

most frequent Yentna climbing destination. Its elevation is approximately 8,600 feet, and it is located in square seven of the Talkeetna D-4 map.

JIM LARUE, AAC

Glacier 1 (Fake Peak Glacier) Peaks. From June 1-22 British climbers Mike Fletcher, Richard Leech, Oliver Shergold, and I visited the unfrequented Glacier 1 (a.k.a. Fake Peak Glacier). In the prevailing fine weather we made seven ascents, five of which we believe to be of new routes. Glacier 1 rises gently east from Glacier Point at the southern end of the Ruth Gorge and is famous for a diminutive rock spike on its southern rim known as Fake Peak. This 1,675-meter point's fame derives from its identification as the site of Dr. Frederick Cook's photo of him posed triumphantly on what he declared to be Mt. McKinley.

After Dr. Cook, the next recorded visit to Glacier 1 took place in 1977. Local climber Brian Okenek, approaching from the Ruth, made the first crossing of the col at its head and descended the Coffee Glacier on the far side. In recent years, though, several parties have been diverted to the glacier to make ascents of Fake Peak for its history, and one or two ski descents of an easy glaciated peak, Sholes (1,890m), were made by parties organized by Paul Roderick. The first technical climb from the glacier basin was made in 2000, when Geoff Hornby (U.K.) and Mike Smith (U.S.) made the first ascent of Tassles (2,090m) via the aesthetic west couloir. In March 2001 a guided party from the Alaska Mountaineering School climbed Fake Peak by its northeast ridge.

Flown in by Talkeetna Air Taxi director Paul Roderick, the 2001 British party established base camp just below Cook's Col and the site of his "upper world" panorama. The two most attractive peaks on the eastern rim of the glacier, Glisen and Lee (both ca 1,920m), were our main objectives. After a repeat of the easy southeast face of Sholes and a reconnaissance to the col south of Lee, we made the first ascent of Lee on June 5. Fletcher and I climbed the straight-forward 45-degree, 550-meter west-northwest couloir, which led directly to the summit, while Leech and Shergold opted for the steeper north face via the northwest couloir. All arrived on the summit within minutes of each other and descended the west-northwest couloir.

On June 9-10, while Fletcher and Leech made a ski trip to the Ruth Amphitheater, Shergold and I climbed Glisen in a 28-hour round trip from base camp. Leaving camp at 4:00 a.m. we first followed a deep avalanche runnel in a 50-55-degree subsidiary couloir on the west face, with a loose mixed exit onto the south ridge. After a couple of wet granite pitches we gained access to a traverse line onto the middle of the west face. There a succession of interesting mixed pitches, interrupted by the usual almost-bottomless Alaskan snow, led over a rock tower to the summit crest. This proved broad and relatively cornice-free, and we reached the summit at about 5:00 p.m., after 13 roped pitches above the head of the initial couloir. On the descent (downclimbing and rappelling) we discovered a ledge system, hidden from below, by which we could have avoided the crux section. We regained the top of the couloir at 11:00 p.m. The walls of the couloir were plastered with potentially dangerous snow formations, one of which collapsed and swept the lower gully shortly before we arrived. We waited for colder conditions, but a thin cloud cover hindered a freeze, and our packet of biscuits and liter of water each were running thin (we had anticipated being out for six to eight hours). Shergold and I therefore rappelled the steep mixed pitch into the upper couloir at 2 a.m. and started a roped descent. We were back at camp by 8:00 a.m. on the 10th. Glisen is a fine summit, and we feel

that a competent party could climb it much faster. We graded the 650-meter West Face Indirect Alpine TD (Scottish V mixed).

On June 13 all four of us climbed Fake Peak by its south ridge, and the following day Leech and I climbed the northeast ridge of Sholes over various small northeast shoulders to join the normal route (at which point we descended).

Attention now turned to peaks at the back of the Balrog Glacier (the west arm of Glacier 1). Early on the 15th Leech and Shergold began up the southeast couloir on Point 7,470', which stands on the watershed between the Balrog Glacier and the upper Coffee Glacier. They reached a point approximately one-third of the way up when the side wall avalanched below them, sweeping their tracks. To continue would have meant reversing the route later in the day, and with temperatures barely dipping below freezing they descended. The following morning Fletcher and I visited the same area and ascended a side glacier northwest of Sholes. Finding good conditions we made the first ascent of Point 5,800'+ via the southwest face to the southeast ridge. After descending to the side glacier we continued south toward the steep upper section of the northwest face of Sholes, but the expected consequences of imminent sunshine prompted a retreat. On the 20th, with Leech and Shergold in the lead, all four of us made the first ascent of the northwest face of Sholes (AD)—a nice line, though then in poor condition. In the upper section five long pitches of 70-degree and steeper snow, with two delicate cornices, led to the summit slopes.

With much snow having disappeared from rocks at lower altitude, a trip to a now-denuded Cook's Col led to the discovery of sections of Cook's old box and one or two other artifacts. However, the highlight of the trip was the first plastic sledge descent from the summit of Sholes, by Leech and Shergold on June 17. New Wave plastic sledging in the Alaska Range could come of age during the next few years—the Sultana Ridge on Foraker, for example, being an eminently suitable target.

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RUTH GORGE

Mt. Barille, Northeast Pillar, Baked Alaskan. Eighteen-year-old Scotty Thelen and I left Valdez at noon on June 29 and raced to Talkeetna to catch Talkeetna Air Taxi into the Ruth Mountain House. The whole state had had a month of predominately clear weather, and with any luck I could squeeze another trip in. An earlier trip into Little Switzerland left me wanting more. After landing we packed the sleds and headed around the corner to the base of the Cobra Pillar, only to find fixed ropes on the Austrian route. The Cobra scared us off, so we skied back around past the Russian route, Forever More. Just past a steep drainage is a smaller face on the shoulder of Barille, the northeast pillar. We quickly agreed on a route up the corner on the edge of the face. We fixed the scary bergschrund crossing and, after 40 hours of funky weather, headed up with a large rack. The Ruth had taught me the value of large pieces, and the rack included gear up to a #5 Camalot and a #7 Big Bro. Steep, shallow hand cracks led to easier climbing and great ledges. Five pitches led to a perfect bivy ledge, where we strung the fly and waited out weather until morning. Further moderate climbing took us up a large chimney and up the face proper to steep double cracks, where we were glad to have the large pieces. We topped out on the pillar's large table-like top, 1,500 feet from the summit of Barille but an obvious ending point. We