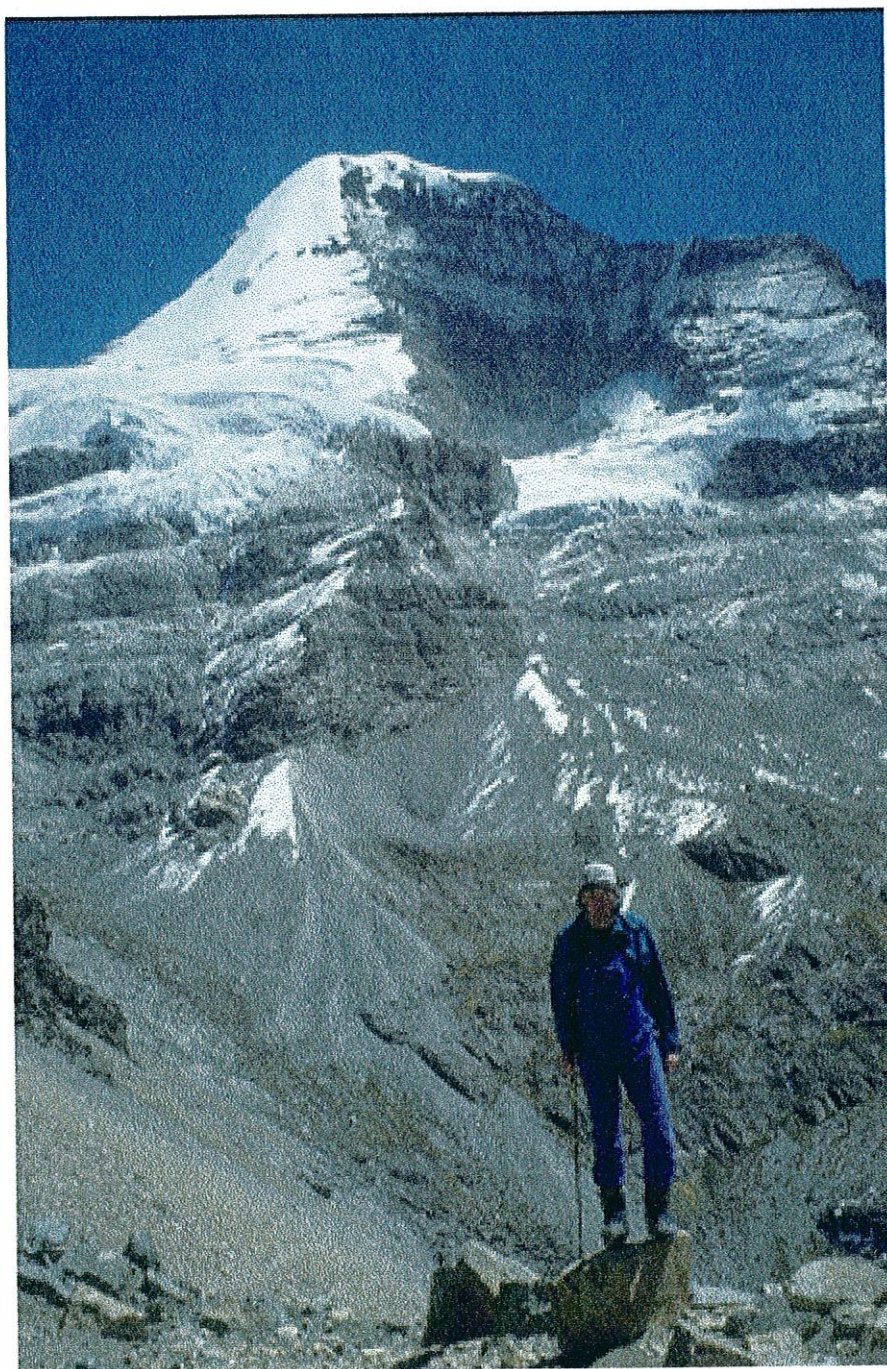


GALLOWAY ANDEAN EXPEDITION



Cordillera Quimsa Cruz - Bolivia

Cordillera Apolobamba - Bolivia

Cordillera Central - Peru

July - August 1998

John and Linda Biggar

Supported by the Mountaineering Council of Scotland
and the Scottish Sports Council

SUMMARY OF ACHIEVEMENTS

Cordillera Quimsa Cruz - Bolivia

Santa Rosa 5550m
E ridge
Probable first ascent by this ridge and first British ascent

