8,000 ft. The top is made in 6 to 8 hours, with descent taking 3 hours. There are five small glaciers

on the N. and E. slopes: Whitney, over 2 miles long; Bolam, Hotlum, Wintun, and Konwakiton, 3-4 square miles together. The mountain is approached from the SW by the 16-mile Everitt Memorial Highway, ending at Panther Meadow, 7,500 ft high, where a modern winter-sport center has been built, Mt. Shasta Ski Bowl. A chair-lift starts there, operating in summer only, ascending to 9,212 ft (2,810 m), not quite high enough for useful IR work. At times Shasta causes a cloud street (Fig. 35) which normally appears to clear the summit level, but does indicate moist Pacific air at the lower levels. The approaches to Mt. Shasta, including airstrips, are shown in Fig. 36.

The apparently minor volcanic activity below the summit needs further investigation (Williams, 1932). There is a sulphur spring 200 ft below the highest point (Heald 1966). "The last eruptions probably occurred a couple of centuries ago, with a few feeble gasps as late as the 1850's." Mt. Shasta "has been reduced some 200 to 300 feet in altitude by erosion and its sides are seamed with ridges and canyons. The greatest erosion took place during the Pleistocene. The present rugged surface of the peak is the result of the grinding action of these prehistoric



Fig. 33a Aerial view of the summit crater of Mt. Rainier, with ice cap and crevasses. Most of (in-part warm) crater rim and part of Pt. Success show exposed rock.



Fig. 33b Trail to Mt. Rainier.

