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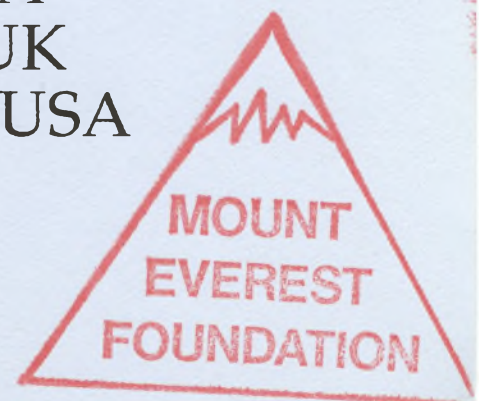
MONTE SARMIENTO 1995 TIERRA DEL FUEGO, CHILE

EXPEDITION REPORT



Tim Macartney-Snape - Australia
Charlie Porter - USA
John Roskelley - USA
Stephen Venables - UK
Jim Wickwire (leader) - USA

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MONTE SARMIENTO 1995

INTRODUCTION

Monte Sarmiento is one of the most prominent and beautiful peaks in Tierra del Fuego, rising from an isolated peninsula at the western end of the Cordillera Darwin. Despite intermittent attempts over the last century, each of the mountain's two summits had only been climbed once by 1995 - the East summit in 1956 and the West Summit in 1983. Jim Wickwire's Anglo-American-Australian team hoped to climb both summits in one short expedition. In the event, shortness of time, the usual problems with Patagonian weather and two accidents meant that just one day was finally available for the climb. It was a case of choosing the quickest, safest option, so the reduced team settled for the slightly lower West Summit, climbing a new route up the South-West Ridge and South Face.

The expedition is described later in an article from High magazine. A few additional comments here will clarify some details.

THE APPROACH

Our choice of approaching in a yacht from Puerto Williams was dictated by a desire to see the best of Tierra del Fuego's beautiful terrain with a local English-speaking expert, Charlie Porter. The quickest, cheapest approach is direct from Punta Arenas with a local fishing boat.

WEATHER

Tierra del Fuego is notorious for its wet, windy, overcast conditions and it lived up to its reputation. Porter reported that in some years April, the austral autumn, offers slightly more settled weather, but that was not the case in 1995.

EQUIPMENT

Anyone visiting this area should expect to get repeatedly wet. Rubberised waterproofs and wellington boots are the best gear for life on board and at base camp. Waterproof storage bags and tarpaulins are also extremely useful. Base camp food should be stored in fox-proof containers. Tents need to be the best mountain versions available, with plenty of guy lines and low profiles to cope with vicious gusting winds. Axes and machetes can be vital for cutting paths through the dense forest which guards most peaks in Tierra del Fuego. Snow stakes are extremely useful for climbing the typical Patagonian rime encrustations on the upper slopes of the mountain. Keep expensive Goretex or other breathable garments for use high on the mountain, where conditions should be freezing.

Cover picture: John Roskelley approaching the west summit of Monte Sarmiento, with the east summit behind him and the Cordillera Darwin in the background. Monte Buckland is on the far left horizon. © Stephen Venables



HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

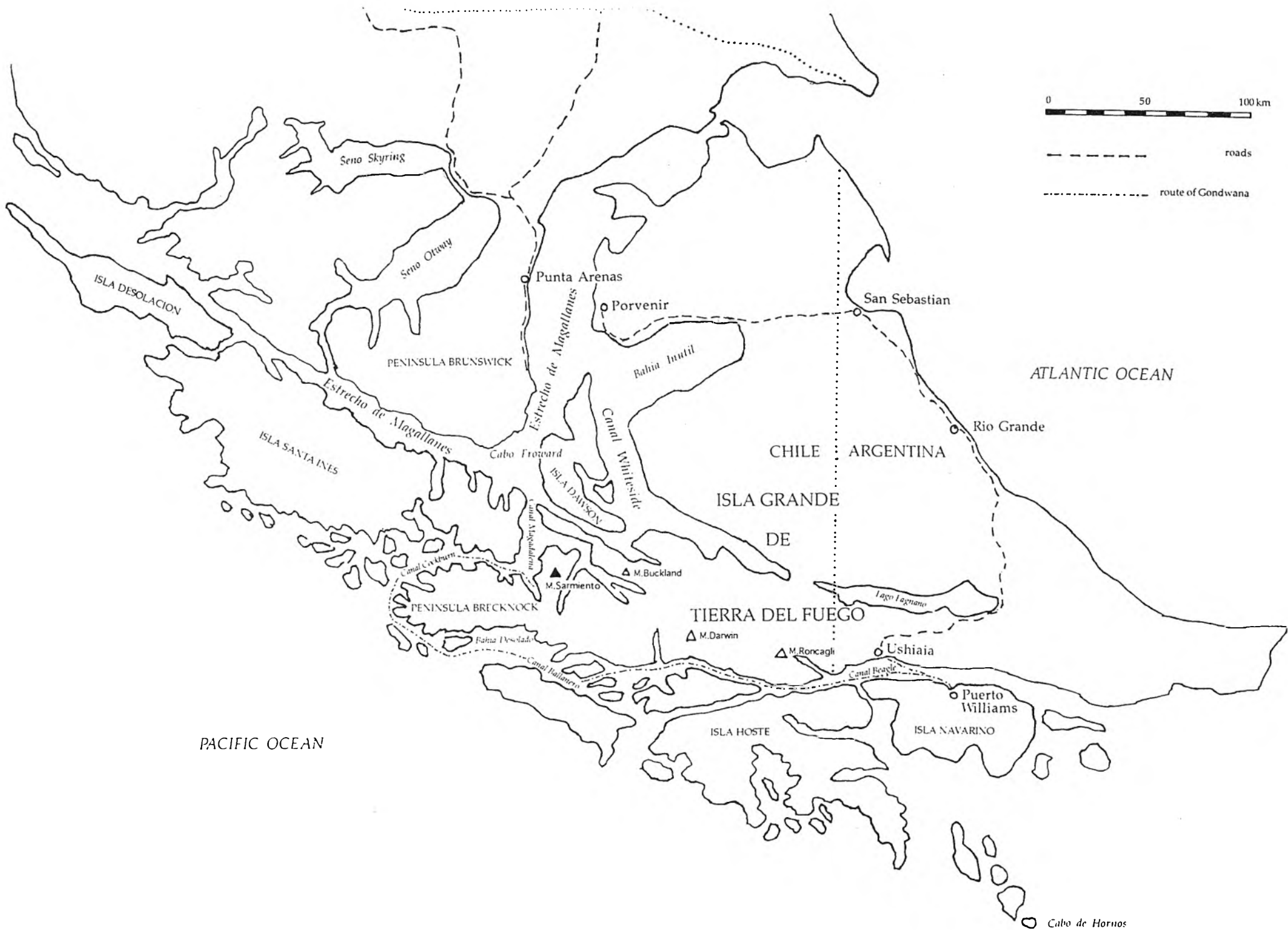
Monte Sarmiento was named after a Spanish sea captain who tried unsuccessfully to establish a settlement on the Straits of Magellan in the late sixteenth century. Charles Darwin saw and admired the mountain, as did John Ball, the first president of the Alpine Club. However, it was an Italian, Domenico Lovisato, who made the first recce, somewhere to the south of Monte Sarmiento, in 1881. The first serious mountaineering attempt was made in 1898 by Martin Conway and his Italian guide Maquignaz. They explored the western approach from tongue of the Schiaparelli Glacier. This was the same approach used in 1913 and 1915 by the Italian missionary and doyen of Patagonia explorers, Alberto de Agostini. In 1915 his team climbed Mount Conway and continued to the North-West Ridge of the West summit of Sarmiento, reaching a height of 1875m before being repulsed by dangerous conditions.