Jachacaupiroja 5580m
Probable first British ascent

Jachacunocollo (Don Luis) 5721m
SW ridge, descent by N ridge
Probable first ascent of SW ridge and first traverse. Possible first British ascent

Cordillera Apolobamba - Bolivia

Ascarani Chico 5262m
from the N

Ascarani 5580m
by N ridge

Montserrat 5650m
from S
Possible first ascent from S

Cordillera Central - Peru

Llongote Norte c.5600m
N slopes/ridge
Reached 5400m attempting first known ascent of this peak

Ticlla 5897m
N slopes/NE ridge
We reached 5600m attempting this new route

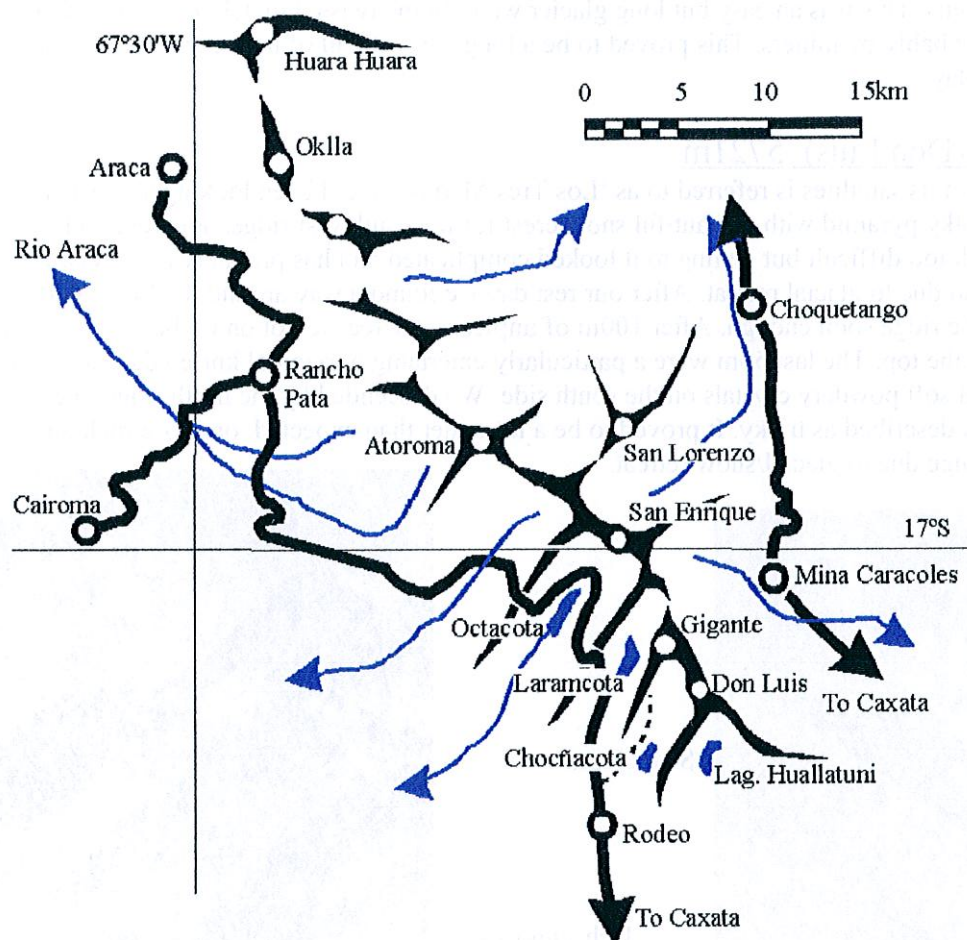
General Summary of Conditions in 1998

It was a very icy year in this part of the Andes with most routes considerably harder than normal. Weather was generally very settled though we were unfortunately hit by a bad spell for 3-4 days in the Cordillera Central. All areas visited are showing signs of very rapid glacial retreat. In particular Ascarani and Llongote were described as snow peaks when first ascended in the 50's and 60's but are now largely rock peaks. Various conversations with local mountain dwellers confirmed this.

