

was Stu and we could try for the summit that day. As we stood thus musing, Stu appeared below, and we were on our way. The buttress ended at 17,000 feet and the ridge soared upward in long sweeping curves. As we pushed along the ridge, the climbing got more exposed. In places, the knee-deep mush slowed us down, but the snow was generally firm and the rock steps proved to be fourth class, even with overboots and crampons. The only difficulties in this part of the climb were the short ice pitches encountered whilst crossing the ridge to avoid particularly imposing cornices. On the upper 750 feet of the peak, our progress was slowed by crevasse problems. By five P.M. we stood a few hundred feet below the top, but were wrapped in a white-out. Every afternoon, storms enveloped the peak, as the wet season approached. We retreated down the ridge and bivouacked at the top of the rock buttress about ten P.M. The sky cleared and a memorable sojourn under the wind and the stars lasted into the ruddy dawn. From Base Camp the following day, we decided that, having climbed the buttress, we would try to reach the ridge again via the unexplored eastern icefall. After leaving the moraine, the route passed through a maze of snowed-over crevasses and skirted the tracks of almost continuous avalanches. From high camp in a basin at 16,500 feet we climbed a headwall covered with hip-deep snow and rejoined the north ridge just above the buttress. Following our two-day-old tracks, we made good time and stood, again wrapped in storm, beneath the final pyramid by noon. An hour's wait rewarded us with a slight clearing and we climbed on. This proved to be the crux of the climb with two difficult crevasse problems and a final steep ridge composed of fragile filigree ice. We climbed this as much by faith as technique, only to discover that the summit was an overhanging cornice on three sides. Trusting to our long ropes and double belays, we crawled, one at a time, to the summit. The return to Yanahuanca, through two-and-a-half days of continuous precipitation, proved that we had finished the climb none to soon.

JONATHAN HOUGH

*Huamanrasu, Cordillera Chonta; Apucasa, Cordillera Huaytapallana Karu; Climbs in Cordillera Huaytapallana.* I made four journeys in the mountains near Huancayo in the spring and early summer. I soon found out why no one climbs in Peru during the rains, from November to April. Tom Kamm and I climbed in February the least of the *nevados* (snow peaks) near Huancayo, Nevado Kunti (5200 meters or 17,061 feet), some two kilometers southwest of Rurakrumi. We were rewarded by slippery

rock, hip-deep snow and a brief view of Lasontay and Rurakrumi. After Tom left, I usually climbed alone. The Huaytapallana was still too wet and so I climbed San Andrés (17,389 feet) in the Cordillera La Viuda, another snow wallow. The Cordillera Chonta is *altiplano*, rolling desert and pasture between 12,000 and 15,000 feet, dry and cold. Grey and black peaks with small glaciers rise above it. A road crosses the Chonta on its way from Huancavelica to Pisco on the coast. A bus deposited me about 30 miles from the former about 10 miles northwest of 17,317-foot, unclimbed Huamanrasu. I planned to traverse the peak and return to town on foot. After crossing the *altiplano*, I had a muddy grind up couloirs and across shelves to reach the northeast ridge. The firm north-slope snow let me move quickly by early afternoon to the lower north summit. The south peak lay across a difficult gap. The vertical wall of crumbling conglomerate beneath me was too high to rappel and the summit offered no anchor. The wall at my feet joined the 2500-foot west face and curved unbroken around to the east. I found an alternative. Shelves and chimneys led down the west face for 200 feet to a traverse to the notch. The steep, utterly rotten rock was coated with slush and melting ice. Half an hour after reaching the notch, I climbed the final snow ridge and stood on the summit. In gathering storms I began to descend the fantastically slushy snow of the easier south ridge. By the time I had reached llama herders' homes, it had snowed six inches. I was more than 24 hours' walk from Huancayo but made it in doubtful weather. Chulla (5650 meters or 18,537 feet) is the highest unclimbed peak of the Cordillera Huaytapallana. It is the east twin of Rurakrumi of the same height, which was called Lasontay Sur by the first ascent party of Jorge Fernández and César Morales Arnao in 1955. Rurakrumi was again climbed in 1964 by Bernard Frei, Olaf Hauptmann and Marie Mayer. It lies two kilometers south of Lasontay (18,701 feet). The ridge runs southeast from Rurakrumi over Chulla, Yana Jaya, Huilca and Hichu, forming a south-facing amphitheater. Tons of shattered ice crash from the glacier on these peaks into the steel-grey *laguna* beneath it. (This ridge was reconnoitered by Fred and Alice Dunn and Dick Kimball in 1953, when they attempted Rurakrumi, which they thought was Lasontay, climbed eight peaks on the southeast end of this ridge, including Hichu and Yanaccha, and four peaks in the ridge to the east, on which Kunti lies. See *Harvard Mountaineering*, May 1955, pp. 38-44. — *Editor*.) In May I hitch-hiked as close as I could and started walking at dusk through heavy mist to the Paso Sur (also called Paso de Huaytapallana. — *Editor*.) Four hours later I bivouacked on the lateral moraine of the huge glacier at perhaps 14,000 feet. I began to climb at