De Agostini returned in 1956, this time approaching the mountain from the Bahia Escandallo, to the east. A circuitous route, skirting dangerous ice cliffs, established his team in the upper basins of the Schiaparelli Glacier, right beneath a final steep snow wall - the North Face - leading to the col between the two summits. However, the wall was deemed too dangerous (a 1956 photo shows slab avalanches) and the team returned to base. Then Carlo Mauri and Clemente Maffei tried a completely different route, eventually reaching the South Ridge of the highest point - the East Peak. The upper section of their route gave some spectacularly steep ice climbing, weaving between elaborate rime formations. For Mauri, who led the whole successful climb to the summit, this must have been a valuable preparation for his attempt two years later, with Bonatti, on Cerro Torre.

The East Summit was climbed in 1956. It took another four expeditions, all Italian, before the West Summit was reached, via the North-West Ridge first attempted in 1915, in 1986.

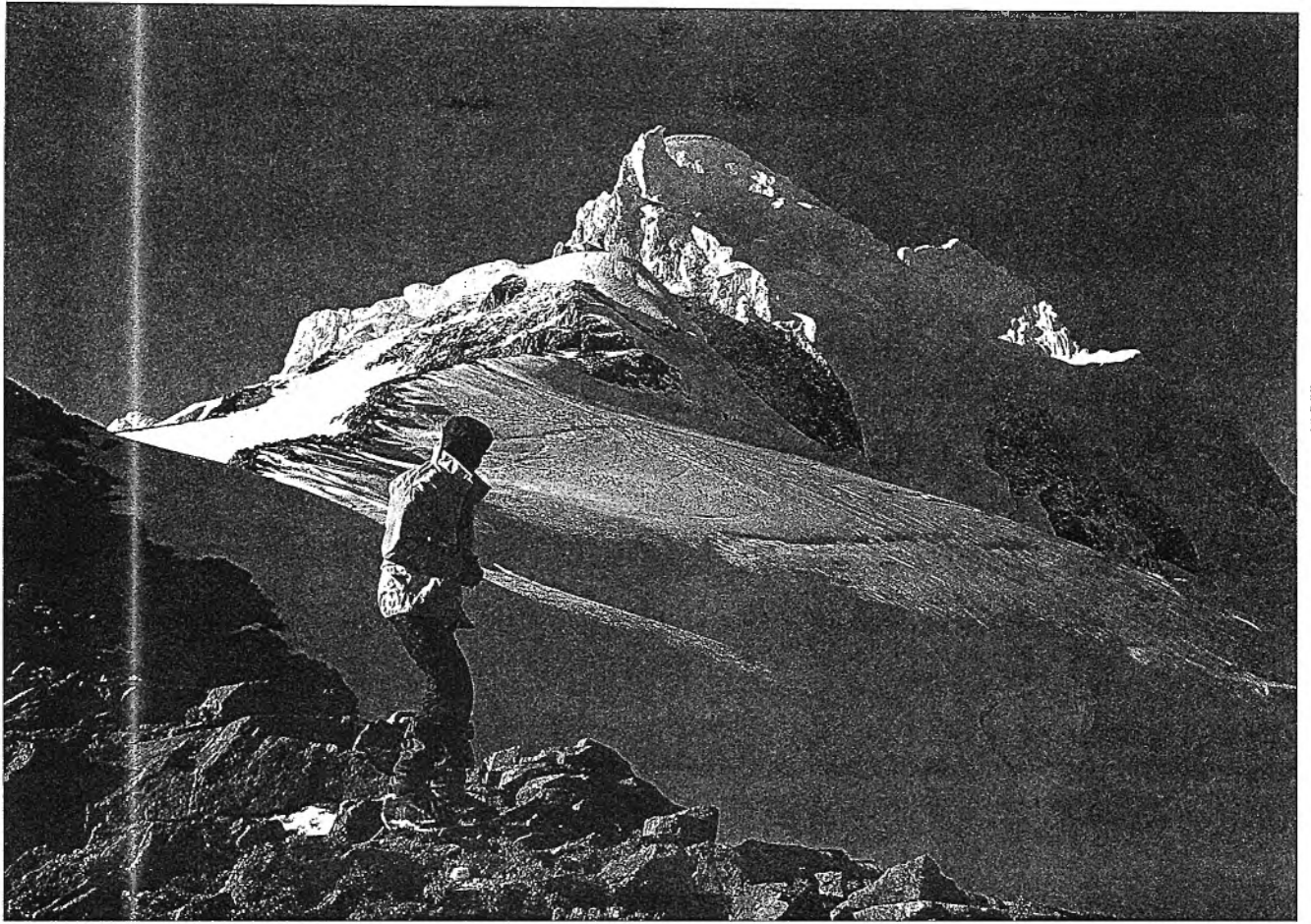
In 1993 Caradoc Jones' British team attempted a new route on the South-East Ridge but the 1956 approach from Bahia Escandallo had changed drastically due to glacial recession. It took Jones and his team 21 days to reach and establish a camp at the foot of the ridge, which they never really got to grips with. Bearing that in mind, we opted in 1995 for the shortest possible approach - from the Seno Negri, via the Lovisato valley, to the South-West Ridge. Some rusty tin cans near our Camp 1 indicated that people had been this way before, but as far as we know they never set foot on the upper slopes of the mountain.