Cover picture shows the SE face of Ticlla

CORDILLERA QUIMSA CRUZ

BOLIVIA



Introduction

After three nights in La Paz (3700m) to acclimatise we travelled to the Cordillera Quimsa Cruz which lie south of the Cordillera Real and about 100km from La Paz. our visit to this area was intended primarily as a warm up but in fact the Quimsa Cruz proved to have better potential for new routes than the Apolobamba. We travelled in a privately hired transport from La Paz via Panduro and Caxata to the ruined mine at Chocñacota. This was a five hour journey on roads that started good and ended very bad. We had to walk the last section due to a recent snowfall. Access is very difficult on public transport with a regular service only to Caxata and is likely to take at least two days unless you are very lucky.

We camped the first night at Chocñacota (4600m), then walked in a couple of hours carrying an unfeasibly large amount of kit (fresh avocados etc.) to our base camp for the week at Laguna Congelada (4900m). This made an adequate camp for our purposes and had the advantage of being off glacier, though for some ascents a higher glacier camp at about 5200m might be better. This is a very beautiful valley.

We had perfect weather throughout our time in the Quimsa Cruz - cold nights and clear days.

Santa Rosa 5550m

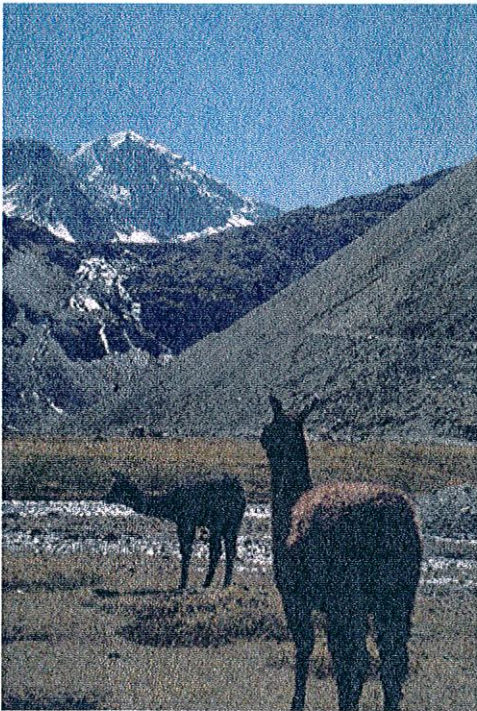
The first day John (with friends Jackie Randall and Ian Humberstone), climbed Santa Rosa by the east ridge. This was an easy if loose rock scramble. We'd hoped to make a first ascent of the peak but found a note on the summit from Evelio Echevarria in 1991 claiming an ascent by the north ridge. Descent was by the same route.

Jachacaupiroja 5580m

The next day John and Linda (accompanied again by Jackie and Ian) went back up to the foot of the east ridge of Santa Rosa and carried on across the glacier basin to make an ascent of Jachacaupiroja. This peak lies between Gigante and Jachacunocollo (Don Luis) and we climbed it primarily to get a better look at routes on these two mountains. This was an easy but long glacier walk. Some twisted metal on the summit indicated a previous ascent, probably by miners. This proved to be a long day with all of us feeling the altitude so we took a rest the next day.

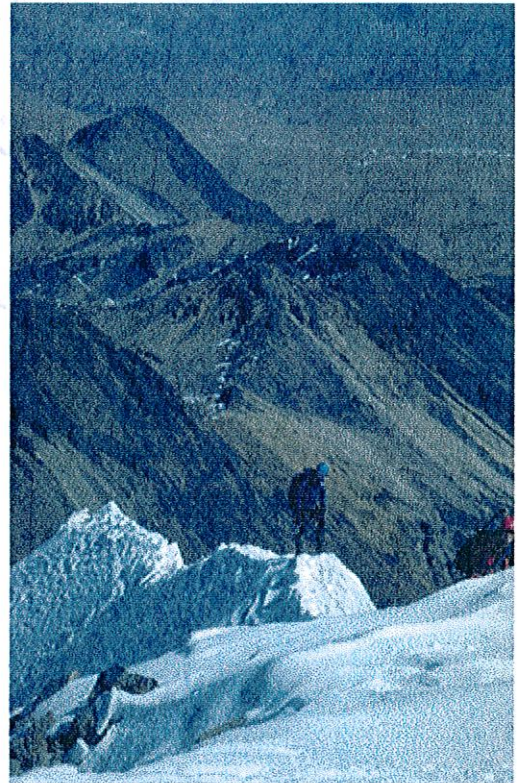
Jachacunocollo (Don Luis) 5721m

Locally this peak with its satellites is referred to as 'Los Tres Marias'. We'd been looking at this peak since we arrived, a fine bulky pyramid with a beautiful snow crest for the southwest ridge, apparently unclimbed. The ridge didn't look too difficult but getting to it looked complicated and has probably only been feasible in the last 10 years or so due to glacial retreat. After our rest day we found a way around the lower part of the glacier and gained the ridge soon enough. After 100m of unpleasant scree we got on to the good snow crest and followed this to the top. The last 50m were a particularly entertaining horizontal knife-edge, with hard ice on the north side and soft powdery crystals on the south side. We descended by the north ridge, the route of previous ascents and described as tricky. It proved to be a lot easier than expected, on loose rock and scree, perhaps this is a change due to glacial/snow retreat.



