

find. So we admitted defeat with the buttress, rappelled down and set up camp.

Once again we awoke to perfect skies and took off to finish the East Face via the '83 route. The climbing on the upper part of the route was stellar. The rock steps, serac band and ice runnels reminded me of the clean, beautiful climbing on the Cassin. The last pitch was an overhanging, loose, ice/snow step that capped off the summit ice serac. Alex led this surprise crux fluidly and quickly. We summited by 1 p.m. and then started down the west face. Downclimbing the upper face with the aid of a photo, we were able to find the top of the Nettle-Quirk Route, which we then rappelled. At the bottom of the route, just like clockwork, Paul zoomed overhead in the Cessna 185, checking up on us. At 8:30 p.m., we were on the Tokasitna, and Paul landed shortly thereafter to pick us up. We shuttled over to our still-packed base camp, threw it all in the plane, cracked open the celebratory Foster's Oil Cans and flew back home. Two nights on the mountain, a summit and traverse on the most beautiful 12,000-foot peak in the world. It was our last climb together, and one of my best. Thank you, Alex.

DOUG CHABOT

Ruth Gorge

Mt. Barille, Northeast Buttress, Forever More. I arrived on the Ruth Glacier on May 21. A 12-day storm kept me in my tent until June 2. The next day, I undertook an attempt of a new route on the south face of Mount Dickey, but the granite was so greatly affected that it would in no way allow me to get any safe protection or set up a secure anchor. Though there already existed two routes on the east face of Barille, the northeast buttress—2,700 feet high and 1,200 feet of it a sheer buttress cut by several roofs and ledges—still remained unexplored. On June 7, I passed over the heavily torn glacier at the foot of the peak and then reached the rock itself. Starting in a dihedral system, I managed to climb 300 feet that day and fix the rope. I spent the night in the tent and the next day continued the ascent. Using the same technique, I reached a big roof that stuck out six feet beyond the face. I climbed it precisely with cams and reached the headwall. Fifty feet higher was the beginning of a wide crack almost 300 feet high. I had to use sky hooks. The whole next day was devoted to climbing that long stretch of offwidth. On the fourth day of the ascent, when I was already in the upper part of the buttress, I came across a small sloping ledge that turned out to be a stretch of pulpy rotten granite. This ledge cost me a lot of nerves.

On June 12, I finally reached the top of the rock buttress. Above was a series of simple rock and big ledges. Climbing it, I encountered loose stones and blocks. That relatively easy part of the face was followed by another buttress that was not so sheer as the previous one. I spent the fifth night of the ascent in the middle of the buttress. The sixth day was the longest. After climbing another 450 feet, I reached the snowfield. To get to the summit, I had to climb the 300-foot snowfield, two moderately difficult rocky stretches, and about 900 feet of snow slope that smoothly transformed itself into the ridge. I decided to leave the tent behind. It took me four hours, sticking deeply in the molten snow, before I reached the summit of Mount Barille.

The sky turned black with storm. Descending cost me an hour and a half. I reached the tent in the company of strong wind and heavy rain. Such dreadful weather lasted until midnight. The entire next day, June 14, I retraced my way down. At 10 p.m., I crawled into the lonely tent on the glacier, very tired. I called the route *Forever More* (ED+ VI 5.10 A3, 900m).

VALERI BABANOV, *Russia*