Our anchorage was in a little cove on the east shore of Seno Negri, about one mile south of the Lovisato river outlet. From there we ferried equipment to base camp near the river. The approach from here, *was* almost certainly the shortest on the mountain - about four hours to Camp 1 at the foot of the South-West Ridge. From Camp 2 it would be possible to traverse across to the original Mauri/Maffei route on the East Peak. However, this would entail traversing beneath unstable seracs.



MONTE SARMIENTO APPROACHES





Above: Sarmiento from near Camp Two, the West Summit is on the left. Photo: Stephen Venables.

Sarmiento

Mountaineering in Tierra del Fuego, the southern tip of South America, with Stephen Venables

Tierra del Fuego, (Land of Fire) the name is wonderfully misleading, for this archipelago at the southern tip of Patagonia is wet — wet beyond belief, like an immense sponge, soaking up the rain, sleet and snow which blast relentlessly from the equally misnamed Pacific. Ferdinand Magellan came up with the nomenclature during his epic voyage of circumnavigation. In 1520 he discovered the improbable South West Passage near the tip of South America and while coaxing his reluctant sailors through he spotted fires rising from the land on the south side of the channel. 'Misty smoke' — or words to that effect — was the name he suggested, but the Spanish emperor, Charles V, decided on the more upbeat 'Land of Fire'.

The fires in question were the work of native Indians who for 6,000 years had lived as hunter gatherers in the southern archipelago, some based mainly in the flatter, eastern area where they hunted guanaco, others living

almost entirely in their wood and hide canoes, subsisting on fish, crab, mussels and the rich profusion of fungi and berries in the dripping forests that cloak the shoreline further west. Today there are no pure Indians left and most of Tierra del Fuego is completely deserted. It is wilderness on a grand scale, dominated by magnificent mountains. The highest, most glaciated peaks are concentrated in the south west part of the largest landmass, Isla Grande. The main group of peaks is named after the naturalist who came here in the Beagle, at the start of a voyage which would result eventually in a book challenging the whole basis of western civilisation. Just west of the Cordillera Darwin, isolated on its own little peninsula, rises another peak, Monte Sarmiento, which is perhaps the most spectacular in Tierra del Fuego. It is certainly the most prominent and was described in *The Voyage of the Beagle* as 'the most conspicuous and the most splendid object in these regions.'

Rising abruptly from the sea to a height of about 7,000ft it terminates in two sharp peaks, which seem absolutely in the sky, so lofty does the mountain appear when you are close to its base'.

The twin peaks of Sarmiento have eluded many expeditions over the last 126 years, since Domingo Lovisato first explored the south west approaches in 1869. The first proper attempt was led by Martin Conway in 1898 and it was whilst anchoring just west of the mountain that he had his dismissive encounter with the Indians in their canoc. With his Swiss guides (who had also accompanied him to the Bolivian peaks of Ancohuma and Illimani) he gained some height on a large glacier which now bears his name, but never really got to grips with — nor even saw — the upper slopes of the mountain.

Conway was followed by a man whose name is synonymous with Patagonia — Alberto de Agostini. Agostini spent the best part of his life away from his native Italy, serving in Patagonia as a Salesian missionary. An assiduous photographer, he posed stilted groupings of the native Indians, scrubbed clean and decked out in unnaturally fine furs but his mountain photographs make no attempt to tame the grandeur of the wild landscape. For over 40 years he explored the length and breadth of Patagonia, mapping, photographing and climbing. Of all his first ascents the most important was probably the magnificent peak of San Lorenzo, between the two Patagonian icecaps. Down in Tierra del Fuego he led expeditions to several peaks including Sarmiento. The first Sarmiento attempt was in 1913 and the second in 1956, when he was 73. On that second attempt, the large Italian team almost reached the col between the two summits from the north but was repulsed by dangerous snow conditions. Then Clemente Maffei and Carlo Mauri traversed round to the South Ridge finally succeeded on a very steep, direct line up spectacular rime mushrooms to the higher East Peak (2,235m). The West Peak eluded three further Italian expeditions until a fourth, in 1986 was successful; Daniele Bosisio, Marco Della Santa, Mario Panzeri and Paolo Vitali reached the summit by its North West Ridge. A British attempt on the East Peak in 1993, led by Caradoc Jones, was unsuccessful.

That was the state of play when I was invited to join an American trip to Sarmiento last April. The leader, Jim Wickwire, comes from Seattle and is used to rain. Although he is best known for climbing the East Ridge of K2 in 1978, many of his best ascents have been in Alaska's Fairweather Range, notorious for being everything but fair. Nurtured on filthy weather, Wickwire was drawn instinctively to Sarmiento's dense sodden forests and invisible cloud-wrapped upper fortifications of ice and rime. He was not, as he put it 'in the game of besting Italians' but it would be nice to try and climb both summits in one go, achieving in one month what had taken our predecessors over a century. I also, of course, had no competitive agenda but jumped at the chance to visit an area that had long been on my list of places to visit. Five years on from a South Georgia expedition, I felt ready for another battering by the 'Filthy Fifties' and I was keen to see the Fuegian forest — a sort of South Georgia with trees.