Santa Rosa

Jachacunocollo



Gigante 5748m

We had hoped to climb Gigante on our last day, but altitude had taken its toll and none of us could face the long walk back over the glacier. This is reputedly the highest peak in the Quimsa Cruz but visually the next peak to the north (Torre Jihuaña) appeared to be higher. From what we saw there is little doubt that Gigante has become much harder in recent years and will prove to be an entertaining ascent.

Future Potential

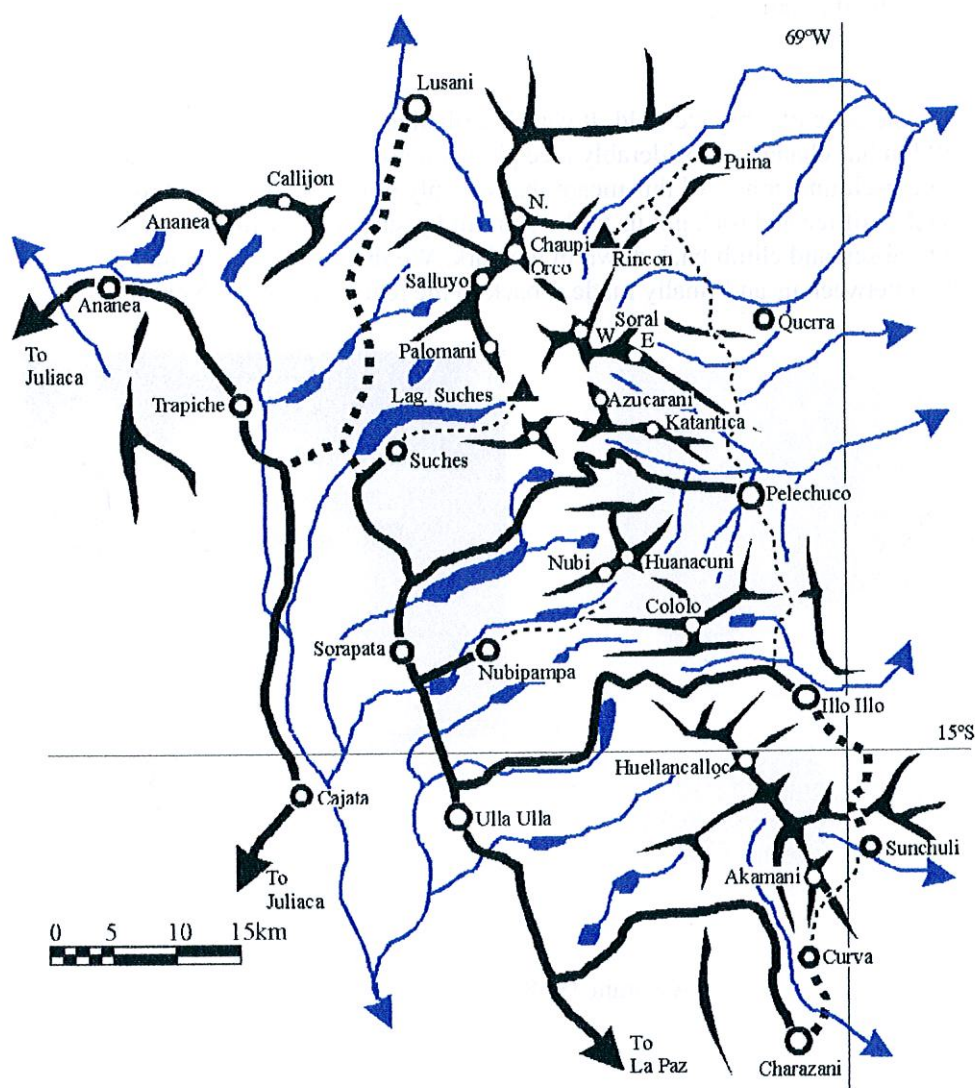
There remain plenty of unclimbed lines in the Quimsa Cruz though probably very few unclimbed peaks. Bad rock will be a problem on many of the unclimbed faces. As an area for a warm up before a major ascent in the Cordillera Real they are an excellent venue, with beautiful scenery and nobody else about.

