

a snow fluke over a large corniced overhang, descended 40 feet and scrambled up a line of rock and adjacent snow. Dan disappeared to his armpits into the bottomless chasm between the rock and the melted snow beside it. After a labored extraction, two frightened climbers proceeded to the summit. Descent began at 2:45 A.M. and was carried out under increasing avalanche hazard. Benesch and Haunold made two new routes. They climbed P 6910 (1.4 miles south of P 7200) by its southeast ridge. They climbed a couloir to a 300-foot slab which took them to the ridge crest. They climbed this to where they were forced to make a short rappel to a couloir which took them to the summit. They then climbed P 7510 (Italy's Boot) via the central rib on the north face.

HOLM W. NEUMAN

"Gnomen Spire," Cathedral Spires, Kichatna Mountains. In mid May Kjell Swedin and I flew to the Cool Sack Glacier, hoping to make the first ascent of P 8500, the satellite peak just west of Kichatna Spire. On our first attempt we climbed a 1700-foot hard ice couloir between the two peaks that had previously been climbed by the Oregonians in 1978 (*A.A.J.*, 1979, pages 171-2) and Bouchard and Embick in 1979. At the top of the couloir we were met by deteriorating weather and a slightly overhanging headwall that was so rimed that it appeared featureless. We descended and the weather kept us pinned in the tent for ten long days. When the weather cleared, we attempted the west face of Sunrise Spire. Again wind and snow drove us down after two days and nine pitches of enjoyable rock climbing: F10 free-climbing in EBs in a good crack system on the lower pitches and higher up mostly aid on flakes and small cracks. On June 7, five days before our scheduled fly-out, the weather cleared in the evening and we left for another try on the satellite. We climbed the couloir during the night. The six-foot tunnel through the cornice at its top, which I had dug on the first try, was mostly intact, saving time and effort. The headwall was less rimed although still very hard and time-consuming. Above it, the remaining 500 feet were hard mixed climbing with ice-filled cracks and chimneys, verglased slabs and short aid sections. We stood on top during the darkest part of a pink-glowing, beautiful Alaskan night. The rappels went quickly and after 32 non-stop climbing hours we were out of the gully.