The mountain was attractive; more importantly I liked the sound of the team. A brief meeting with Wickwire in Bath confirmed that he was an immensely likeable and extremely efficient man. I was also intrigued by his friend, John Roskelley, who over the years has aroused strong emotions in American climbing circles, upsetting a number of people with his forthright opinions and defiant lack of political correctness. After reading his books I concluded that he really upset people because he was nearly always right — and because he was just better than them, with an Himalayan record hardly equalled in the World with big new routes on K2, Nanda Devi and Taweche, the second

ascent of Makalu's West Pillar and first ascents of Uli Biaho, Great Trango, Cholatse and Gaurishankar. For a fourth team member I suggested the Australian, Tim Macartney-Snape, whose Himalayan credits include the seminal White Limbo climb on Everest's North Face and the second ascent of Gasherbrum IV, after Carlo Mauri. He was free to come and liked the idea of repeating another Mauri climb, this time in Tierra del Fuego.

Burlington Industries, the manufacturers of Ultrex fabric, liked the sound of Sarmiento and agreed to a sponsorship deal which, boosted by grants from the MEF and BMC, just about covered the considerable expense of getting to the mountain, first by air, then by land and sea. We all met in Punta Arenas, Chile's last major outpost before Antarctica. From there we flew across the Strait to the Isla Grande and drove south into the Argentine section of the island to Ushuai where we met Charlie Porter, one of the legendary figures of Yosemite big wall climbing in the '70s and now a resident of Southern Chile, where he has spent the last 17 years wandering by kayak and yacht amongst the incredible maze of islands and channels carved into the Pacific coast of Patagonia.

Charlie was a very interesting chap — which is just as well, because he talked a great deal — probably a result of having spent all those years alone, hanging in hammocks on granite walls or paddling the Chilean channels. These days he drives a yacht, which he charts out to expeditions and scientists for anything up to \$1,000 a day. The quickest, cheapest approach to Sarmiento is to hire a fishing boat in Punta Arenas, from where it only takes a few hours to motor down the Magellan Strait and Canal Magdalena. Our longer, scenic approach with Charlie took five days and, even with a special reduced rate, cost a lot more but it was well worth it. Minos, the French cook, turned out an excellent Bouef Bourignon and produced cauldrons of steaming mulled wine to combat the effects of almost continuous wind and rain. The skipper, like all skippers, was bossy and paranoid about landlubbers wrecking his precious vessel but entertained with his wealth of knowledge, pointing up in to the clouds at all the great unclimbed faces, all completely invisible, on Roncagli, Bové, Darwin, Italia and the other famous peaks of the Cordillera Darwin.

The only way to get to these peaks particularly on the southern, Beagle Channel, side is by boat. A permit from the Chilean navy is obligatory and a powerful diesel motor is recommended, even in the comparative shelter of the channels, sailing into the wind is a slow, impractical business and on Gondwana we motored the entire journey, with an occasional boost from the jib when the wind was in the right direction. The scenery was Scotland on the grand scale.

The voyage took us almost due west, up the Beagle Channel, squeezed between the Isla Grande and the fragmented islands further south, then into the Canal Ballenero and the Bahia Desolada, named in the 18th century by a disenchanting Captain Cook. It was indeed bleak, with sea, sky and mountains a uniform wet grey but that afternoon Porter steered us into a magical anchorage somewhere on the Brecknock Peninsula, nosing deep into the heart of the mountains and dropping anchor in a tiny bay encircled by beech trees and cliffs of granite. Everyone put on waterproofs and Wellington boots, the single most useful piece of kit in Tierra del Fuego, and went ashore for a slosh through the bogs. Then back to the boat for another large dinner and long night's sleep, rocked by the gentlest of ripples in our sheltered bay.

The following day we sailed out into the Pacific, rounding the tip of the Brecknock Peninsula to feel the huge, rolling, lumbering waves that come all the way from Australia. Almost immediately we turned back east, escaping the ocean and heading up the Cockburn Channel on the

* The second attempt was actually in 1915. The successful 1956 expedition was Agostini's *third* attempt.



Above: Stephen Venables returning to Camp Two for the final attempt. Photo: John Roskelley.

final run into Sarmiento. There had been a lot of discussion about from which side to try the mountain. Wickwire's original plan had been to anchor on the east side of the peak, like most of the Italian expeditions and Caradoc Jones's attempt. However, Jones's team had taken 17 days to get six miles inland and reach the foot of the South East ridge; we had 14 days available to find a route, climb the mountain and leave for home so decided to try what seemed the shortest approach, up the Lovasato valley to the south west, anchoring in a little cove on the fjord of Seno Negri.

Porter kept us busy for a whole morning, dropping anchors and running 100m ropes ashore, trussing up Gondwana in a spider's web of nylon, secure against every fickle turn of the Patagonian wind. Base Camp was a mile up the coast, hidden in the forest near the mouth of the Lovasato river. From there we made a series of recces to try and find a suitable route on to the mountain. The whole business was made complicated by the fact that we never actually saw the mountain itself — at least never all in one go — just the occasional glimpse of bits of mountain. However, we got enough of a feel for it to decide to aim for the South West Ridge. The key factor in getting there was to keep jungle-bashing to a minimum, seeking out corridors of open ground; where forest was unavoidable, axe work was essential to cut a trail. The axe also came in handy, I am ashamed to say, to fell two beeches for our bridge over the River Lovasato.

