

acl 28189

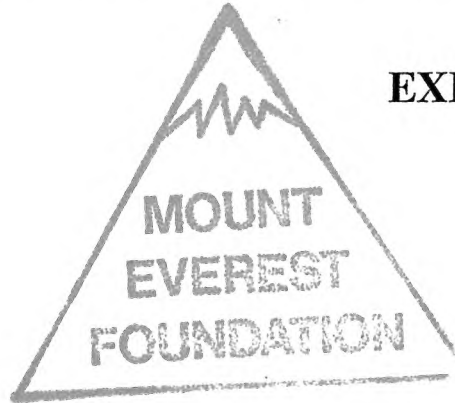
02/12

NORTH WALES ALASKA EXPEDITION 2002

Stuart McAleese
Mike 'Twid' Turner

EXPEDITION REPORT

Kichatna Spires



+443

CONTENTS

Expedition objective
Team members
Sponsors
The route
Transport UK to Kichatna Spires base camp
Accommodation
Food and equipment
Insurance
Agent
Environmental
Medical
Expenses
Maps and diagrams
List of ascents in the Kichatna Spires.

Expedition objective

The aim of the expedition was to attempt a new line on the massive East face of Middle Triple Peak in the Kichatna Spires. Due to unseasonal temperatures, access to this route was constantly threatened by avalanche and it was decided to climb a line on a spire called the Citadel. Nine days were spent between fixing ropes and living on the wall, with a further two week wait on the glacier for our pick up. Subsequently our line got nicknamed 'Off the wall madness'.

Permission to reproduce this document is given in total. Anybody can copy and use as they wish.

Team Members

Stuart McAleese 27 Mountain Instructor. Currently living in Nant Peris and working at Plas y Brenin. Climbs E6 and VII 7. Alps summer and winter with routes such as Beyond good and evil, 1938 Eiger in winter.

Mike 'Twid' Turner 35 BMG Guide. Has climbed E8, 19 Alpine seasons Expeditions; Patagonia 1992,94,2000, Greenland 96, Mali 96, Baffin 98, Borneo 99, Pakistan 98, 99, 2001. Twid has lots of big wall experience with extensive time on big faces.

Sponsors

The Mount Everest Foundation

Special thanks to the MEF, Bill Ruthven for making this expedition possible.

The British Mountaineering Council for their grant.

Sports Council for Wales

Terra Nova for their kind loan of the tent

DMM

Jagged Globe for their support with satellite communication.

Plas y Brenin for kindly allowing time off work for Twid and myself.

THE Cathedral spires have always held a mythical air about them for me. A range frequented rarely, stories of the worst weather in Alaska, some of the best Alpine climbing in the states with some of the most impressive rock formations conjured up a magical Disneyland for the Big Wall Climber. We had to go, so said every other person who we spoke to who had travelled to this area!

The Cathedral Spires punctures the horizon around the Kichatna Mountains as Cerro Torre and The Central Tower of Paine does in Patagonia. Steep granite faces and ridges nestle amongst the tightly knitted glaciers, the whole area only stretches through 20 square miles. Although less than 9000 feet the mountains have a reputation far beyond their size. 90 miles from Talkeetna, it was one of the latest ranges to be explored by American climbers, in Alaska. The 'Reisentein Hoax' opened up the potential of the area. Aerial shots, taken by a pilot Austin Post, tempted the American climbers in the press, but its whereabouts were not revealed for years later. New York climbers Al DeMaria and Brownwell Bergen finally discovered this enigma in 1965. They found an intimidating area of huge granite walls and steep gullies often engulfed in some of the worst weather they had know. What worse than Scotland in winter we thought, possibly not!

Clumping into the local café, in down town Talkeetna, we made for the bar. Four and a half weeks without alcohol can focus persons need to kill a few brain cells. We sat down next to two climbers who had obviously just arrived back from the hill. Hello! Came a strong French accent, They're the tallest greeted us. Putting his hands on the table we gorged at his bandaged hands. Both hands bandaged like gloves most of his fingers frost bitten, Alaskan climbing had obviously some potential of unpleasantness! We joked with them about Theiry's unfortunate experience, but kept our hands below the table. We ordered beer and burgers with chips, the French wine, burgers with fries. We drank and eat our crisps and chips!

'Take as much as you want, weight is no problem', was the advice we had been given. Arriving on the tarmac of Talkeetna airport, we soon realised our inexperienced goof. The supercharged Cessna planes resembled little more than a flying kite. Weight was a premium to cope with flying at altitude and to land on the glaciers. Our eight big boxes of food, our bucket and frying pan, our four 50kg Haulbag, our 3 rucksacks, our newly acquired getto blasta, our 3 camera bags, our extra large family tray of Darreto's, our cool box fully of meat and cheese all did look a little over the top. 125lb was the personal allowance, we had over 1000lb! We asked if they had a bigger plan, maybe a herc! Casually we drifted off repacked our bags and eat and drank as much as possible. Everybody stranded at the airstrip soon consumed our extra large jar of pickled gurkins. We stoked up the barbee and through an unannounced party, which lasted well into the endless evening.

Paul Roderick from Talkeetna Air Taxis pulled back on his controls as we hurtled down the runway. Paul an accomplished climber himself seemed as keen as us to fly into the Kichatna Mountains. It was a change from the flight into Denali. The supercharged engine pulled us up above the endless sea of Pine Trees. As we levelled off the full vista of the Denali Range could be taken in. The weather was perfect, you could say Alaska was suffering from a heat wave. Forrest fires raged all over the state. We had crystal clear views as we travelled west parallel to the main Range. The Cathedral Spire at first only blended into the horizon as we buzzed our way across the 90 miles of frozen swamp.

Walking out was not a possibility. If we didn't drown crossing the Salmon rivers then the Bears and mosquitoes would have certainly eaten us alive! As you fly west the full scale of the place hits you; snow topped mountain after more mountain fantastic mountains. Most climbed but only occasionally plenty of scope for new routes. We were the only folk climbing west of the main range.