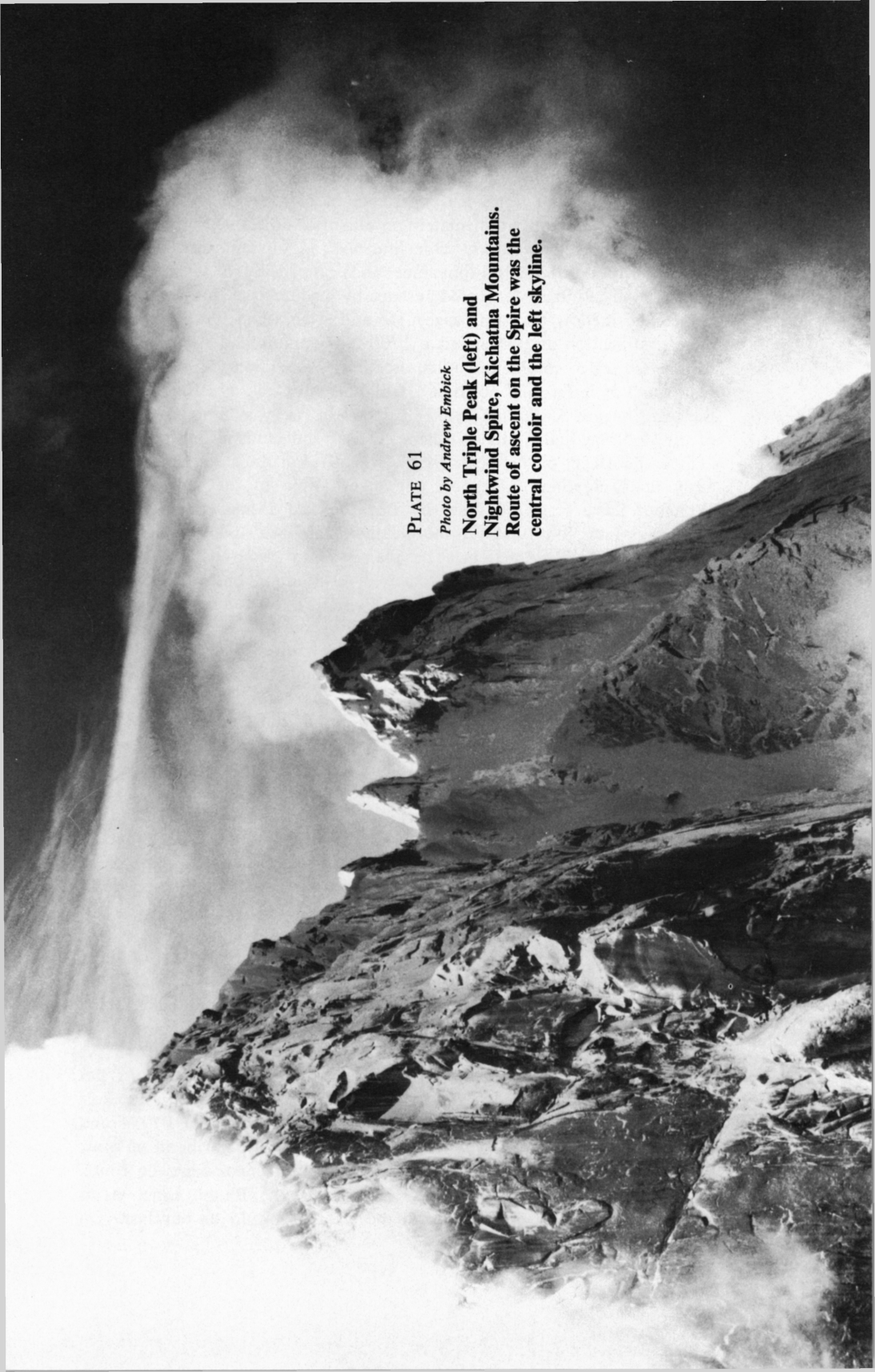
ROBERT McDougall, *Unaffiliated*

Cathedral Spires, Kichatna Mountains. The lure of untouched walls amidst classic alpine peaks once again supplanted senses of propriety and self-preservation as we returned to the Tatina Glacier in June. There was the air of a class reunion as Andy Embick, Alan Long, Randy Cerf

PLATE 61

Photo by Andrew Embick

**North Triple Peak (left) and
Nightwind Spire, Kichatna Mountains.
Route of ascent on the Spire was the
central couloir and the left skyline.**