Most of the time it rained, reminding me of the Ruwen-zori. Fancy mountain gear was a waste of time and at this stage we went everywhere in rubberised waterproofs and Wellington boots. Loads were packed in tough river-rafting storage bags, one of the many excellent bits of gear organized by Wickwire and Roskelley. Base Camp drinking water flowed continually off the kitchen roof and was collected in buckets, which was fine until the fox pissed in them.

Sarmiento, standing not quite 8,000ft tall, might have

seemed rather insignificant by comparison but the shortness of time — we all had engagements to get back to — and the prevailing awfulness of the weather gave us a sense of urgency. Climbing in Patagonia, more than anywhere else, is about seizing opportunities. However filthy the weather, you have to keep working, getting yourself in a position where you are ready to climb the moment the weather improves. In the case of Sarmiento unlike, say, the granite walls of Cerro Torre, the climbing would be essentially snow and ice, so even moderately reasonable weather would be useful. So we plugged away in the rain and snow, making three journeys to a rocky shoulder above the tree line where we put Camp One.

The next day we continued up the southern flank of the ridge, first scrambling on boulders, then reaching glacier ice. For me it was rather a special moment, putting on crampons for the first time since they had been wrenched from my feet, falling down Panch Chuli V nearly three years earlier. This time, I had promised my wife, I would come back fit and healthy, with no bits missing and no bones broken. There would be no accidents.

In the event there *were* accidents, two of them. That afternoon, descending after we had dug out a tent platform ready for Camp Two, Wickwire was caught off balance by a vicious gust of wind and flung through the air. He landed head first on the ice, skidded out of control and crashed into a pile of boulders, sustaining nasty bruises and a sprained ankle. That night down at Camp One he announced that he would have to drop out of the climb.

It was a cruel blow. Just before the accident, the clouds had lifted in a wonderful, theatrical, transformation scene, revealing the mountain for the first time. Suddenly we had seen the whole southern side of the mountain and realized that, with two days of reasonable weather, we could probably climb two different routes and reach both summits. Now Wickwire was going to be denied that after all his hard work organizing the trip. We left him the next morning to carry the spare tent up to Camp Two and settle in for a summit attempt. As usual the lanky McSnape strode effortlessly ahead, with Roskelley in hot pursuit. I was slower and Porter followed last shouting cheerily: "I'll stay behind so I can catch you when you fall." Today the wind was blasting across the ridge in huge, unpredictable gusts, threatening to catch us unawares. I had almost reached Camp Two when I heard Porter shouting and looked down to see him beside a crevasse crouched immobile on the ice. The wind muffled his shouts, but as I descended towards him I caught the word "arm" and when I got a bit closer he told me that he had dislocated his shoulder, trying to break his fall as the wind blew him past the crevasse.

So that was it, the end of our climb. All afternoon we escorted Porter back down to Camp One, knowing that the longer his shoulder was left, the more the muscles would seize up, making it harder to put back. In an ideal world, Roskelley and Macartney-Snape, both paramedics, would have put it back immediately but they needed somewhere flat, dry and out of the wind. They finally tried in the tent that night, heaving and wrenching on the arm, while I held down Porter's head and Wickwire sat on his hips. It was like being back in the labour room, witnessing all that unspeakable pain and I did not enjoy it. Porter was much braver, enduring the torture with just codeine for relief, clenching his teeth on a strip of beef jerky and digging his finger nails into Wickwire's leg. At one point Roskelley got up to close the door, apparently embarrassed that some stranger might wander by and stare in, perplexed, at five grown men grappling with each other in the darkness.

The paramedics pulled and strained and heaved, time and time again but in the end, exhausted, they had to admit defeat. The only option left now was for Porter to sail 90 miles north to the hospital in Punta Arena, so in the morning

we all descended, slowly, to Base Camp. Back in Gondwana, Minos produced a meal (I remember an excellent salad in garlic dressing) while the one-armed skipper lumbered around, giving Wickwire a crash course in crewing. He would sail that night with Wickwire and Minos, leaving the other three of us behind with a chance of one stab at the summit. It was Sunday and Wickwire promised that, whatever happened he would be back to collect us by Friday. We had just five days.

That evening the sky was completely clear for the first time in three weeks. As the three of us paddled ashore in the inflatable, Sarmiento glowed violet, floating serenely above the black silhouette of the forest. Out in the bay, Gondwana's navigation lights receded north towards the Magellan Strait. After that brief moment of serenity it stormed and rained for two days but we had to press on regardless, hoping for another improvement in time for the summit. By Tuesday evening the three of us were ensconced on the snow shelf at Camp Two, with the tent lashed down to deep-driven alloy pickets. Macartney-Snape cooked supper while Roskelley argued the basic freedom of the American citizen to carry firearms. Then we drifted asleep in our cocoons of goose down, trying to ignore the battering of the wind on the tent.

The wind howled to a climax in the early hours of Wednesday then died down at dawn. As we left, pink light suffused diaphanous clouds, dispersing rapidly beneath us. I dared to hope that we were going to be lucky and, sure enough, as the day brightened to luminous tranquillity I realized that we had been given a wonderful gift. Only two things marred it. First, Charlie and Jim should have been there, second we had to abandon hopes for the slightly higher East Summit, untrodden since 1956. To reach Mauri's route from this side would have meant traversing right through a zone of avalanche debris and when Roskelley stopped in front of it, with his look of deliberate purposefulness, I knew that there was no point in arguing. My feeling, and I think Tim's, was that you have occasionally to hurry past nasty places but Roskelley was adamant that there should be no unnecessary risk. So we opted for a new route up the South West Face of the West Summit.

