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EARTH STRAIN MEASUREMENTS;
AMCHITKA AND ADAK ISLANDS,
ALASKA

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A Thesis submitted to the Faculty and the Board of Trustees of the Colorado School of Mines in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Geophysics).

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ABSTRACT

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Improved strainmeter instrumentation has allowed the recording of nearly continuous earth strain measurements in the Westcentral Aleutian Islands. The addition of an Automatic-Recentering Device to the transducers of the instruments has provided the improvement required so that strains of the order of 10^{-8} may be measured in an environment where strains as large as 10^{-6} may occur.

Strainmeter data for four sites are shown and discussed. The sites are on Amchitka and Adak Islands, and at each site at least 3 components of strain were measured. Weather data pertaining to the islands is also shown.

A correlation between instrumental thermal response and annual cycle of apparent strain exists. The mechanical alinement of the transducer or its placement relative to the standard of length of the strainmeter are believed to be the controlling factors in the thermal response of the instrument.

Quasi-static strain steps associated with earthquakes are detected. Post earthquake creep is offered as an explanation for the mechanism causing the quasi-static steps.

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Strain episodes are shown to have durations from a few hours to several days. The beginning of a strain episode may be from 5 to 20 days prior to the more easily recognizable phases of very rapid compression followed by rapid extension. These episodes are associated with rain, most are not tectonic.

Secular strains at each strainmeter site are shown to be non-monotonic functions of time. The explanation of complex secular strains may be the existence of a time varying dislocation surface. No changes in the secular strains are found at the time of the Cannikin nuclear experiment.

Strains of the order of 10^{-8} are detected and associated with post earthquake creep. The magnitudes of strain episodes vary from a few parts in 10^8 to a few parts in 10^6 . Annual and secular strains vary from a few parts to several parts in 10^6 . The time durations for these types of strains are from a few hours for the creep events to a few years for the secular strains. Therefore, both the amplitude and time recording are required to range over at least two orders of magnitude to obtain the data for this paper.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Introduction -----	1
Purpose -----	2
Site selection -----	3
Site description -----	7
Instrumentation -----	9
Instruments -----	9
Records -----	10
Calibration -----	10
Installations -----	16
Recording centers -----	16
Data -----	19
Creep after earthquakes -----	19
Episodic noise -----	28
Seasonal cycles -----	37
Secular variations -----	70
Conclusions -----	76
References Cited -----	79

ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure Number	Page
1: The Aleutian Arc -----	4
2: Strainmeter Transducer -----	12
3: Analog Strain Record and Calibration Steps -----	14
4: ADK Strain Records of the May 2, 1971 E.Q. -----	21
5: ADK Strain Records of the Feb. 7, 1971 E.Q. -----	22
6: Composite strain field map -----	23
7: Episodic strain at the ADK site -----	29
8: Episodic strain and rainfall -----	31
9: Signature of a strain episode -----	33
10: ASE 045 strain component -----	38
11: ASE 090 strain component -----	39
12: ASE 135 strain component -----	40
13: GPT 045 strain component -----	42
14: GPT 090 strain component -----	43
15: ANW 045 strain component -----	45
16: ANW 090 strain component -----	46
17: ANW 135 strain component -----	47
18: ADK 000 strain component -----	48
19: ADK 045 strain component -----	49
20: ADK 090 strain component -----	50
21: Amchitka Temperature 1970 and 1971 -----	52
22: Adak Temperature 1970 and 1971 -----	53
23: Barometric Pressure 1970 and 1971 -----	54
24: Amchitka Rain-Day 1970 and 1971 -----	55
25: Adak Rain-Day 1970 and 1971 -----	56
26: Example of a Rain-Day Plot -----	59
27: Dislocation map and non-monotonic strain record --	74

TABLES

	Page
Table 1. Aleutian strainmeter sites and locations -----	17
2. Earthquake series near Adak Island -----	20
3. Abrupt and quasi-static strainsteps after earthquakes -----	26
4. Transducer alinement and seasonal strains-----	66
5. Summary of secular strains -----	73

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The original material for this dissertation includes a significant number of oversized pages. The full text can be viewed by accessing the supplement file.