The Spire grew closer and the granite started to peak out of the snow. Paul cranked down the skids to land on, all done by hand. The dashboard of the plane was covered in knobs and dials; I asked which one was the cappuccino machine Paul just smiled. All of a sudden I couldn't get all the peaks in the viewfinder of my camera. We had arrived, everything went into overdrive! We hooted and pointed at all the famous peaks we had seen in books, the view was spectacular. Everywhere we looked amazing pillar walls and gullies appeared. Paul through the plane over hard and we could almost touch the famous East Pillar of Triple Middle Peak. Probably one of the best lines in the world first climbed alpine style by Embic and crew. The plane kicked over hard and it was hard for both Stu and I to focus on where we were. The rollercoaster levelled out and we swept through the Col between Gurney and Kichatna Spire. The biggest face in the range of Kichatna Spire showed its full glory. Over 1000m of pink granite covered in corners and cracks. The long slender, flat Shadows glacier, which was to be our home for the next four and a half weeks, opened out in front of us. Paul took a tight spin to check out the landing, we both suddenly got serious gut wrench and for once stopped howling. The flying kite lined up on the glacier and Paul skilfully dropped us onto the snow. The smoothest landing both of us had ever known, it was only when Paul shouted to us that we realised that we had really put down. The final spin faced the plane back down the glacier after which Paul cut the engine. All of us fell out of the cramped plane onto the snow, even Paul seemed quite impressed with the place. Quickly the kit was dropped onto the snow a quick farewell and Paul was off. It was only when the plane did its final glory roll out of sight the true remoteness of the place hit us both. Just the two of us for four and a half weeks in the whole of the Kichatna Range with no form of communication. There was nothing left to do but put on the Getto blasta full blast, nobody was going to tell us to turn it down!

Quickly our base took shape. Tent was pitched, snow valences covered and snow walls built. The situation was incredible to the climber. Every where you looked you were inspired. Once Stu had unpacked his vast wardrobe we put on our snowshoes and set off for a recy. Our initial plan was to scale the col between the Shadows glacier and the sunshine glacier and attempt objectives on the various peaks. Lots of snow and unseasonably warm conditions had made the col a risk game. We reckoned that we needed to cross the col at least 8 times. 8 times in to the Lions jaws. 3 separate seracs threatened the approach and a steep final snow slope sported huge crown walls where avalanches had peeled off. Avalanches for most of the day and more importantly during the night regularly came down. In the land of midnight sun any slope in sun at any time was a serious problem. To add to the danger the snow at our low altitude didn't want to freeze at any time. In such a remote place it was daft to take such risks. On Denali nobody was moving unless it was at night. It had to be rock climbs any gully was certain suicide and snow was like wading in porridge. We decided to attempt a new line on either the Eat face of Kichatna or on the East face of the Citadel. Initial we plumbed for a new route on the East Face of the Kichatna Spire and dragged up our equipment to the base.

After a foray onto the face a band of very loose rock repelled us. For somebody used to loose Llyn Peninsular rock this was on a par with the worst on offer. We returned to steak and chips at the Hotel Shadows and dug out the binos. The most impressive chunk of rock in the valley lay only opposite our base camp. The East buttress of the Citadel had been climbed in 1976 but sported many fantastic looking lines. An obvious direct was asking to be climbed.

Early next morning we finished off the Danish pastries and loaded up the haul bags. Off we plodded post holing our way up the steep snow to the base of the wall. After a couple of hours we came to the steepest slope just as the early morning sun hit it (4am). After a brief chat we decided to bale down and try later once things had cooled off. It was too chancy to risk getting avalanched, 4 weeks with a broken leg was not going to be fun. We left our huge loads and slid down the slope. The final section we sledged down on our borrowed toys. Sledging was way scarier than the climbing; the result of a roll at warp speed would certainly result in a serious injury and loss of face! Once at the bottom of the slope we turned to admire our tracks, only to see an avalanche sweep down the slope behind us covering our tracks and catapulting one of our haul bags to the bottom of the slope we had just spent two hours walking up!

Next day we were back and earlier the snow was harder and we made the traverse at the base of the wall in good time. The traverse proved difficult with bottomless old snow, which often gave way. After some faffing around as usual, we got to grips with a new line. The rock was clean granite with the occasional loose block in the way. Getting around loose blocks was pretty terrifying for both leader and belayer. The weather was perfect and very hot in the sun, once the shade came around it was instantly a fridge. At the end of our first day we had climbed 100m up the wall. The whole time was slightly overhanging, as was most of the wall. Climbing was mostly aid with occasional free climbing through in for measure. The granite consisted of very coarse grain crystals, which tore at the skin and shredded the ropes. On our first day our only lead line was cut through to the core in 3 places. The rope was soon to have more duck tape as a sheath than nylon. We just got used to this; the rope changed from blue to grey.

For a further 2 days we climbed and fixed all our 250m of rope and slid back to the base. Each evening we waited till our approach gully had gone into the shade and the snow started to firm up before we dived with descending it. As each day went on and the temperatures increased so did the number of avalanches. It was definitely very stressful making the journey each day. Once back at base we enjoyed fantastic culinary delights such as Steak and chips and trifle. It was very hard trying to get to sleep due to the endless daylight. Masks over our eyes did help darkens things a wee bit but still our body clocks were all haywire. I got to sleep at 3am Stu at 11pm. We felt permanently jetlagged from the lack of sleep.

We finally moved all our kit up to our camp on the wall 160m up the wall. From our ledge it was a free abseil all the way back down to the traverse. Our camp on the wall was based on a perfect 6foot square ledge that was perfectly flat. From one wall we hung the ledge, from the other hung a 20-foot high flake. We could not see or work out how this shield of granite was hanging in. you touched it would wobble on its end. We contemplated anchoring it back to the wall; instead we just ignored it. It was more than once that one of us woke up with nightmares worrying about being squashed by the flake. As big wall bivies go it was not bad and we enjoyed hanging out and listening to our only

entertainment a small wave radio. Reception was poor on the glacier but up in the air the sound came through crystal clear. Our favourite channel was Retro Anchorage, which constantly played music from the 80's. Name that in one was a popular game, being slightly older I seemed to win a bit more often.

The climbing was still steep but now bands of loose rock would have to be negotiated. Some days we climbed only 50m due to the difficulty and the terrifying rock. The leader would climb on an 11mm and trail a zip line. The second would jumar behind and collect any equipment. Still the weather was perfect but we could see in the distance that things were changing. The forecasts we got on the radio never seemed to fit with what we got. We fixed all our rope and decided to go for the top the next day, climbing as fast and as long as it would take. The morning we woke early to discover that the weather had changed and it started to snow lightly. The weather was obviously going to get a whole lot worse before it was going to improve. After waiting a while we thought to go for it. Jumaring back up the ropes was a terrifying experience. All the rope had serious cuts now covered with duck tape. It was always a relief to make the next belay. At the top of our ropes the climbing angle had started to ease and we climbed quickly for a number of pitches. The snow was now falling thick and fast, visibility was very poor. Finally we squeezed through a tight chimney to stand on top of a very precarious pinnacle. The ground dropped all around us, we had reached the top of the wall. The ridge dropped sharply beyond and then wandered up to the summit. It was clear that things were going to crap out big time so we decided to call it a day on top of the wall. Pleased to make this summit we took the compulsory shots and fled down our climb. The weather worsened and turned to pouring rain. We collected our equipment and abseiled down to the glacier. Dragging our haul bags and ourselves back to the camp was a major effort. We both then slept for many hours. In the morning it was still snowing. It snowed for a further 14 days. Paul flew over the tent, both of us had again given up hope of getting out that day. We had been waiting for 15 days to get out. It was 10 in the evening; I was reading my book for the third time! In a matter of seconds the plane had landed and we were throwing kit into bags. It was great to see another person it had been 4 and a half weeks on our own. In no time we were packed and flying out the whole thing just seemed a blur. The flight out was a completely different view. All the snow over the 90-mile approach had melted, rivers replaced ice. At 11.45 we touched down on the tarmac strip of Talkeetna International, not another soul was in sight. By midnight we made the bar, the England match had just started and the party had just begun!