Map Used

Bolivian IGM 1:50,000 sheet 6143-III 'Mina Caracoles' We only had a photocopy but this proved adequate.

CORDILLERA APOLOBAMBA

BOLIVIA



Introduction

After three nights rest back in La Paz (3700m) we travelled to Pelechuco in the Cordillera Apolobamba. This range lie north of the Cordillera Real and about 300km from La Paz. This area was intended as a major area for doing new routes, but in fact proved to have less potential for new routes than the Quimsa Cruz. Our plans were also badly affected by a stomach illness and we lost a couple of valuable days.

We again travelled in a privately hired transport from La Paz to the wee village of Pelechuco. This was a nine hour journey on roads that required a four wheel drive vehicle, which we got for the absurdly low price of \$220 each way. The going rate was \$350 each way and we were quoted as high as \$500 each way. Access to Pelechuco is very slow on public transport - there are reported to be two buses a week but these take 24 hours.

We stayed the first night in Pelechuco while arranging horses then walked in up the Nakara valley to a base camp under Ascarani (Azucarani) using donkeys to carry our unfeasibly large amount of kit (fresh avocados etc.). A camp by the stream at the head of the Nakara valley was our base camp for the week (4600m). After a days rest due to illness when we carried a little climbing kit higher up we carried most of our kit up to a high camp on the edge of the glacier north of Ascarani at about 5250m. This was our high camp for the remainder of the trip.

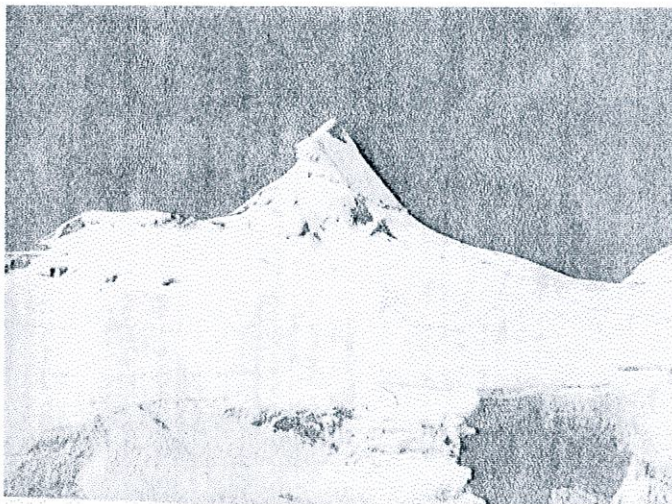
We had similar perfect weather throughout our time in the Apolobamba - cold nights and clear days.

Ascarani Chico 5262m

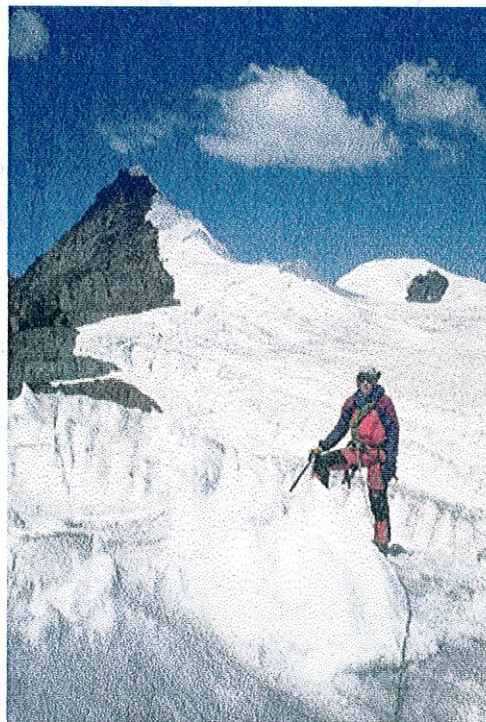
We climbed this little and very easy peak by the north ridge and glacier to get a look at the surrounding area and potential routes. Descent was by the same route.