and I organized camp and discussed objectives. Except for Randy, the rest of us shared the combined experience of nine previous trips. Randy Cerf and I began fixing immediately on our main objective, the unclimbed west face of Mount Jeffers. Our line was an obvious dihedral rising continuously up the 2500-foot face and capped by a large chimney system. Andy Embick, tempered perhaps by his marriage the week before, played the mellow Kichatna sage. He and Alan Long opted for immediate gratification and ascended a 1700-foot couloir and two pitches of fifth-class rock to complete the first ascent of "Serendipity Spire" (c. 6800 feet, south of Jeffers and north of Gashly Crumb Col). The following day the team bagged Vulgarian Peak (P 7785), a rocky summit at the head of the Cool Sac and Tatina Glaciers. Geiser and Hudson had previously claimed an ascent of this peak (*A.A.J.*, 1966), but their description more aptly fits Vulgarian's neighbor, one eighth mile to the north, named Whiteout Spire (c. 7700 feet) by Bocarde and Denkwalter in 1975. Two days later, on June 12, the weather stabilized and we decided to commit ourselves on Jeffers. The plan was to climb without hauling bivouac gear and complete the face in a 36-hour push. We enjoyed twelve pitches of superb climbing in EBs before the fun ended and foul weather moved in. Our momentum kept us going as we dealt with the fringe benefits of Alaskan wall climbing: iced ropes, waterfalls, slipping Jümars, and frozen Friends. The latter phenomenon fascinated me as I stood on a tied-off angle in the middle of the night, examining all my #1 Friends in turn. Amusement vanished and so did I as the pin popped and I dropped 30 feet down a chimney. In time we learned that the best treatment for a frozen #1 Friend was mouth placement. After 21 pitches the weather broke and we saw with great relief that the chimney system was ending. Four pitches later we emerged from the shadows and were greeted on top by the warmth and beauty of a gorgeous Alaskan sunrise. Our descent was facilitated when we located anchors the Robbins party had used on the south ridge in 1969. After 54 hours of continuous climbing we happily reached camp on the evening of June 14. (NCCS VI, F10 A3.) Andy Embick and Alan Long used these days to establish a fine first ascent on "Serenity Spire" (c. 7500 feet), the northernmost of three minarets that dominate the Flattop cirque between Tatina Spire and Flattop Peak. Their ten-pitch climb followed a prominent right-facing dihedral on the east face. Good rock was encountered throughout, little aid was necessary, and half the pitches involved F9 climbing. (NCCS IV, F9 A2.) Switching the teams around, Randy Cerf and Alan Long got a midnight start on June 16 and ascended the improbable-looking couloir on "Plum Spire" (c. 7300 feet), the highest point between P7984 and Three-O-Spire (P 6760). The two climbed the 2000-foot ribbon of snow and ice in 5½ hours, negotiating several awkward chockstones en route. Appropriately enough they named their route the Plumb Line. As it turned out, the next good break in the weather would be our last. On