TRANSPORT UK- ALASKA

A taxi from Nant Peris took me to Manchester Airport on early Saturday morning. Amount of kit we had was 50L rucksack each and four haul bags. A satellite 'phone was taken and attracted much attention at customs. Because the airports especially at States have cranked up scanning machines, so much so it will destroy camera film. Note have it handy don't bury it from UK.

Confusion at Washington led to two of our haul bags being left there, lost later to find their way to Talkeetna 2 days later. Passing through the time zones we swiftly arrived in Anchorage late Sunday night. We were advised by TAT on a few places to stay one was the Microtel. Close to the airport and for shopping the next day. A taxi from the airport took us there for \$7 and to our surprise it was dark. Did you pack the head-torches??

Early Sunday we went shopping again advised from TAT that we went to **Carrs** Supermarket in Anchorage. Taxi again of \$14 return to Microtel. Shopping for a light 30 days took some time and saw us in **Carrs** until midday. Packing the food into boxes rather than barrels (easier to pack on plane) back at Microtel, took us until close to 4pm when Tom from Talkeetna Overland came to pick us up. Picking up a few other people on the way we arrived at Talkeetna at 8.30pm. Just in time for some good grub at one of the few eating-houses. Accommodation in Talkeetna was a simple bunkhouse at TAT on the runway. TAT was booked over the Internet. Gas had to be bought in Anchorage at a big outdoor chain called **REI** (MSR Butane/Propane). Monday was spent repacking after our shock allowance of only 400lbs we had over 600lbs

Seems to be that Paul charges by the hour on flights to places such as the Kitchatna and the Hayes.

We flew out on early Tuesday morning arriving on the glacier around midday, 3 days from leaving Nant Peris.

Summary:

Taxi A to B, alternative one way hire? £50 Trail Finders to agent international flights
Accommodation Anchorage: Microtel other options B&B or Hostel. Earth Towns
B&B Anchorage \$35 + 5% TAX – includes breakfast. Taxi to and from Anchorage
Blue Cabs Taxi to Talkeetna: Talkeetna Overland (Tom).

Accommodation in Talkeetna. Booked as part of flight included bunkhouse
accom/maps/return flight.

Shopping and Eating:

Anchorage Carrs, REI for gas

Roadhouse for breakfast in Talkeetna

TAT has a Barbeque that you can fire up at any time. Stock up on some meat before the flight.

Talkeetna Air Taxi

Talkeetna seems to revolve round one airstrip with all the usual faces we see in the magazines K2, Hudson, Doug Geeting and TAT. All have hangers but with Denali Trips now in 'revolving door status' all the planes stack the sides of the runway. The planes range in all shapes and sizes. Little sporty (Cesnas) to the big Beavers which can take 6 or 7 people. The orange of Hudson and red of K2 colours with most of the Paul's planes being blue and white.

As for TAT's control tower if any was a modern log cabin with a huge decking area over-looking the runway. This is the place usually where people sit and wait or return to first to tell their tales or phone their friends. Paul Rodrich the owner or the 'Boss of TAT' is a young confident guy. Paul has about 9 Pilots, a large set up. Most friends who had climbed in Alaska recommended him.

We watched in disbelief as Paul packed what seemed to be a ridiculously small plane, 'Sporty' as Paul put it. The plane had a little belly to it which could take a lot of kit such as ropes and food. For packing he preferred it loose rather than packed big, bags in preference to boxes and barrels.

Food and Equipment

Food is an important item in the Kichatnas especially after hearing of tales about waiting for weeks in bad weather or even teams walking out. The rangers and pilots advise you take a little extra to keep you going if the weather gets too bad to fly.

You can afford to go as fresh as possible - the only thing to remember is the weight limit and bulk. We took potatoes and some vegetables such as cabbage, carrots and peppers and they seemed to last very well. Keeping items cold was not a problem at night but during the day in the sun temperatures soared. We had a limited amount of meat and a lot of cheese, which we kept cool by storing in a polythene cool box we bought cheaply and covered it with snow. Another alternative we used was a bin bag dug into a deep hole, which seemed to work with the vegetables.

Teas, coffees and drink mix was bought and decanted into Tupperware tubes avoiding glass storage, which would have been very heavy.

When out of potatoes or for variety we would eat pasta, which handy tubes of Pesto and garlic paste complimented well.

One item we bought and found very useful was a large frying pan, something a little larger than your usual Trangia pans was very useful. Earlier in the day we had porridge, which came in a very good portion size bag, with lots of variety just add water. On the hill we would carry chewy bars and little chocolate (M&Ms or Twix) with main meals being noodles and boil in the bag tasty bite curry or pasta. We had some bag meals from the UK but worth noting as only chicken and vegetable meals were allowed into the USA - the rest we had confiscated by the Ministry of Agriculture. Storing the food was simple - a little in the tent and some in a spare haul

bag once ropes and equipment was out with the rest in a dug out space in the rear of the tent.

Water was the usual quest of boiling snow but due to Alaskan heat waves we had for 2 weeks, we found a bucket that we bought filled with snow in the morning created approximately 4 litres on a good day. Once down from climbing thus saving us a lot of fuel. On the equipment issue the snow volumes on our tent were essential however we did back then up by burying bin bags of snow to the guide lines which work very well – top tip! The bin bags were used for dry storage and obviously rubbish but toward the end of the trip were used to mark out a runway on the glacier.

We had the one shovel between us and we found a light-weight artovox sufficient. Using an MSR at Base Camp with Coleman fuel, though blackening the pans, was cheaper on fuel and worked well when it was cold. Worth noting, we took along a spare burning stove as well. On the hill we used a gas hanging stove on MSR gas acquired from REI Anchorage.

Base camp was a Hyperspace Tent by Terra Nova nicknamed ‘the Hotel’ and when away either bivvying or using the portaledge, great on the wall but also provided an ideal base beneath the wall at night.

Within BC we had designated areas a dug kitchen and lounge in front of the tent with a toilet in front of the tent with a toilet well away, with water snow and cleaning snow clearly marked to keep the area to a minimum impact. Having the base on snow all the time was difficult especially keeping warm and dry, a luxury but we had 2 pairs of boots. Plastics Scarpa Vegas and a pair of leather winter boots came in handy when either was damp or wet.

