



AAC Publications

Agpad Island, Europa Wall; Akuliaruseq Island, Anchor Wall

Greenland, West Greenland

BETWEEN JUNE 28 and August 6, Wojtek Malawski, Konrad Ociepka, and I visited the Uummannaq and Upernavik regions aboard the yacht Berg. We flew to Illulisat on Greenland's west coast and then sailed north for a few days to the Horn, a 1,000m wall on the northeast spur of Upernavik Island (Upernavik Ø), first climbed in 2013. However, we found the wall unattractive, with no logical or fine-looking lines on solid rock, and decided to change our plans.

We moved south and the next day reached Agpat (Agpad or Appat) Island, where we discovered the Sleeping Man (a.k.a. Old Man) Range at the western end of the island's south coast. It comprised seven 800m faces that had seen no previous climbing. Standing above the cliffs is the Old Man of Saatut (70°53.9'N, 52°06'W). The only recorded route to the summit was completed in 2010 by Matthew Burdekin, Sam Doyle, Miles Hill, and George Ullrich (U.K.), with mostly scrambling on poor rock and a section of British HVS 5a. The main cliffs looked technically difficult, with hardly any continuous features.

We selected one of the faces, which we named Europa Wall (70°53'4.37"N, 52°7'54.81"W), and after reaching the base in a dinghy, we fixed ropes on the first four pitches. Our plan had been to climb a direct route with portaledges, but we soon found chossy rock on our chosen line, so we changed tactics and opted for an alpine-style ascent along the easiest and most logical route.

On July 7, after one day of rest, we ascended our fixed ropes and 18 hours later reached the top of the wall. (The true summit proved to be too dangerous to climb, being a tower of rubble.) On the penultimate pitch, rockfall cut our two lead ropes into five pieces. Fortunately, we had a spare rope, and this allowed us to rappel to the base of the wall, 26 hours after starting. The route was named Rollingstones (850m, 6c). One bolt was placed by hand.

We spent the next two days resting in the town of Uummannaq. The following day, two hours into the voyage toward our next destination, a pressure cooker exploded in my face, causing severe skin burns. We returned to Uummannaq, where I had my face treated and dressed in the hospital.

On July 12 we reached Sortehul Fjord and the Impossible Wall and Red Wall, climbed by an American-Belgian team in 2010. Although these looked like exceptionally beautiful objectives, they also appeared to be quite grassy, and there was snow on the tops, meaning that potential routes would likely be wet. We moved on, and on the 13th discovered an area of virgin 800m to 900m walls on Akuliaruseq Island and the Kangeq Peninsula. Both sets of walls lie above Angmarqua (Ammarquua) Strait. Kangeq has two named formations: Kungut and Ujara. On Akuliaruseq (72°33.54'N, 55°20.50'W), we knew of no named walls nor saw any traces of climbing activity.

Over 10 climbing days, during the period from July 14–28, we put up a new route on what we dubbed the Anchor Wall, on the northwest tip of Akuliaruseq Island. We first located a descent route on the opposite side, then fixed a few ropes on our chosen line so we could work several difficult pitches, and subsequently we committed to the wall, reaching the summit on the July 26. We descended partway on the far side to collect some food, returned to the summit, and bivouacked for two nights. On the 28th, Konrad and Wojtek rappelled the headwall and started freeing the difficult sections, with Konrad leading the key 7c+, 7b, and 6c+ pitches. That evening, we made 5.5-hour descent to the

coast, where we were picked up by our yacht at 2 a.m. on the 29th.

We named the route Nightwatch (700m, 7c+, three bolts and two rivets), and we have called this region Bergland after the name of our vessel and its captain Artur Bergier, without whom the expedition never would have happened.

Marcin Tomaszewski, Polish Mountaineering Association

Editor's note: AAJ 2013 included a note on regulations governing access to certain seacliffs in Greenland during bird-nesting season. Although **this note** has not been updated, it provides contact information that should be helpful to climbers who want to learn more about these regulations.

Images



The Sleeping Man Range on Agpat Island. There are seven towers in total, of which only one is known to have been climbed: Europa Wall, the prominent white-colored face toward the left side of the image.



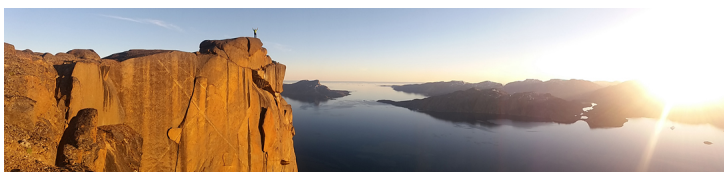
Rollingstones on the Europa Wall of Agpat Island.



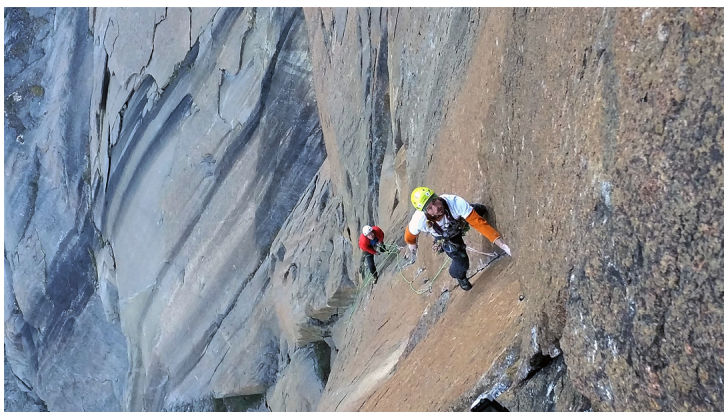
Unclimbed walls of Kangeq ($72^{\circ}28.33'N$, $55^{\circ}26.73'W$), to the south of Anchor Wall. Bob Shepton inspected these walls from his boat in 2010, during the time an American-Belgian team was making the first ascent of the nearby Impossible Wall, but subsequently the team decided to head for Cape Farewell.



Anchor Wall, Akuliaruseq Island, and the line of Nightwatch (2017).



On top of Anchor Wall with the waters of Angmarqua Fjord.



Konrad Ociepka (leading) and Wojtek Malawski on the 7b+ pitch of Nightwatch, Anchor Wall, Akuliaruseq Island.



Marcin Tomaszewski above the Nightwatch headwall on the Anchor Wall, Akuliaruseq Island.



Konrad Ociepka on the headwall of Nightwatch, Anchor Wall, Akuliaruseq Island.



Konrad Ociepka on the crux pitch of Nightwatch, Anchor Wall, Akuliaruseq Island.

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