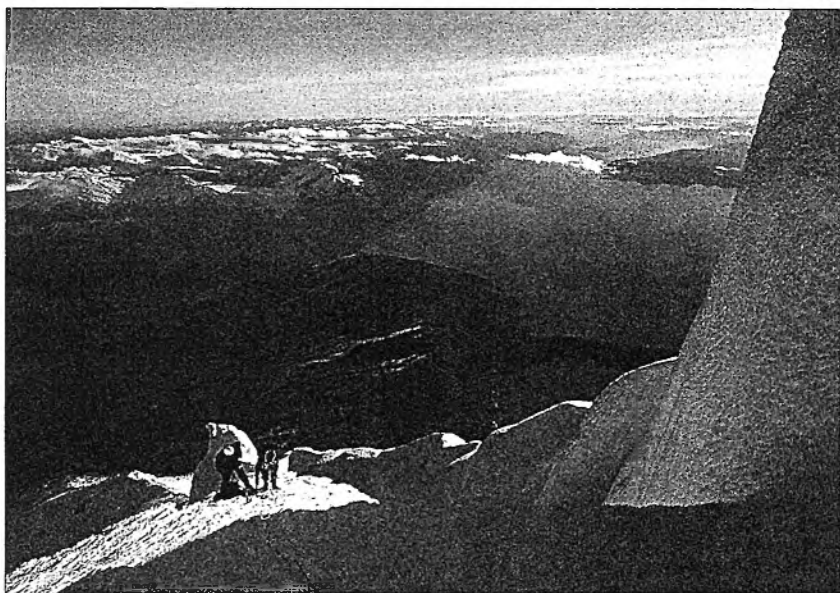
It was a pleasure to climb with two superlative mountaineers, both 100% alert, concentrated and always following the safest line, seeking out islands of solid ice amidst suspicious slopes of windblown snow. In the shade, on the south side, there was little freeze-thaw and the choice lay between deep powder or rime-encrusted ice. Whenever possible we stuck to the latter, relishing the joy of crampons and axes sinking effortlessly into purpose-built Styrofoam.

At the top of the face a steep runnel with 70° bulges led up into a gangway, which led us miraculously underneath the summit mushroom — a fantastic protuberance of swirling rime, hanging far out over our heads — and through to a notch in the summit ridge, from where it was an easy walk to the top of the mushroom. Again I was reminded of Scotland, a fine winter's day in the North West, perhaps. There was the same intricate, glittering pattern of mountain and sea but again it was on a grander scale, with huge glaciers and icecaps and the wonderfully surreal rime formations of our own mountain, Sarmiento, to remind me that we were in Tierra del Fuego, suspended between Atlantic and Pacific.

Forty minutes passed all too quickly, then it was time to

descend, hurried down by Roskelley who was rightly anxious to get down as far as possible before the light faded. The wind returned soon after dark, suddenly, without warning, transforming our benign face of Sarmiento into a hideous maelstrom of spindrift, pouring down relentlessly on our heads, stinging eyeballs raw and numbing fingers each time we had to take gloves off to feed the ropes into our abseil plates. I took the easy option, going in middle place on the abseils blind as a bat and grateful for the others' unerring professionalism. Shouting through the din, Tim commented: "If this was Nepal they would say that the mountain gods are getting back at us." We certainly seemed to be paying for our summit gift but after two hours the unpleasantness was over and we were safely back in the tent, congratulating ourselves on our wonderful luck.

Packing up the tent on Thursday morning, Macartney-Snape and I told Roskelley to get inside and hold it down



Above: Roskelley and Macartney-Snape setting up the first abseil after the ascent of Sarmiento. Photo: Venables.

while we untied it from its moorings. A moment later Roskelley's hand shot out of the door and grabbed a piton as the wind picked up him and tent, threatening to fling them both over the edge. He looked at us suspiciously and said: "I don't wanna seem like an old fuddy-duddy or anything, but I really think we should rope up down to Camp One." So we roped up for slopes less than 30°, clawing our way horizontally on hands and knees, like a replay of the famous Monty Python sketch of people climbing the pavement. It looked very silly but I was extremely glad of the security. Two accidents had been unlucky, a third would have looked careless.

On Friday we walked out on to the beach to find Wickwire waiting with the promised fishing boat. Minos was guarding Gondwana on the other side of the Magellan Strait and Porter was now in Santiago awaiting surgery on his mauled shoulder. Macartney-Snape and I both had to be home in time to give lectures on the Wednesday morning. Wickwire was already engrossed in a major land deal on behalf of the Alaskan Eskimos he represents. Roskelley was keen to get back and take up his new position on the Spokane planning committee. Everyone was already looking homeward but just to remind us what a wonderful peak Sarmiento is Saturday was another luminous autumn day with our mountain shimmering over the Magellan Strait. It was good to think that three days earlier we had been up there and even if I was annoyed not to have bagged both summits, I knew that we had been very lucky to climb any summit at all, on the last available day of the trip.

EXPEDITION DIARY

- April 3 Team meets in Punta Arenas.
- April 4 Shopping in Punta Arenas.
- April 5 Fly across Straits of Magellan and drive to Rio Grande
- April 6 Drive to Ushuaia. Final shopping. Meet Charlie Porter and sail in Gondwana to Puerto Williams.
- April 7 Formalities in Puerto Williams. Set sail at dusk.
- April 8-12 Sail up Beagle Channel, round Brecknock Peninsula and back east through Cockburn Channel to Seno Negri.
- April 13-14 Secure anchorage and establish Base Camp. First recce.
- April 15-17 Second recce. Build bridge over River Lovisato. Third recce - find site for Camp 1.
- April 18 Rest day.
- April 19 Carry to Camp 1.
- April 20 Third carry to Camp 1. Sleep at Camp 1.
- April 21 Recce to Camp 2. Wickwire injured on descent to Camp 1.
- April 22 Porter injured near Camp 2.
- April 23 Team descends to Gondwana. Porter, Wickwire and Minos (cook) set sail for Punta Arenas.
- April 24-25 Macartney-Snape, Roskelley & Venables return to Camp 2.
- April 26 Climb West Summit of Monte Sarmiento and return to Camp 2.
- April 27-28 Evacuate camps. Wickwire arrives with chartered fishing boat.
- April 29 Return to Punta Arenas.