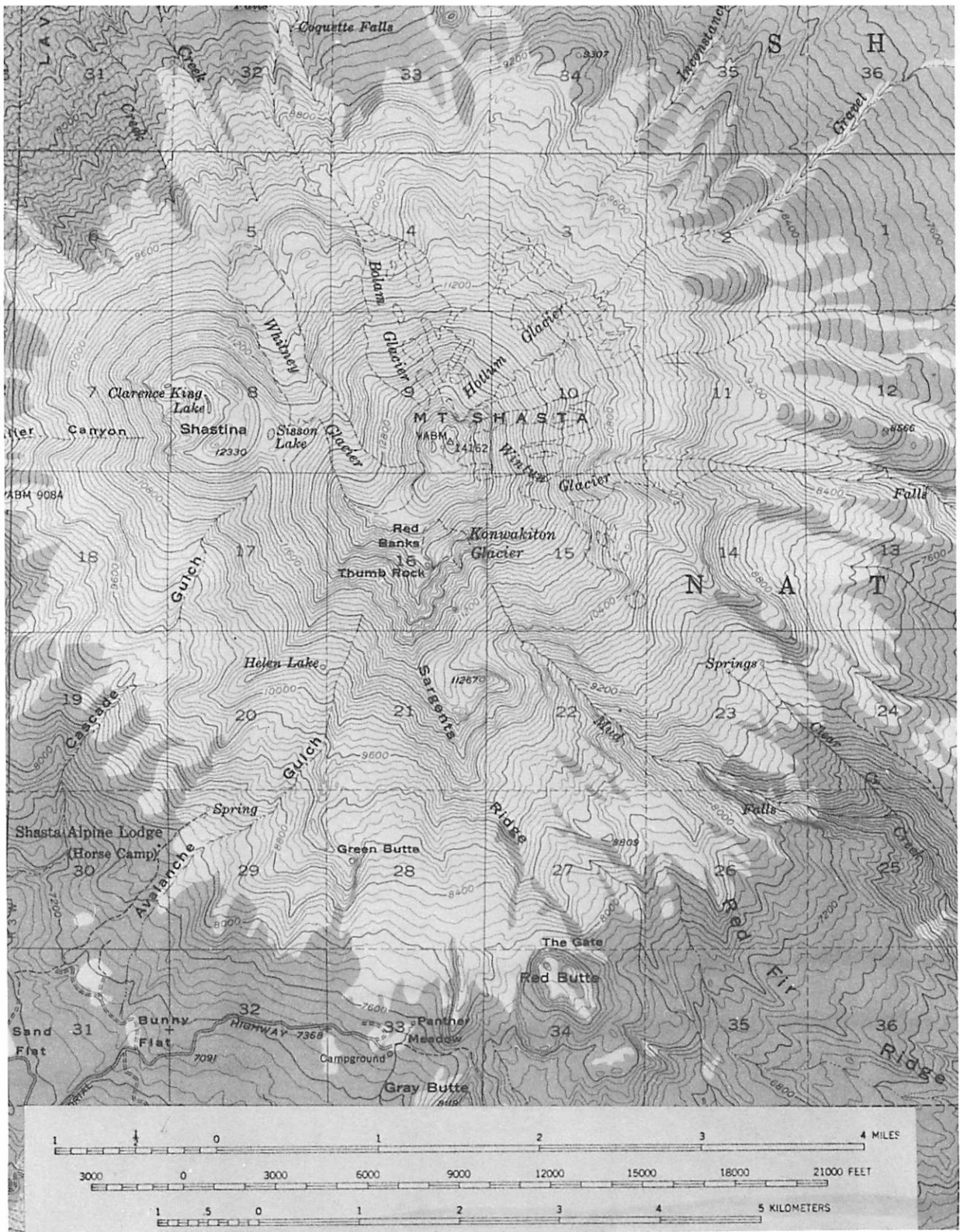


Fig. 34 Mt. Shasta, from topographic map (scale 1:62,500).

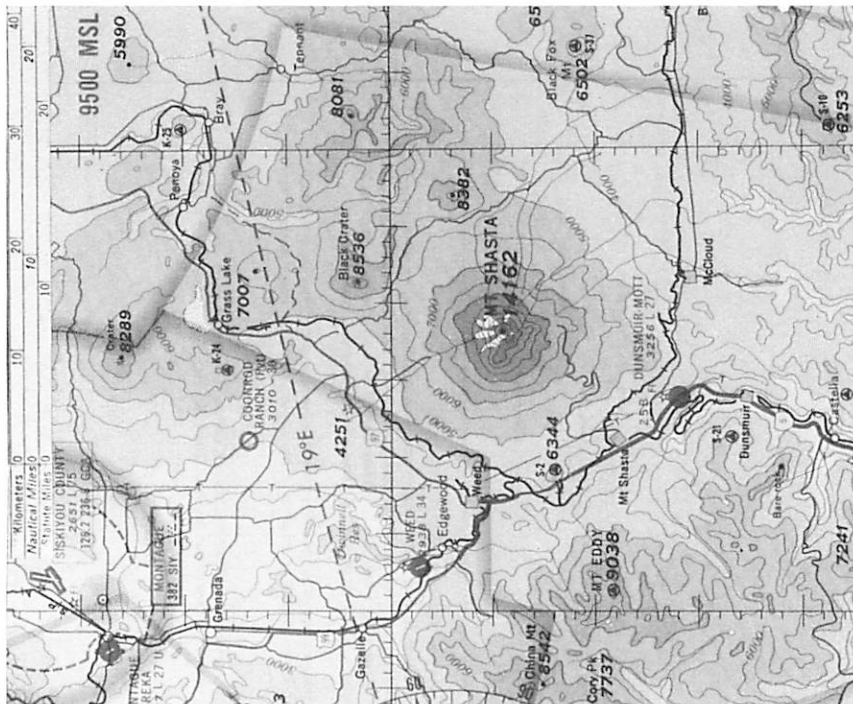


Fig. 36 Approaches to Mt. Shasta, by road, rail, and air (World Aeron. Chart).