Ascarani 5580m

This beautiful little peak lies on the edge of a big ice field. It was described as a beautiful snow pyramid by the first ascensionists in 1959 but has changed considerably (see photos below). We set off very late and got badly entangled in a crevasse/bergschrand zone. All this meant that we only got to the bottom of the summit pyramid at 6p.m. Two easy pitches of ice and rock got us to the summit by sunset and with the extremely short tropical twilight we had to abseil and climb back down in the dark. We then had a long walk back across the glacier with one torch between us and finally made it back to the tent at midnight. Next day was taken as a rest day.



Ascarani 1959



Ascarani 1998

Montserrat 5650m

We climbed this peak by the south slopes, again after a long glacier crossing. It proved to be very easy with just a couple of bad crevasses and some exposed scrambling on the summit ridge. This is possibly the first ascent of this peak from the south, though the route seemed very obvious.

Future Potential

This area of the Cordillera Apolobamba appears to have few significant unclimbed lines and probably no unclimbed peaks. There are some big rock walls in the Nakara valley with reasonably good rock, none of which have been climbed (e.g the east face of Ascarani).

Map Used

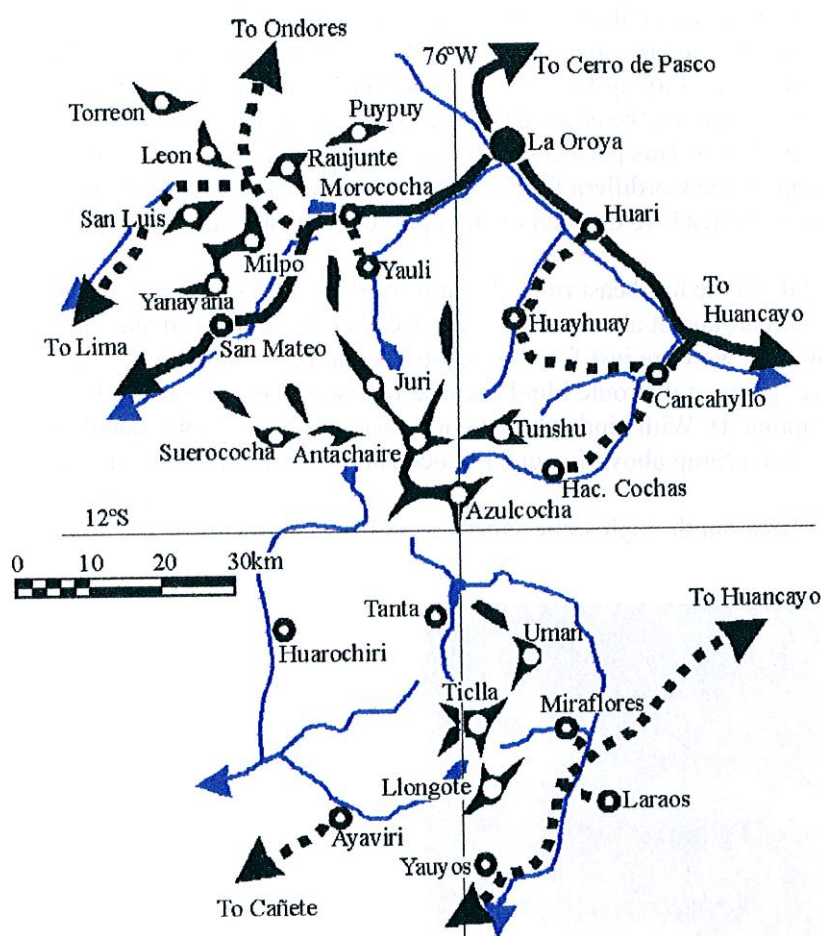
Bolivian IGM 1:100,000 sheet 3041 'Pelechuco'

This map was obtained from the IGM against all the odds. Many respected authorities on the Andes and well known La Paz guides refused to believe that we had obtained a map of the Cordillera Apolobamba.

Apparently no-one has ever even seen this sheet before, let alone purchased one. It is now safely under lock and key at home.

CORDILLERA CENTRAL

PERU



Introduction

After some time back in La Paz we flew to Lima then travelled by bus to Huancayo. From here we had hoped to visit both the area around Tunshu and the area around Ticlla, but business commitments of John meant we had to cut the expedition short by a few days and we decided we did not have time to visit both areas fully.

We had a couple of days in Huancayo then travelled in a privately hired car to the friendly wee village of Miraflores. This was a five hour journey on very dusty roads. we passed some magnificent limestone walls of over 500m high in the canyon south of Tomas. One day this will be Peru's answer to Verdon...? Access to this area is probably next to impossible on public transport - there is rumoured to be a bus on most Sundays. We stayed the first night in Miraflores (3600m), then walked in four hours up the Tomapampa valley to a camp beneath the north side of Llongote. We used mules to carry all our kit again.