Insurance

Twid and myself took out the insurance that the foundry had to offer. This gave us cover for almost anything especially new peaks and routes. This cost a total of £150 per person. This was the best deal we could find.

Agent

Strictly speaking we didn't have nor need an agent. However we had a trusted contact, John Evans*; a friend of ours from Capel Curig who works as a ranger on Denali during the summer season. John's local knowledge was very helpful and knowing Denali like 'the back of his hand' was interesting for future jaunts.

* John Evans, Ranger base, Talkeetna.

Environmental

We were very conscious of leaving no trace of our presence in this remote area of Alaska. The range already so untouched, we limited our impact as much as possible. With a team of two this was made easier, and litter waste was kept to a minimum.

Controlling the amount of waste was easy, due to the limited amount of food we could carry on the plane. Our flight weight was limited to 450 lbs, this meant any unnecessary food packaging and glass was not taken into the mountains. Most food was packed in bin bags making it easier to pack in the plane than boxes. All litter was taken out on the plane and binned in Talkeetna.

Unlike Denali where human waste is a problem due to the hundreds of climbers; the Kichatna is not in the park and receives a lot less visitors. To date, we were the only team in the mountain range this year.

It was not feasible to carry out any human waste and our pilot recommended that we dig a pit well away from the tent at base camp. Due to the mini heat wave, a number of pits had to be dug about 200m away from the tent.

Potential in the area

The challenges that remain are diverse and difficult. The big prizes maybe a line on the unclimbed South face of Kichatna Spire and anywhere on Middle Triple Peak. Not to mention the fact that in 35 years only 6 routes have been climbed on the 1000m East face of Kichatna Spire with no repeats.

With your timing right and a little luck, access to the routes maybe easy, you may even uncover some amazing ice couloirs which ascend for ever. There is no doubt that they will be of a high standard and worth the time you put in.

Expenses

We changed all our cash at Manchester Airport for Dollars, and carried our cash cards which seemed to be accepted almost anywhere if we needed.

Flights	
Manchester to Anchorage	1300
Talkeekna Air Taxi	750
Talkeetna Overland Taxi	140
Food	675
Insurance	300
Equipment	1000
Accommodation	400

Total £4565

Due to the relative ease of access to and from the mountains (weather dependant) we found that little time was spent down town and waiting. We found the major expense of the trip to be the flights, but that was expected.

Medical

Fortunately we experienced no major health problems or injuries. With just the two of us we were committed to look after each other. We carried an expedition first aid book, which was useful during those tent bound storms. Along with us we had a lot of first aid for base camp and on the hill. We carried anti histamine for rashes and stings as well as anti bio tics for infections. A variety of pain killers were taken and lots of dressing to stop any bleeding.

Map of Cathedral Spires, Alaska

Citadel is the peak 8510, just North of Kichatna Spire. Our base camp was situated adjacent to this on the shadows glacier.

Photos from top to bottom

Photo page one

Traversing the exposed snow terrace beneath the face. The route follows the right side of the photo, up the series of corners high on wall.

Base Camp, Guerney peak in the background

Photo page two

Stu McAleese leading on pitch 2

Citadel. The line takes the clean leaning prow in the centre of the photo.

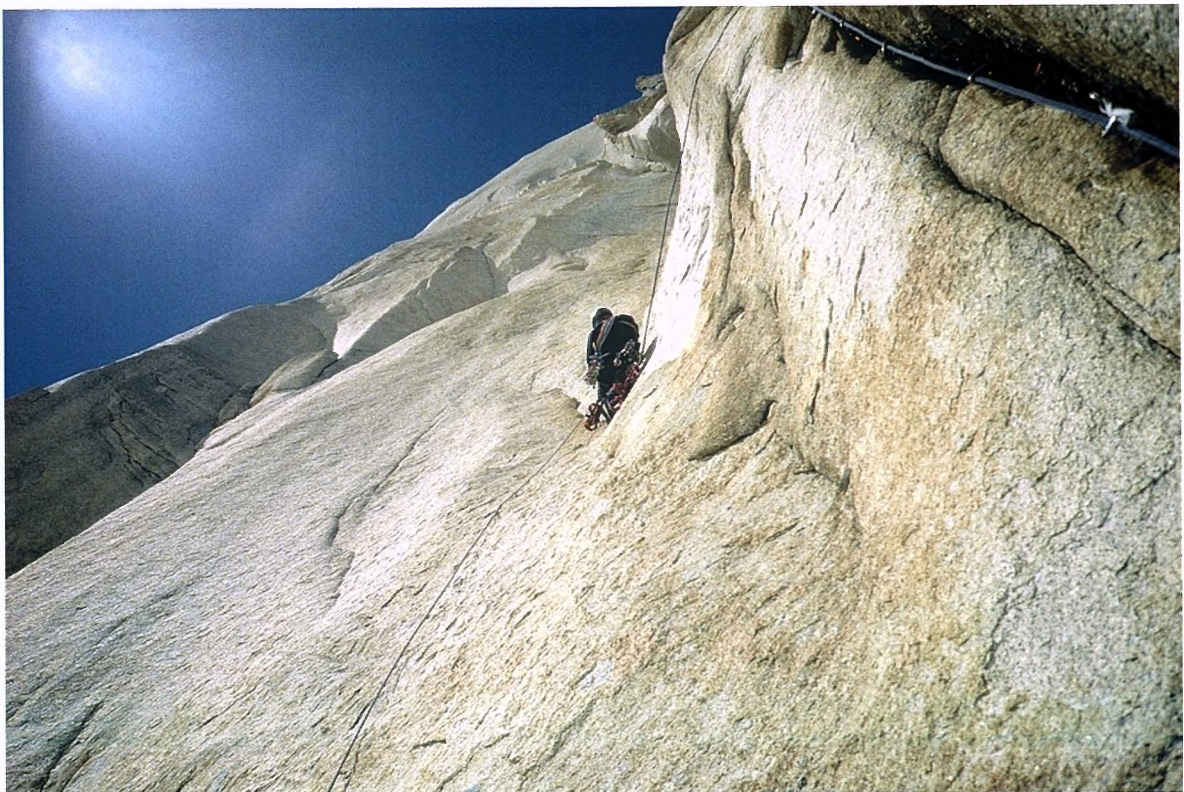
Photo page three

Mike 'Twid' Turner on the bivvy ledge.