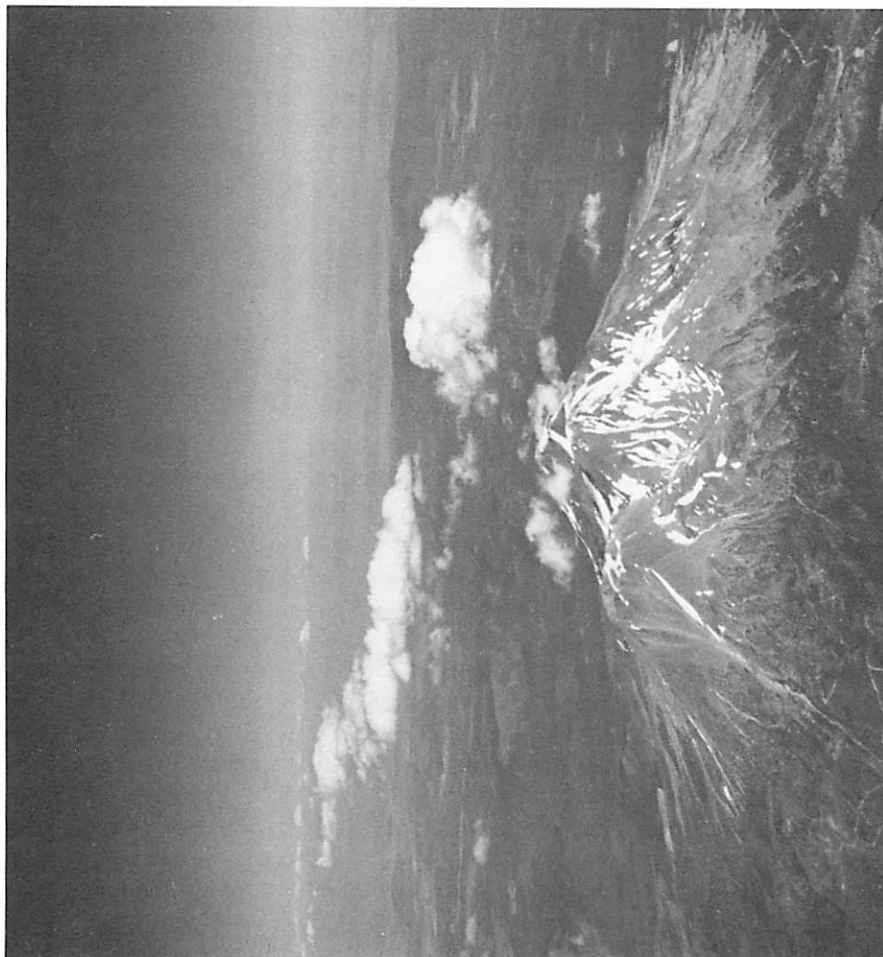


Fig. 35 Cloud Street developed by Shasta (taken from NASA CV-990, returning from IR solar flight, July 19, 1968). Detailed coverage in Comm. No. 158.

ft, is 2½ hours from Lima by car, and already has rudimentary accommodation . . . The Cordillera Raura has distinct possibilities — and roads.

“ . . . The winters in Nepal are clear. The site of the Silver Hut (19,000 ft) on Ama Dablam near Everest, where a group of British physiologists spent 9 months, would be suitable but the logistics would be formidable . . . A helicopter could be arranged . . .

“ . . . My first choice would be Mt. Logan in the St. Elias range, Canadian Yukon. It has: (1) Height. The plateau where we have our facility is 17,600 ft high. The mountain is just under 20,000 ft, and a higher camp could be put up — at almost 19,000 ft. (2) Cold. (3) It is a going concern, with a base-camp laboratory on the Alaskan Highway. . . . Against it: it is, like McKinley, open for only one month a year (July) . . . Mt. McKinley in winter is definitely out.

“The facility at Logan is well run and well serviced. In particular, it has: (a) excellent rapid transport from base to mountain by Heliocourier plane; (b) plenty of physicians, physiologists and ancillary staff (climbers) . . . The staff will be able to supply very full meteorological data, all gleaned at the top of Logan over 3 years. At the moment, it is all on a rather small scale, and has been kept that way deliberately, to increase scientific efficiency . . .