We had some pretty bad weather during our time in the Cordillera Central. Mornings were always clear but cloud would come in by 10 or 11am and it would often be snowing by mid-afternoon. Very unusually for the Andes this weather was accompanied by thunder and lightning. The bad weather disrupted our plans in quite a big way - we turned round on Llongote partly due to an approaching storm and we had to delay our ascent of Ticlla.

Llongote Norte c.5600m

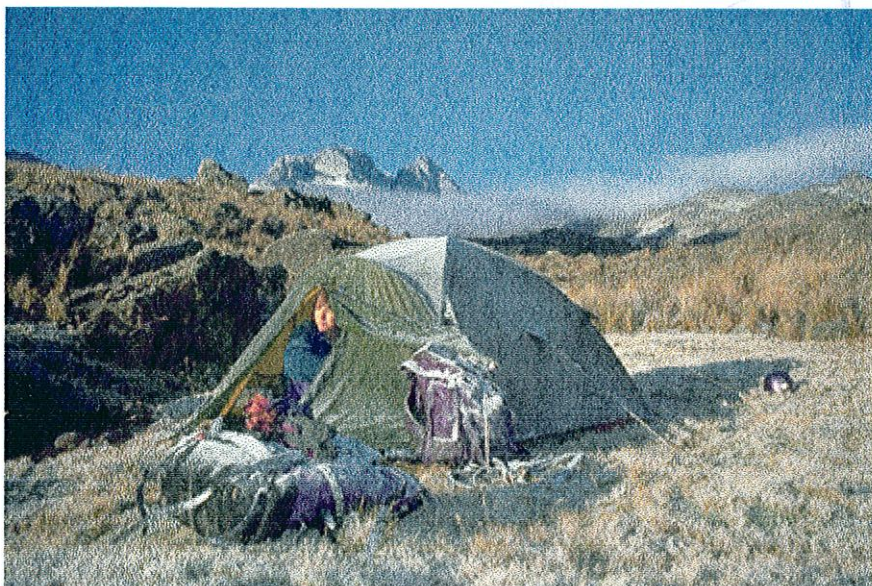
We attempted this unclimbed subsidiary peak by the north slopes and northeast ridge. Before we saw the mountain we had an idea to traverse to the main summit (5780m) but this will in fact be a very difficult rock route. Unfortunately our day on Llongote brought the worst of the weather and we got no higher than 5400m, just when the route was getting interesting. What was above us was entirely on rock and looked to be about grade III or IV rock for a couple of short sections with lots of easier scrambling in between. We turned round at 9 a.m. due to rapidly deteriorating weather and were back in the tent eating popcorn in a thunderstorm by midday.

Ticlla (Cotoni) 5897m

This beautiful pyramidal peak was our main objective in the Cordillera Central. It is also known in some sources as Cotoni. We hoped to climb by a new route on the southeast face or failing that the east or northeast side. The day after we attempted Llongote we decided to move on to have a look at Ticlla. This proved to be a good decision as the weather was again very bad and trying Llongote again would have been a waste of time. We backpacked over a 5000m pass to get to a camp on the east side of Ticlla and this gave us an opportunity to look at the southeast face (see front cover photo). This perfect 60° snow face is apparently unclimbed and looks similar to the south face of Artesonraju in the Cordillera Blanca. Unfortunately it was more than we felt was safe to attempt in such uncertain weather. Instead we decided to attempt the north east ridge which in profile looked like a feasible line.

We tried Ticlla the next day by the north side of the northeast ridge, but it proved to be an extremely complicated route and we were forced to turn around at about 5600m. The weather had improved and the route presented no unsurpassable difficulty, but we were just faced with too long and complicated a route for the time we had left (unfortunately we were going at the route blind because we had run out of time to be able to get a full view of the route before attempting it). With hindsight the north face will be a simpler line than the northeast ridge, and could be climbed from a camp above Laguna Llicococha. This will take an extra day to approach from Miraflores.

The last two days were spent backpacking back out through some superb scenery.



Llongote

Future Potential

Of the three areas we visited the Cordillera Central undoubtedly have the best potential for significant new routes and there are probably a few unclimbed peaks. One difficulty is that this area has been visited relatively often by Lima climbers who have not necessarily recorded all their routes. This is a great area of Peru, much quieter than the Cordillera Blanca and offering some challenging peaks and superb scenery.