MONTE SARMIENTO 1995 - ACCOUNTS

INCOME

Burlington Fabrics/Ultrex	\$10,000		
E.I. du Pont de Nemours & Co.	5,000		
Mount Everest Foundation	930	(£600)	
British Mountaineering Council	775	(£500)	
Foundation for Sport & the Arts	<u>581</u>	(£375)	
	\$17,286		£11,152
Members contributions			1,331
			<u>£12,483</u>

EXPENSES

Airfares	\$ 5,700		
Excess baggage	954		
Hotels & meals	2,722		
Local transport	850		
Local agent	1,350		
Gondwana yacht charter	3,100		
Fishing boat charter	1,100		
Equipment	732		
Food	872		
Film stock & video plus processing	1,200		
Telephone & faxes	<u>950</u>		
	\$19,350		£12,483

SUMMARY OF EXPEDITIONS TO TIERRA DEL FUEGO

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AAJ=*American Alpine Journal*, New York

AJ=*Alpine Journal*, London

Acab=*Anuario*, Club Andino Bariloche

RM=*Rivista Mensile*, Club Alpino Italiano

S=*Sangaku*, Japanese Alpine Club

Z=*Zeitschrift des D. und ÖAV*

1832-4 Captain Robert Fitzroy and Charles Darwin landed on Tierra del Fuego on 12.16.1832 and 1.29.1834.

1869 Italian expedition to Monte Sarmiento with Domingo Lovisato.

1898 British attempt on Sarmiento with Martin Conway.

1913 A. de Agostini and A. and A. Pession made 1st ascent of Cerro Olivia (1270 meters, 4187 feet) on 3.1.1913 and attempted Sarmiento. *Revista Chilena de Historia y Geografía*, #6, 1913 pp. 396-404, Santiago.

1933 G. Fester made 1st ascent of Cerro Cotorra (1510 meters, 4954 feet). Z 1938 pp. 234-8.

1937 H. Teufel and S. Zuck made 1st ascent of Monte Italia (2350 meters, 7710 feet) on 3.24.1937 and of Monte General Ponce (2040 meters, 6693 feet) in February, 1937 and with G. Fester and R. Jakob of Cerro Piedrabuena (1650 meters, 5414 feet). Teufel and Zuck also climbed three peaks (Luisa, Miguel and Serka) between 1000 and 1500 meters (3281 and 4922 feet), which from their names must have been on or near the Estancia Yendegaia. *Revista Geográfica Americana*, #50 pp. 327-332, Buenos Aires.

1948 D. Munzimayer climbed Cerro Olivia in February 1948. *Acab* 23 p. 111.

1952 T. Duplat and A. Johannensen climbed Cerro Olivia in July, 1952. *Acab* 21 p. 53.

1953 E. Colli and A. Jazin climbed Cerro Olivia on 1.4.1953. *Acab* 22 pp. 23-6.

1956 Carlo Mauri and Clemente Maffei made 1st ascent of Sarmiento (2235 meters, 7333 feet) on 3.10.1956. (Agostini's expedition.) L. Carrel, C. Pellissier climbed Monte Italia 3.10.1956. L. Barmasse, Carrel, Pellissier climbed Cerro Olivia on 3.21.1956. *RM* 3-4, 1957 pp. 77-86 and 7-8, 1958 pp. 203-214 and *Acab* 25 p. 11.

1962 Eric Shipton with Eduardo García, Cedomir Marangunic and Francisco Vivanco crossed the Cordillera Darwin from a base on the Marinelli Glacier and made the 1st ascents of Cerro Yagán (2100 meters, 6890 feet), P 2470 (8104 feet.) (The latter seems to be the highest mountain on the island. Shipton confused it with Monte Darwin.), Monte Luna or Darwin II (2350 meters, 7710 feet) and Cresta Blanca or Darwin III (2300 meters, 7546 feet). *AJ* 1963 pp. 259-63 and *AAJ* 1963 pp. 514-5.

1964 Eric Shipton with John Earle, Peter Bruchhausen and Claudio Cortés made the 1st ascent of Monte Bove on 2.25.1964 and of Monte Francés on 3.1.1964. Altitudes in the Cordillera Darwin have not been accurately determined. Andean authority Evelio Echevarría gives Bove as c. 2300 meters or 7546 feet and Francés as 2150 meters or 7054 feet. In Shipton's book *Tierra del Fuego—The Fatal Lodestone* Bove is given as 8100 feet and Francés as 7900 feet. In Earle's book *The Springs of Enchantment* Bove's height is 7054 and Francés' is 7033 feet. *AAJ* 1964 p. 222.

1966 Americans Jack Miller, Paul Dix and Roger Hart and Argentine Peter Bruchhausen approached the cordillera from the north and climbed in the Cordón Navarro. They made the following 1st ascents: Cerro Ahnikin (1859 meters, 6100 feet), Cerro Ona (2286 meters, 7500 feet), Dientes de Tiburón (1747 meters, 5730 feet), La Vela (1783 meters, 5850 feet), Filo Helado (1826 meters, 5990 feet), Cerro Casi (1611 meters, 5450 feet). *AAJ* 1967 pp. 326-333.

1966 Italians Carlo Mauri, Gigi Alippi, Casimiro Ferrari, Cesare Guidice, Guido Machetto and Giuseppe Pirovani made the 1st ascent of Buckland (1800 meters, 5905 feet) in February, 1966. *AAJ* 1967 p. 400.

1966 Japanese led by T. Tujii took time from their botanical and geological work to climb three peaks in the Cordón Navarro: P 1860 (6103 feet), P 1840 (6037 feet; at the western end of the Cordón Navarro) and P 1840 (6037 feet). *AAJ* 1967 p. 400 and *S* 1967 pp. 13-14.

1966 Japanese led by Kentaro Takagi climbed Cerro Olivia. *AAJ* 1967 p. 400.

1969, 1971 and 1972. Italians led by Giuseppe Agnolotti made three unsuccessful attempts on the west summit of Monte Sarmiento. *AAJ* 1970 p. 179, *AAJ* 1972 p. 181 and *AAJ* 1973 p. 478.