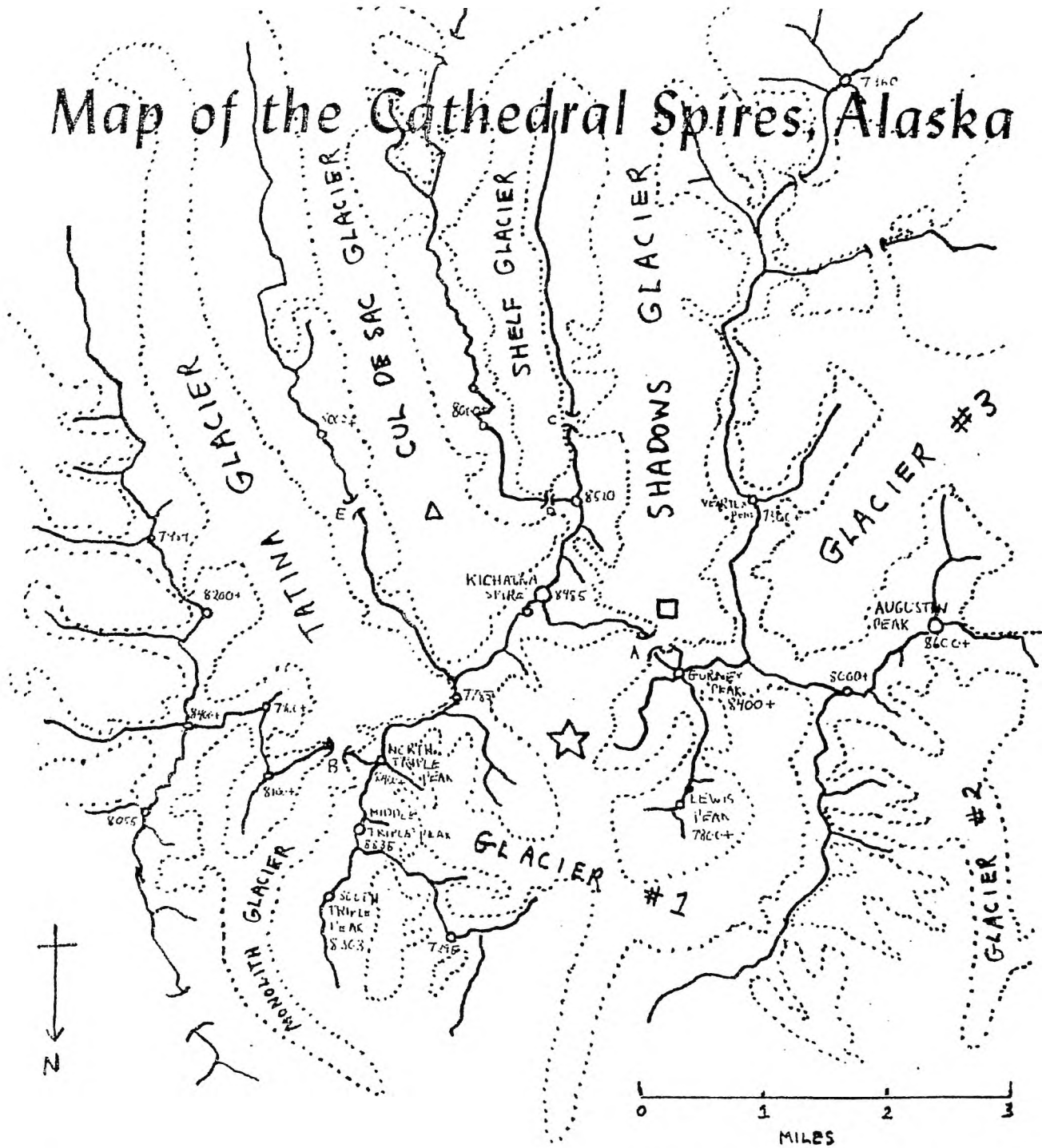
Pitch 4, bottom of the corners can be seen high above.







Map of the Cathedral Spires, Alaska



KEY:

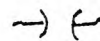
Main ridges

Major summits

Glaciers



Passes



1965 Base Camp



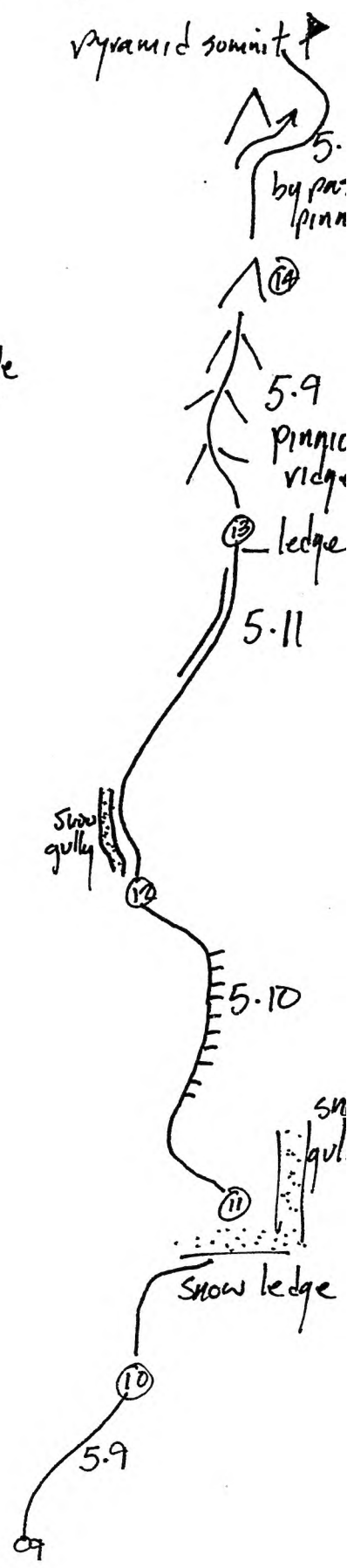
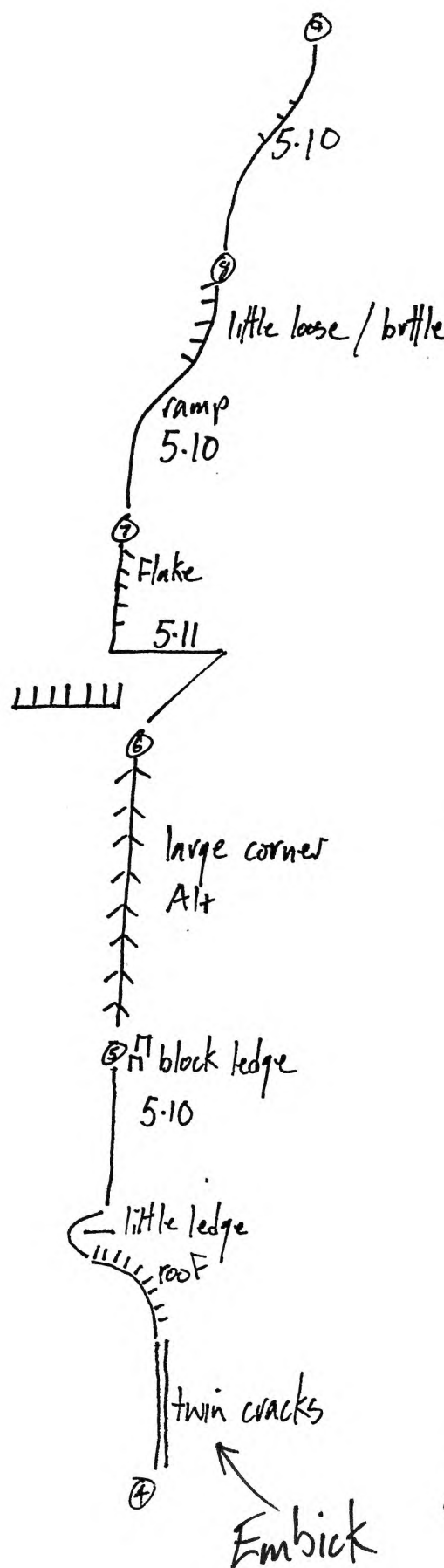
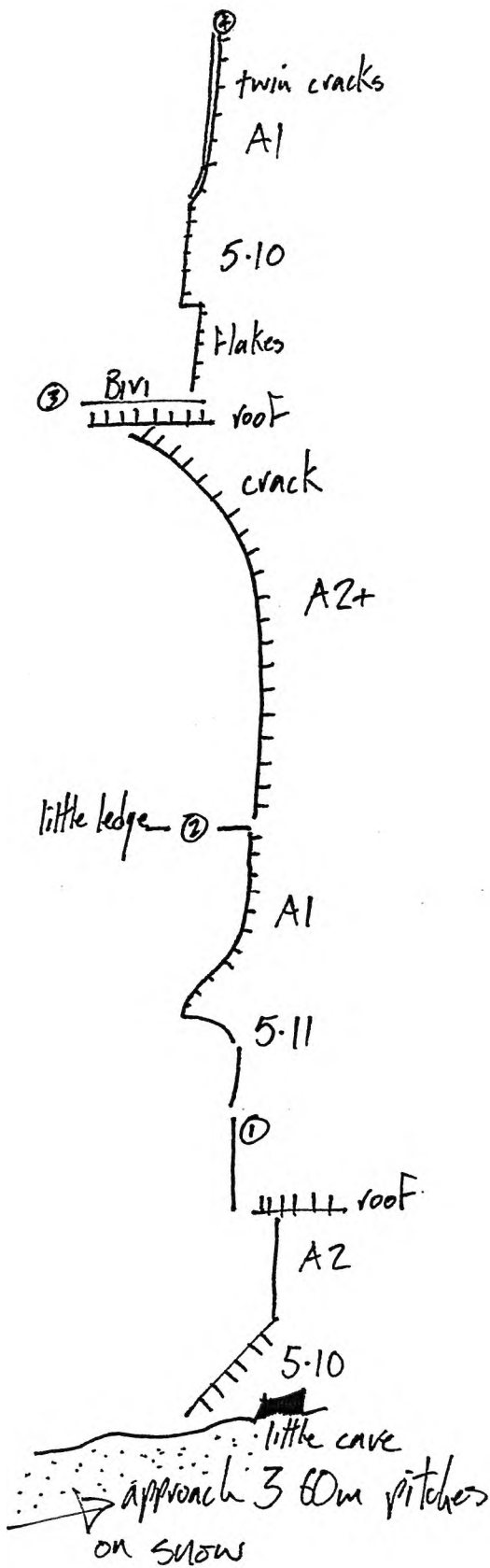
1966 Base Camp