four A.M. The snow was so good that only the points of my crampons penetrated. A couloir bordered by ice cliffs led to a saddle between Chulla and Rurakrumi, technically easy but deep in snow. The 800 feet required two hours of struggle. I arrived at 8:30 in the saddle, 150 feet below and 200 feet away from the summit. Clouds had risen and now covered the top. It seemed absurd to climb the final ridge of mushrooms, cornices and flutes alone, but it was short. I climbed a slope of powder snow to the ridge, where I cut steps about ten feet below the crest until I reached a tiny crevasse running along the fracture line. Since the slope below the crack was too steep to climb, I placed my toes in the crack and shuffled along, thinking how nice a belay would feel. Rounding a bulge, I saw the summit barely fifteen feet higher and less than 100 feet away. It was an ice mushroom overhanging on all sides and shot through with cracks. I turned back. Not knowing the country north and east of Lasontay, I went to have a look. On June 1, I started at noon from Comas at 9000 feet at the northern end of the Huaytapallana up the *quebrada* that cuts into the mountains south of town. After five hours I saw my first ice peak, Chuspi, and camped an hour later. The next day I continued up the valley and reached the glaciers and peaks I had seen. The largest glacier led to a saddle. If the peak before me really was Chuspi, the saddle should lead to the west side and to country I knew. After a hot climb I reached the col with relief, but to my surprise it did not open to the west but rather south. A ridge with three ice peaks ran east. A huge, unfamiliar peak rose to the south, which I finally realized was Lasontay. I climbed a few hundred more feet to the true col (Janan Pass) and looked for a way down to the west. I found the shortest part of the fluted wall and backed down on the toe points of my crampons. Soon I was hopping across crevasses and balancing along sérac crests of a complicated icefall. I passed the last difficulties with a rappel and left the glacier in fading light. The polished cliffs below required ticklish rock climbing and I got off just as darkness came. I bivouacked by a *laguna* below the cliffs. On the third day I walked down the Mina Reina road to Hacienda Acoplaca.

Beyond the Huaytapallana and above the Peruvian jungle lies the unexplored Huaytapallana Karu, Quechua for "The Far Place Where They Pick Flowers." This short range of ice peaks rises above the deep Parihuanca valley. On June 8 I returned to Chilifrutas. With food and equipment for six days I descended 3500 feet to Hacienda Lampa and began the grind up the valley to my first camp, 7000 feet above the hacienda. The next morning I entered an ice-carved *quebrada*, difficult but beautiful with dwarf trees, flowering bushes and a small lake. I climbed a muddy

fifth-class pitch, hauled up my pack, lost my ice-axe, rappelled down to get it, climbed back up and made camp near a 200-foot-deep sinkhole at only 13,500 feet. I left camp before dawn on June 10. From a rock tower on the crest of the slope south of camp I saw the *nevados*. One was a rock fin edged with ice flutes, whose rock walls fell 2500 feet to small glaciers. That was Sucuslazo. To its left and south of it was Pampalazo, a fluted ice tower supported by buttresses of black rock. Both peaks were across a valley 5000 feet deep. Beyond them stood more ice peaks. From the top of a small glacier-covered tower, I saw the finest peak of all — a double spire of white and grey ice flanked by ice-crueted rock towers. Between the towers a glacier tumbled into the valley to the north. Herders later told me that they called it Apucasa. At noon, only six hours of daylight remained and clouds were gathering. The fluted white peak looked difficult. I turned back, but after a few steps, I knew I was making a mistake. The clouds would probably dissolve and I was equipped to bivouac. Better yet, I could climb until midnight under the full moon. Speed was everything. I climbed quickly down to a col and up a narrow but uncorniced snow ridge. Still on crampons, I descended rock and did an uneven standing glissade to the glacier, which also gave no problems. I reached the base of the fluted peak at two P.M. The ice wall beneath the col that separates the two summits had a weakness, a narrow ramp between ice cliffs on the left and flutes of ice on the right. I climbed diagonally to the ramp. The snow, at first perfect, turned to powder on hard ice 100 feet below the saddle. I crossed a schrund and toe-pointed the last few feet. Granules of wind-blown snow tinkled against the ice at my feet but sunlight began to penetrate the clouds. A ridge led to the summit 150 feet above me. The top was separated from the ridge by a schrund partly filled with icicles. I stepped across as lightly as I could and at 4:30 climbed the last few feet to Apucasa's 18,300-foot summit. The ramp traverse was delicate because my steps, patted insecurely into powder snow, kept breaking. At seven o'clock I was off the glacier. When the moon went down I bivouacked. On the fifth day I finally got back to Chilifrutas. After Apucasa I again attempted Chulla. I bivouacked at 17,300 feet and hoped to climb the easier east ridge in the morning. During the bivouac I became violently ill and had to stagger back to the road. I had typhoid fever. That ended the climbing season.

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