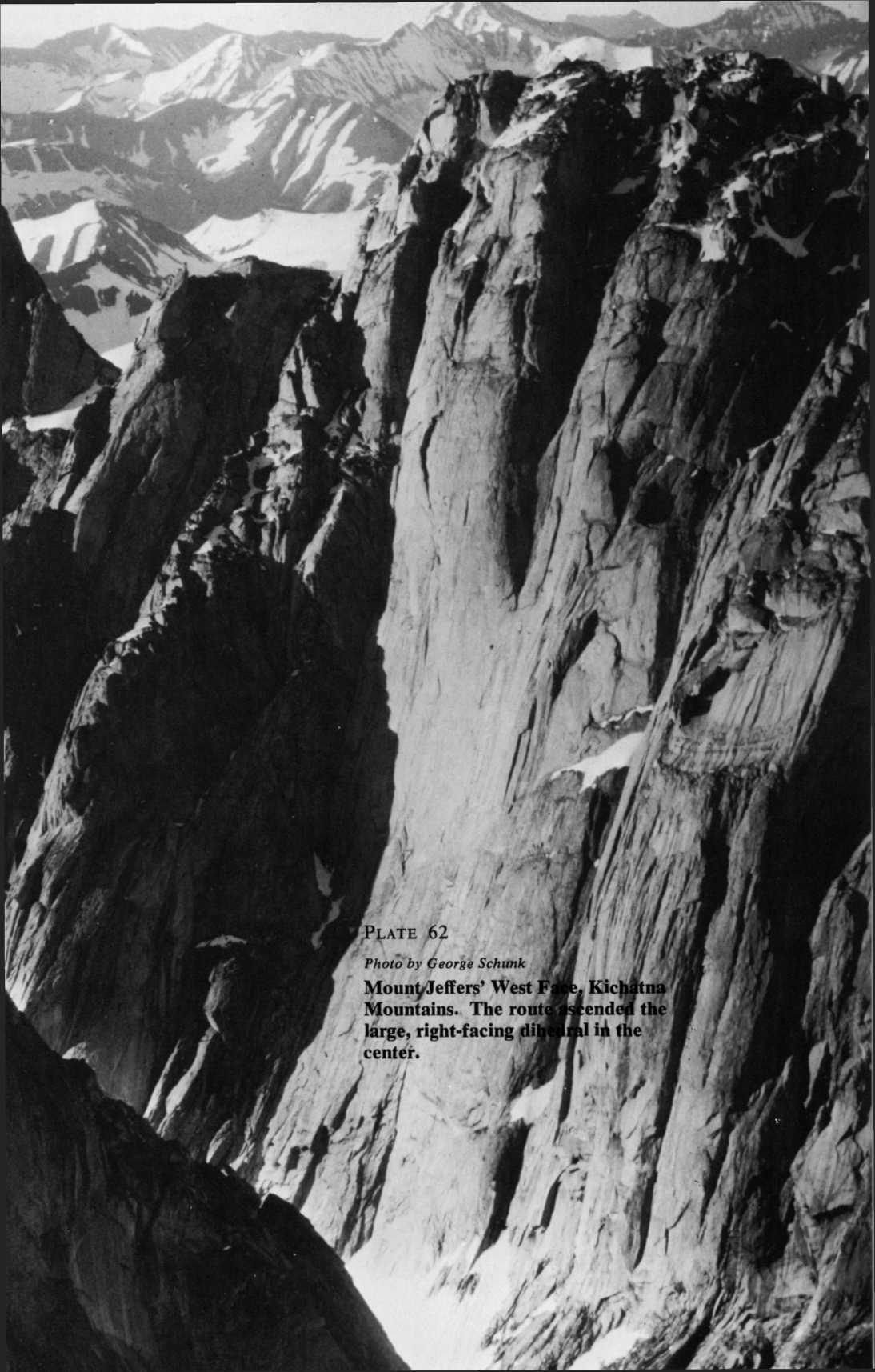


PLATE 62

Photo by George Schunk

Mount Jeffers' West Face, Kichatna Mountains. The route ascended the large, right-facing dihedral in the center.

June 21, Andy Embick and I fixed three pitches on the central spire of the Flattop cirque trinity. We returned the next day and continued directly up the east buttress. Crack system followed crack system and the higher we got, the more it felt like Yosemite. Unbelievably, the precipitation held off for the entire 20 hours we were on the wall. There was minimal aid and five of the eleven pitches involved F10. This first-ascent route on "Trinity Spire" is among those few climbs in the Kichatnas which would be pleasant to repeat. (NCCS V, F10 A1.) Alan Long and Randy Cerf bagged another first ascent on June 22 when they climbed "Nightwind Spire" (c. 8300 feet), the major summit between North Triple and Middle Triple Peaks. Their route followed the ice couloir first climbed by Sennhauser and Ellsworth (*A.A.J.*, 1979), then trended right to gain the severely rimed south ridge three pitches below the summit. The descent required 14 rappels, and the pair spent a total of 19 hours on the mountain. During the next twelve days we were treated to mandatory participation in the Kichatna weather waiting game. Doug Geeting was finally able to get in under the cloud cover and we were flown out on July 4.

GEORGE SCHUNK

Mount Redoubt, 1979. Dave Haring, Don Spurlock and I climbed Mount Redoubt (10,197 feet) from July 3 to 8, 1979 via the northwest ridge and glacier system. Winds in excess of 60 mph pinned us down for a day in our 6000-foot-high camp.

STEPHEN KRUSE

P 10,910, Second Ascent by a New Route, Hayes Group, Alaska Range. On April 24 Carl Tobin and I flew into the Hayes Group with Doug Geeting. We landed on the Turkey Glacier, which drains the southwestern flanks of Mount Hayes. We then skied to 8200 feet, established camp and fixed rope over the schrund at the base of the 2700-foot-high east-northeast face of P 10,910. On April 25 we started the climb under sunny skies. The first five pitches went quickly on 55° snow-covered ice. The next four were with deteriorating weather in a steep ice gully. The gully ended at the diagonal band which splits the face. This, the tenth pitch, was the crux, involving 75° to 80° hollow verglas over granite. With spindrift sloughs increasing, we were committed to the summit after this section. Carl said it was his most difficult lead ever. Steep snow over ice, steep snow, white-out and persistent avalanches in ice gullies characterized the next four pitches to a prominent ice rib between two major gullies. After one pitch on this rib, we were forced to bivouac. The storm had worsened and we were exhausted after 15 continuous pitches of front-pointing. We scooped a small hole in the shallow snow