“Finally, medical problems. If you acclimatise by going up in stages — no problem. We have all climbed above 20,000 ft, and as you know, several men *climbed* to 28,000 ft (in 1923) without added oxygen, on Everest. We have had some experience with the drug prophylaxis of acute mountain sickness, and would certainly be able to help there. Oxygen is supplied on Logan for those requiring it, as is power (propane generators) and heat. If much of your equipment is run by remote control, then you would need, perhaps, only one or two acclimatised people to run it. Perhaps the well-acclimatised climbers, who are all at college, or college graduates, could do this. They are in charge of all the meteorological work.

“More generally: the more slowly you ascend, the less the chances of developing acute mountain sickness, so that the ideal is to climb all the way, slowly. Practically speaking, few people are troubled by a sudden ascent to 10,000 ft, but thereafter problems tend to occur, the incidence being exceedingly variable.

“For many years, climbers have minimised their difficulties by climbing high, setting up a camp and then descending to the previous camp to sleep — ‘climbing high, sleeping low’ — but gradually moving up.

“There are now drugs available which are useful in speeding acclimatisation up, but it is very important to have a physician *experienced in the mountains*, and competent in physiology, around. *High altitude experience for the physician is essential* so that he does not panic and knows what to do.

“Your suggestion of mechanical transport to 8–10,000 ft, and spending a few days there before going higher is excellent; in my experience, *one* night at 10,000 ft has made it possible to work hard, and sleep well, at 14,500 ft, thereafter I myself have gone straight from sea level to 17,600 ft and have conducted 10 days of research before coming down, but this is not a good idea.

“ . . . With a competent physician, staged acclimatisation, efficient transport, drug prophylaxis, and available oxygen, there should be no danger.”

In view of Dr. Rennie’s most interesting comments we have added in Fig. 10 the “equivalent” water-vapor distribution computed for Mt. Logan at the accessible 500-mb level (about 5580 m or 18,300 ft), using the 500-mb graphs in the Gringorten *Atlas* for July (when Mt. Logan is accessible) and January (so far not considered accessible). It is seen that the July conditions on Mt. Logan are not appreciably drier than Mt. Shasta would be for the nine *non*-summer months. Nevertheless, the possibility of IR astronomical observations from Mt. Logan appear a challenge, certainly as long as Mt. Shasta is not accessible in winter. Professor Charles S. Houston, Chairman of the Department of Community Medicine, University of Vermont, in charge of the physiological program at the Mt. Logan facility, adds the following pertinent information regarding it (letter May 18, 1970): “The Mt. Logan Laboratory at 17,500 ft has been occupied for two months each summer since 1967. It consists of a wooden shelter, now about 20 ft beneath the surface of the snow, which is used as a store room and housing for the generator. In addition, several temporary buildings are erected each year on top of the snow. These are dome-shaped, double-wall nylon shelters with plywood floors, and, with space heaters and electricity, provide comfortable living and working quarters.

“The Laboratory is supplied by a small aircraft

which lands on the snow with skis, and is based 90 miles away at 2,000 ft, where it lands on a gravel strip with wheels. Helicopter backup has been demonstrated to be feasible, and is available. The payload for each type of aircraft is around 500 pounds. We have successfully completed several air drops from much larger aircraft.

"The facility is located on a permanent snow field, which seldom melts. Summer temperatures range from -10 to $+15^{\circ}$ F. Snow and white-out occur about 25% of the time or less. Good weather is impressively clear though I do not have the weather records with me, which are kept every four hours, day and night, all summer; my recollection is that the relative humidity is extremely low.

"The facility is occupied during the two months by eight climbers who provide a support party for the five scientists and ten experimental subjects who come up in shifts from the base camp for acute studies. The acclimatized individuals have little difficulty; those exposed acutely experience various degrees of mountain sickness the first few days."

The entire program is under the auspices of the Arctic Institute, a combined Canadian-U.S. operation. The U.S. address is 1619 New Hampshire Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C., 20009; the Canadian address: 3458 Red Path Street, Montreal 109, P.Q.

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