Recommended Base Camp



Off the wall madness A2+ E3





SHADOWS

GLACIER

SHELF

GLACIER

GLACIER

CUL-DE-SAC

GLACIER

TATINA

CATHEDRAL

DEV

ANAPURNA

GLACIER

Fleischmann
Glacier

ASCENTS IN THE KICHATNAS

<i>Peak</i>	<i>Alt.</i>	<i>Approach</i>	<i>Glaciers</i>	<i>Route</i>	<i>Team</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Diff.</i>	<i>Refs.</i>
	7270	<i>Cool Sac</i>	Tatina	E face S ridge	DeMaria Geiser Hudson	1965	II	2
Sunrise Spire	C7900	<i>Cool Sac</i>	Shelf	SE Couloir ?	Bloom DeMaria Suhl	1965	II	2
Whiteout Spire	C7700	<i>Cool Sac</i>	Tatina Sunshine	NW ridge from N	Geiser Hudson	1965	III	2
Vertex Peak	C7300	<i>Shadows</i>	Trident	W couloir S ridge	Millikan D. Roberts	1966	III	3
	C6500	<i>Shadows</i>	Trident	N ridge from W	Johnston Meisler	1966	II	3
Kichatna Spire	8985	<i>Shadows</i>	Cool Sac Sunshine	E couloir N ridge	Davidson Millikan	1966	V	3
Avalanche Prong	C6900	<i>Shelf</i>	<i>Shadows</i>	W face	Johnston D Roberts	1966	II	3
Rock Prong	C6500	<i>Shadows</i>		W face	Johnston Millikan D. Roberts	1966	I	3
Mt Nevermore	C8100	<i>Tatina</i>	Monolith	NE ridge	Fitschen Raymond Robbins	1969	III	5,6
Mt. Jeffers	C8000	<i>Tatina</i>	Cool Sac	S ridge from W	Fitschen Raymond Robbins	1969	IV	5,6
Sasquatch	8303	<i>Monolith</i>	Sunshine	S face from W	Fitschen Raymond Robbins	1969	IV	5,6
Gurney peak	C8400	<i>Shadows</i>	Trident Caldwell	N buttress	Ferche Fredrickson Katra	1972	IV	8
	8520	<i>Shadows</i>	shelf Cool Sac	N face N ridge	Ferche Fredrickson Katra	1972	IV	8
Peggy's Peak	7133	<i>Tatina</i>	Cool Sac	S ridge from W	Black Graber	1975	II	11
Tatina Spire	C8200	<i>Tatina</i>		SE face	Aprin Black Graber	1975	VI	11
Sasquatch	8303	<i>Monolith</i>	Sunshine	W face	Aprin Black Graber	1975	VI	11
Pollack Spire	C7500	<i>Tatina</i>		NW Couloir	Bocarde Denkewalter Sennhauser	1975	II	10,13
Three-o-Spire	6760	<i>Tatina</i>		E face	Crawford Hostetler	1975	II	10,13
Mt Neveragain	C7900	<i>Tatina</i>		SE Couloir	Bocarde Crawford Hostetler	1975	II	10,13
Whiteout Spire	C7700	<i>Tatina</i>	cool Sac Sunshine	NW ridge	Bocarde Denkewalter	1975	II	10,13
Middle Triple Peak	8835	<i>Monolith</i>	Sunshine	W face	Mclean Porter	1976	VI	14
Citadel	8520	<i>Sunshine</i>	Shelf Cool Sac	E buttress	Black Embick Graber Long	1976	VI	15,17
Middle Triple Peak	8835	<i>Sunshine</i>	Monolith	N ridge from E	Black Embick Graber Long	1976	V	9,15,17
Buff Spire	6885	<i>Sunshine</i>		S face	Black	1976	III	15, 17
Archdeacon Peak	C7300	<i>Shadows</i>	Trident	E face	Reider J Roberts	1976	V	
Lewis Peak	C7800	<i>Sunshine</i>	Caldwell	NW face	Reider J Roberts	1976	VI	12
Archdeacon Peak	C7300	<i>Trident</i>	Shadows	W face S face	Coated Robbins	1976	III	
Middle Triple Peak	8835	<i>Sunshine</i>	Monolith	E buttress	Embick Graber Long Schunk	1977	V	16, 19, 32
Flattop Peak	C8400	<i>Tatina</i>	Monolith	NE face N ridge	Graber Long Schunk	1977	II	16,19
Augustus Peak	C8600	<i>Gradient</i>	getaway	W face to N ridge	Graber Long Shank	1977	V	16,19
Miranda Peak		<i>Trident</i>	Scorpion	E ridge from S	Grabber Long Shank	1977	II	16,19
?		<i>Shadows</i>	Shelf	SE Couloir	Beauchamp Newren	1977	II	
?		<i>Shadows</i>	Trident	N ridge from W	Beauchamp Bridgers Roybal	1978	II	
Steeple Spire	C8600	<i>Shadows</i>	trident	NW ridge	Beauchamp Bridgers Roybal	1978	III	
North Triple Peak	C8400	<i>Tatina</i>	Sunshine Monolith	NW couloir	Ellesworth Sennhauser	1978	IV	27
Riesenstein	C800	<i>Cool Sac</i>	Shelf	W face	Kearney Newville Thomas	1978	VI	26,33
Citadel	8520	<i>Cool Sac</i>	Shelf Shadows	W ridge	Kearney Thomas	1978	IV	26,33
Steeple Spire	C6600	<i>Shadows</i>	Trident	NW ridge	Bartlett Black	1978	III	29
Mt Jeffers	C8000	<i>Cool Sac</i>	Tatina	E face	Becker Embick Milne Tuthill	1978	VI	20,23,25
Sunrise Spire	C7900	<i>Cool Sac</i>	Shelf	NW Couloir	Embick/Tuthill + Becker /Milne	1978	IV	20,23,25
Cemetery Spire	C7600	<i>Cool Sac</i>	Shelf	N ridge	Becker Embick Milne Tuthill	1978	IV	20,23,25
Bastion	7475	<i>Cool Sac</i>	Shelf	S ridge	Becker Tuthill	1978	III	20,23,25
Rook	C7400	<i>Cool Sac</i>	Shelf	N ridge	Becker Tuthill	1978	III	20,23,25
Transition Peak	6337	<i>Cool Sac</i>	Tatina	SE face	Milne	1978	II	20,23,25
Skuzerian Peak	C6700	<i>Cool Sac</i>	Shelf	W face S ridge	Becker	1978	II	20,23,25
Peggy's Peak	7133	<i>Cool Sac</i>	Tatina	E face	Becker Milne	1978	III	20,23,25
Grendal Spire	C8000	<i>Trident</i>	Caldwell Getaway	NW couloir N ridge	A. Mannix C. Mannix Newville	1978	V	28
Mr John Bryan	C6900	<i>Shadows</i>	Trident	SW ridge	Arts Flavelle Mitten	1978	V	24,30
Potlatch	C6600	<i>Shadows</i>	Trident	SW ridge	Arts Flavelle Mitten	1979	II	24,30
	C7200	<i>Shadows</i>	Cool Sac	E face	Flavelle Mitten	1979	I	24,30
	C7200	<i>Tatina</i>	Cool Sac	W buttress	McDougall Pollack	1979	IV	22,39
Yahito Peak	7295	<i>Shnshine</i>		N ridge from E	McDougall Pollack	1979	IV	22,39
Buff Spire	6895	<i>Sunshine</i>		SE ridge	McDougall Pollack	1979	IV	22,39
Pollack Spire	C7500	<i>Tatina</i>		E buttress	Hadra Oda	1979	IV	35,40
Kichatna Spire	8985	<i>Cool Sac</i>	Sunshine Shadows	NW face	Bridwell Embick	1980	VI	21,36,37,38
Ptarmigan Spire	C7700	<i>Cool Sac</i>	Shelf	S couloir E ridge	Bridwell Embick	1980	III	37
Serendipity Peak	C6800	<i>Tatina</i>	Cool Sac	NW couloir N ridge	Embick Long	1980	I	42,46
Vulgarian Peak	7785	<i>Tatian</i>	Sunshine	W face	Embick Long	1980	II	42,46

Mt Jeffers	C8000	Tatina Cool Sac	W face	Cerf Schunk	1980	VI	42,46
Serenilty Spire	C7500	Tatina	E face	Embick Long	1980	IV	42,46
Plum Spire	C7300	Tatina	E couloir	Cerf Long	1980	III	42,46
Gverny Peak		Sunshine	SE face	Anker + Friers	1987	?	?
Trinity Spire	C8300	Tatina	NW couloir	Embick Schunk	1980	IV	42,46
Nightwind Spire	C8300	Tatina Sunshine Monolith	NW couloir	Cerf Long	1980	V	43,45
Gnomon Spire	C8500	Cool Sac Sunshine	NW couloir	McDougal Swedin	1980	V	43,45
	7200	Trident	NE face	Beilstein Woolums	1981	IV	47
Mt John Bryan	C690	Trident Shadows	SE face	Beilstein Woolum	1981	IV	47
Black Rose Spire	P6000	Next to buff spire		Stock Chuts	1988		
Vug Tor			East Ridge	Stock Chuts	1988		
Guerney Peak		Sunshine		Anker Shaw	1987		
North Triple Peak				M. Penning	1993		
Trinity Spire							
Whiteout Spire							
Serenity Spire							
Plumb Spire							
Flattop Peak				M. Penning	1994		
Mt Jeffers				Hall Allen			
Mt. Nevermore				Hall Allen			
		Tatina	Alaskan Rose	Thaw and Calder	1996		
			Sea of Dreams	Thaw and Calder	1996		
Middle Triple Peak		Tatina	W Face	J Smith	1997		