Map used

Peruvian IGM 1:100,000 sheet 25-1 'Yauyos'

APPENDICES

Expenditure

All amounts are in pounds sterling and are approximate.

2 Flights with KLM Edinburgh-Lima-La Paz-Lima-Edinburgh	1608
Food bought in UK prior to departure	30

BOLIVIA

Maps	30
8 Nights hotel accomodation in La Paz	100
Return transport in minibus to Chocñacota, Quimsa Cruz	160
Return transport to Pelechuco, Apolobamba	300
Horses in the Apolobamba	40
Spent on food for the mountains	110
2x Airport Tax	30

PERU

4 Nights in hotel in Lima	80
Bus to Huancayo	25
3 Nights in Hotel in Huancayo	9
Return Transport to Miraflores	160
Horses at Miraflores	10
Spent on food for the mountains	35
2x Airport tax	30

TOTAL EXPENDITURE FOR TWO	2738
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Non essential expenditure!

General Tourism (Nazca Lines, Tiahuancao, Lago Titicaca)	120
Restaurant Meals, Wine etc.	100

We spent very little on equipment for this expedition as we already had virtually everything we needed.

Equipment

- Clothing Each of us had thermal underwear, fleece salopettes, 2-3 fleece jackets, goretex jacket and salopettes, gloves, mitts, down jacket. We rarely needed to wear all of this.
- Camping We used a TerraNova Ultra Quasar tent, an MSR XGK-II shakerjet stove (burning white gas or kerosene) and RAB sleeping bags, Petzl headtorches. All worked very well as expected
- Climbing We used one 9mm rope and carried a rack of about 4 slings, 2 quickdraws, 5 rocks, 3 hexes, 2 snow stakes and 6 ice-screws. We only really used the ice-screws apart from the abseil on Ascarani. We had two tools each, one axe and one hammer. We had a lightweight helmet each but felt it would have been justified not to use this.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to MCoFS for expedition grant, Hum and Jackie for sharing some of our experiences in Bolivia, Azimut in La Paz for advice on the Cordillera Apolobamba, Jorge in Miraflores for food, accomodation etc., Millenarian Tourism in La Paz for transport.

Contact

For anyone requiring further information about the areas we visited we can be contacted at

93 Queen Street, Castle Douglas, DG7 1EH, SCOTLAND. Tel 01556 503946

Bibliography

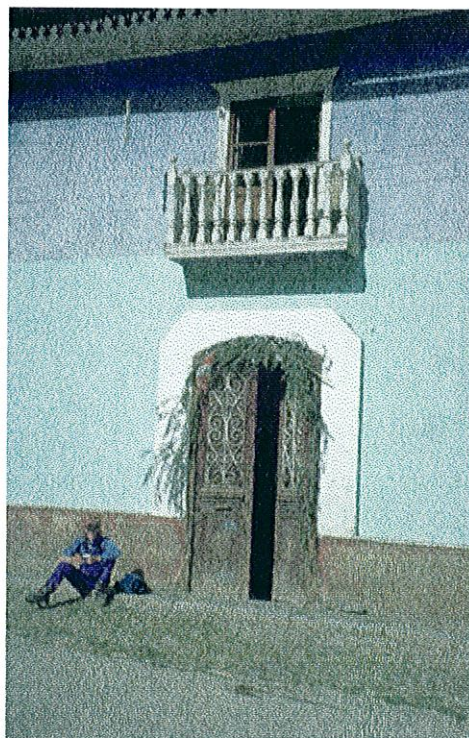
There is very little published in English on the areas we visited, particularly the Cordillera Central of Peru. The following may however prove of some use.

Books

Neate	Mountaineering in the Andes	2nd edit. 1994	RGS	ISBN 0-907649-64-5
Kelsey	Guide to the Worlds Mountains	3rd edit. 1990	Kelsey	ISBN 0944510-02-7
Biggar	The High Andes	1996	Andes	ISBN 1-871890-38-1

Journal Articles

Bratt	Apolobamba	AAJ 1960
?	Apolobamba	AJ 1986
Whewell	Quimsa Cruz	AAJ 1969
Echevarria	Quimsa Cruz	Pyrenaica 162 (Spanish)
Radcliffe	Ticlla	NZAJ 1972



Waiting for the mules in Miraflores