1970-1 New Zealanders Nick Banks, Peter Radcliffe, Michael Andrews, Neville Bennett, Murray Taylor, Peter Janes and Dick Heffernan approached the north side of the cordillera via Bahía Parry in late 1970. They climbed two unnamed peaks northeast of Monte Darwin of about 7200 and 6500 feet, Monte Darwin (2447 meters, 8028 feet), "Pico Jano" (2286 meters, 7500 feet), "Año Nuevo" (2195 meters, 7200 feet), "Pico Tridente" (1677 meters, 5500 feet) and P 1768 (5800 feet). They made a determined attempt on Roncagli's west ridge. *AAJ* 1974 p. 202 and *New Zealand Alpine Journal* 1972.

1971 South Africans climbed Cerro Alvear (1371 meters, 4500 feet). *AAJ* 1975 p. 188.

1973 South Africans Gregory Moseley, his wife Ineke and Brian de Villiers on February 25 made the first ascent of Pico Gemini via the northwest ridge from the Stoppani Glacier *AAJ* 1974 p. 198.

1977 South Africans Richard Smithers, his wife Heather and Bob Reinicke climbed several peaks above Bahía Brookes. *AAJ* 1977 p. 235.

1977-8 Combined sailing-mountaineering expedition led by Douglas Crombie-Anderson sailed from UK to Tierra del Fuego. From a Base Camp at the eastern end of Seno Hyatt, they moved south onto the glacier and climbed Cerro Cuchillo and six other peaks. *AAJ* 1979 pp. 256-7.

1978 New Zealanders Sue Parkes and James Jenkins climbed three peaks at the head of the Valle Lapataia between it and the Stoppani Glacier. *AAJ* 1978 p.

1979 Britons John Earle, Iain Peters, Don Sargeant and Dave Harber via Yendegaia explored the Stoppani Glacier area and made the 1st ascent of Pico Cóndor (1402 meters, 4600 feet), Pico Sentinel (1402 meters, 4600 feet), Caledonia (1402 meters, 4600 feet) and did a new route on Gemini (1829 meters, 5600 feet). *AAJ* 1980 pp. 600-602 (includes map).

1981 Britons Iain Peters, Rowland Perriment and Maggie Clark approached Roncagli via Yendegaia, doing botanical research. *Vegetation Notes, Tierra del Fuego 1981* by Iain Peters (private publication).

1982 Iain Peters, Don Sargeant, Paul Butterick and Maggie Clark went to the Roncagli region via Yendegaia.

1984 Welshmen Alan Hughes and Paul de Mengel kayaked to Seno Agostini and climbed two small peaks. *AAJ* 1985 pp. 242-3.

1984 Chileans traversed the Cordillera Darwin from the north of Seno del Almirantazgo via the Cuevas and Roncaglia Glaciers to the Beagle Channel on the South. *AAJ* 1985 p. 243.

1986 On December 8, 1986, Italians Daniele Bosisio, Marco Della Santa, Mario Panzeri and Paolo Vitali made the 1st ascent of the west peak of Monte Sarmiento (2210 meters, 7251 feet). *AAJ* 1988 p. 178.

1987 Geoff Bartram, Michael André, Peter Getzels and Steve Armstutz climbed Monte Darwin and paddled to Puerto Williams. See "Climbs and Expeditions" section of this *Journal*.

1988 Britons Iain Peters, David Hillebrandt and Australian Ros Ryder entered the region and climbed as noted in the *Summary of Statistics* given above.

1990 Britons David Hillebrandt, John Mothersele and Julian Mathias climbed Roncagli and País de Galles as noted in the *Summary of Statistics* given above.

1990 Japanese expedition to Darwin group. See "Climbs and Expeditions" section of this *Journal*.

1993 Britons Caradoc Jones, Susan Cooper, Philip Swainson and Henry Todd attempt South-East Ridge of Monte Sarmiento from Bahía Escandallo. Glacier greatly receded since 1956, resulting in difficult approach, taking two and a half weeks to establish camp at foot of ridge. *AAJ* 1994 pp. 194-6.

1994 Britons Julian Freeman-Attwood, Frank McDermott, Doug Scott and the American skipper of *Pelagic*, Skip Novak, climbing from an anchorage on Seno Agostini, made the first ascent of Cerro Pelagic in the Cordon Navarro, on 7 December. *AJ* 1996

1995 Jim Wickwire's expedition makes second ascent of West Summit of Monte Sarmiento, by new route up SW Ridge and S Face. Both Wickwire and the skipper of *Gondwana* (anchored in Seno Negri), Charlie Proter, were injured by high winds. Tim Macartney-Sanpe (Aus), John Roskelley (USA) and Stephen Venables (UK) reached West Summit on 26 April. *AJ* 1997

SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

In addition to the journal references above, the following books are useful background information for anyone visiting Tierra del Fuego.

- Alberto de Agostini *I miei viaggi nella Terra del Fuoco*
(Turin: Cartografia Flli.De Agostini, 1923)
Much sought-after - a lifetime's labour of love by one of the great pioneers, lavishly illustrated with beautiful black & white photographs.
- Sfingi di ghiaccio: la scalata dei monti Sarmiento e Italia nella Terra del Fuoco*
Turin: Societa Editrice Internazionale, 1958
Official account of the first ascent of Sarmiento, generously illustrated, including aerial photos.
- Lucas Bridges *The Uttermost Part of the Earth*
London, 1948
Seminal account of life in Tierra del Fuego and probably the best record of the now vanished culture of the native Indians.
- Martin Conway *Aconcagua and Tierra del Fuego*
London: Cassell, 1902
- John Earle *The Springs of Enchantment*
London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1981
Mountaineering in Tierra del Fuego with Eric Shipton.
- Jill Neate *Mountaineering in the Andes*
London: Royal Geographical Society, 1994
Invaluable reference work, listing all main peaks with succinct history of mountaineering.