REFERENCES

1. "Riesenstein" hoax, *Summit* June 1962
2. "Ascents in the Cathedral Spires, Alaska", A.DeMaria & P. Geiser. *AAJ* 1966, p 25-29
3. "Kichatna Spire", D Roberts & R Millikan, *AAJ* 1967, p 272-278
4. "Challenges in the Cathedral Spires", D Roberts, *Summit* June 1968, p 8-25
5. "Californians in Alaska", R Robbins *AAJ* 1970, p 58-62
6. "Up Against the Walls", J Fitschen, *Ascent* 1970, p 2-11
7. "Cathedral Spires", D Roberts, *AAJ* 1971, p 328-329
8. "Guerney Peak and P 8520, Kichatna Mountains", W Katra, *AAJ* 1973, p 408-409
9. Middle Triple Peak, Kichatna Mountains, Attempt", A DeMaria, *AAJ* 1973, p 409
10. "Cathedral Spires 1975", G. Bocarde, *Climbing* (34) Jan-Feb 1976, p 28-29
11. "Ascents in the Cathedral Spires", M Graber, *AAJ* 1976, p 304-307
12. "Fakin It", J Roberts, *Climbing* (39) Nv-Dec 1976, p 16-19
13. "Kichatna Spires", G. Bocarde, *AAJ* 1976, p 435
14. "Middle Triple Peak", R McLean, *AAJ* 1977, p 103-105
15. "A Trip to the Kichatnas" A. Long, *AAJ* 1977, p 106-113
16. note, *Climbing* (44) Sept-Oct 1977, p 4
17. "Fear and Trembling in the Kichatnas", A. Embick, *Climbing* (40), Jan-Feb 1977, p 6-14
18. note, *New Mexico Climber*, Fall 1977, p 2
19. "A Return to the Kichatnas", A.Embick & A. Long, *AAJ* 1978, p 370-380
20. note, *Climbing* (51), Nov-Dec 1978, p2-3
21. "Knife Edge In The Sky, Kichatna Spire's Northwest Face", A. Embick, *Climbing* (57), Nov-Dec 1979, p 10-15
22. note, *Climbing* (51), Nov-Dec 1979, p3
23. note, *Mountain* (66), Mar-Apr 1979, p 12
24. "The Kichatnas", Scott Flavelle, *CAJ* 1979, p110
25. "Cathedral Spires, Kichatna Mountains", A. Embick, *AAJ* 1979, p168-171
26. "Citadel W Face, Riesenstein W Face and Kichatna Spire Attempt", A. Kearney, *AAJ* 1979, p171
27. "North Triple Peak, Northwest Face, Kichatna Mountains", R, Ellsworth, *AAJ* 1979, p 167
28. "P 8000 (Grendel)", E. Newville, *AAJ* 1979, p171-173
29. "Steeple Spire", D. Black, *AAJ* 1979, p173-174
30. "Three First Acents", R. Mitten, *AAJ* 1979, p173-174
31. "A Slightly Slanted History of Climbing in The kichatnas", A. Long, *Harvard Mountaineering* 1979, p 9-20
32. "Middle Triple Peak East Buttress" in *Fifty Classic Climbs of North America*, ed. S. Roper & A. Steck, Sierra Club Books, 1979 p42-47
33. "Kichatna", A. Kearney, *Mountain* (69). Oct 1979, p24-29
34. "Cathedral Spires, Mountains to Marvel At", M. Wright, *Alaska Magazine*, Sept 1979, p50-53

35. "Kichatna Mountains", Hiroshi Oda, *The Iwa to Yuki* (73), April 1980, p90-95
36. note, *Mountain* (71), Jan-Feb 1980, p 16
37. "Northwest Face of Kichatna Spire", J. Bridwell & A. Embick, AAJ 1980, p473-480
38. "Kichatna Spire Nordwestwand", German translation of above article by E Hass, *Alpinismus* Sept 1980, p 53-57
39. "Cathedral Spires, Kichatna Mountains", S. Pollack, AAJ 1980, p 527-528
40. "Pollack Spire, Cathedral Spires, Kichatna Mountains", AAJ 1980, p 527- 528
41. "Eighteen Years After the Riesenstein Hoax, A History of the Cathedral Spires", M. Graber, *Ascent* 1980, p 27-56
42. note, *Climbing* (64), Jan-Feb 1981, p3-4
43. note, *Climbing* (68) Mar-Apr 1981, p3
44. "Bird Lives", interview of J. Bridwell by J. Long, *Mountain* (79), May-Jun 1981, p 22-25
45. "Gnomon Spire", R McDougall, AAJ 1981, p160-161
46. "Cathedral Spires", G. Schunk, AAJ 1981, p160-164
47. "Cathedral Spires2, Scott Woolims, AAJ, 1982.

South Ridge of Mt Hess

Rob Collister and John Cousins attempted the unclimbed South Ridge of Mt Hess in the Hayes range. The mountains were accessed by a one hour ski plane ride, travelling North from Talkeetna. Food shopping was all done in Anchorage and the total travelling time from home in UK to base camp was approximately 48 hours.

After a brief storm we travelled to the foot of the North Ridge of Mt Hess and deposited a food and fuel cache since our intention was to make a 'grand traverse' and descend this ridge. It had been climbed previously and looked feasible.

Two attempts were made on the South Ridge but in both instances very high temperatures meant that very poor snow was encountered and severe, continuous rock fall. Chest deep unstable snow made for extremely slow going but it was the rock fall that made us turn back.

We had both visited this area previously but had not explored the south side of Hess and Deborah. In continued high temperatures we completed a circuit of these mountains on skis over three days. Although we had no thermometer it was so unseasonal that skiing at night was the only option and even then we wore only a fleece!

Our exit from the mountains was delayed by mixed weather and we were forced to wait five days for our pick up. Talkeetna Air Taxis said they had made one abortive attempt to get us out on day four before their successful run on day five. They had re-arranged our international flights such that we left our base camp at 2.00 p.m. and by 10.00 p.m. we were flying back to the UK.

The ridge remains unclimbed. In good conditions it remains a worthy objective in this remote corner of Alaska.

Expenses

We changed sterling for dollars at the airports and carried credit cards, which were accepted almost everywhere.

International Flights (Manchester to Anchorage)	£2550
Alaskan Taxis (Anchorage-Talkeetna)	£280
Air Taxis (Talkeetna – Kichatna/Hayes)	£1750
Food and Provisions	£1050
Insurance	£500
Satellite Phone Rental	£200
Equipment and Film	£1400
Accommodation	£400
Expenditure Total	£8130

Income	
Mount Everest Foundation	£900
British Mountaineering Council	£1100
Sports Council for Wales	£1300
Individual Contributions (£1207.50 x 4)	£4830
Income Total	£8130

The flights were the major expense, but this did ensure that the maximum amount of time was spent in the mountains.

Medical

We experience no major health problems or injuries. We carried an expedition first aid kit and accompanying literature. The kits included antibiotics, pain killers, anti histamine etc.