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SCREE

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June 1960

HEAD OF LAKE EKLUTNA, 2, 3 & 4 JULY

This trip is scheduled to start either on the evening of 1 July or very early in the morning of 2 July and will end 4 July late in the afternoon.

To avoid a 5 mile hike from the end of the jeep trail which is $\frac{1}{2}$ way up the shore of the lake, we are depending on boat transportation to get to base camp at the head of the lake. Inasmuch as boats appear to be scarce so far, it is necessary for those interested in the trip to indicate their intention no later than 29 June. There will be a small charge per person to defray expenses of boat rental.

Anyone willing to lend or rent an extra boat and/or motor to the Club for the trip and all those desiring to make the trip should contact Howard Schuck: Duty hours telephone 114-SK 3-2115, after 5 p.m. 114-SK 2-9448.

There will be no MCA meeting other than the 4th of July outing.

EAGLE RIVER HIGH COUNTRY (PICHLER'S FOLLY)

by Lois Willard

If all excursions go as the first few incidents i.e. running out of gas, our trip would have been a flop. As it turned out a good time was had by Norm Pichler, Howard Schuck, Steve Foss, John Dillman, Gene Horning, Irma (Sherpa Tag-a-long) Duncan and Lois (Sherpa Tailend) Willard. Leaving 7:00 p.m. Friday (June 10) we followed the information provided by Helen Wolfe and a couple of homesteaders, Pullen and Easterly, and continued along the road up the Eagle River valley taking the left fork and climbing almost up to timberline on a road that was not yet two weeks old. The cars were left at the Easterly homestead and the seven of us climbed for about half an hour to our Friday camp beside a rushing stream in a high meadow.

Our morning route took us through this high valley on a center ridge some four and half hours to the end of a moraine of a dead glacier, our Saturday camp. On the way up we tried glissading with pack losing his sleeping bag into the stream. Several anxious moments went by before recovery. The afternoon was spent climbing up to a nearby ridge where Howard could spy on the sheep in Peter's creek. This also enabled us to get a glimpse of the mountain yet to be named for Anton Anderson. Between this ridge and the mountain lies a glacial moraine, lots of snow at this time of year and a high jagged ridge which needs more study. Descent by the seat of the pants, glissading down a long snowfield, reversed things up and Howard made himself the star of the show with his rubber pants brought out for this purpose.

From cooking over a cozy Primus came many varieties of mixtures but let it not be said that anyone went hungry. During the night, water froze in the canteens so to warm us Norm led us up a 6500 ft. peak near camp. We stopped a few minutes at Bear Pass (so named because of the bear tracks coming up from Peter's creek over a cornice and sliding down Eagle River) for snacks. Howard, John, Steve and Gene climbed up nearby Lookout peak to survey more sheep and find out what was on the other side towards Peter's creek, while Norm led the two Sherpas up the highest peak, dubbed Mt. Pleasant because it was pleasant and nicknamed Pichler's Folly by the majority. The rest of the party joined us for more food and pictures. Views to all directions through rapidly moving clouds made it a worthwhile climb. In forty-five minutes we were down via glissade and packed up camp returning to the cars and the pleasures of civilisation.

The area is a hiler and climbers delight with its easy access through the road to timberline. Perhaps with more time and a more rapidly moving party the mountain we wish to reach could be reached for we found it very possible. There are many good campsites and there is water throughout the valley.

Ascent of Mount McKinley South Peak
May 17th, 1960

Paul Crews, Dr. Rod Wilson, Andy Brauchli, Chuck Metzger
all of Anchorage, Alaska

Daily Account by Paul B. Crews

May 7, 1960

Rod Wilson, Helga Bading, Andy Brauchli and I left Anchorage on the 8:30 A.M. Alaska Railroad northbound, arriving at Talkeetna at 12:15. We were met by Don Sheldon, our pilot. Chuck Metzger, 5th member of our party, who had preceded us on the Wednesday P.M. train and had checked through our climbing gear with Mr. Bohlin, the Chief Park Ranger, had been flown in to the 8200-ft. level on the Kahiltua Glacier the day before and sent up camp. Don had also taken in our air drop to the 10,200' level, so all of the preliminaries were out of the way. Within 15 minutes of arriving at Talkeetna I was on my way via Sheldon's supercub to our first camp on the Kahiltua where Chuck was waiting. The trip was routine and by 7:15 all five of our party were assembled on the glacier, "shaking down" equipment for use during the next few days.

May 8, 1960

Got up at 6:00 A.M. - weather calm and clear, plus 10 degrees F. Did not get underway until 9:40 because of adjustments to packs, snowshoes, etc. Because of acclimatization problems, we did not arrive at our airdrop (10,200') until 3:15 P.M. We spent the rest of the day sorting out air drop items and packaging them for transport to higher camps.

The two Japanese parties (Meiji and Waseda Universities) had established base camp nearby and while all members were at higher camps they had left quite elaborate, well-stocked camps.

The weather closed in at 7:00 P.M., with 10-15 mph wind from the north and plus 14 deg. F.

May 9, 1960

It snowed all night with temperature at 7:00 A.M. of plus 12 degrees. The weather cleared at 9:00 A.M. and almost immediately the glacier became almost unbearable from the heat (about 60 degrees), without a breath of wind. We put on snowshoes and our packs and trudged up the well flagged (by the Japanese) trail towards Windy Corner. We were sweltering victims of "glacier lassitude". At about 11,500 feet we ran out of new snow and into hard packed snow and ice. We cached our snowshoes, put on crampons and continued up the glacier to a fairly sheltered spot overlooking part of Peters Glacier where we dumped our loads at 2:00 P.M. at an estimated 12,000 ft. Worked until 4:00 P.M. leveling a spot for tomorrow night's camp, then headed back down the glacier for our 10,200' camp. Weather at 8:00 P.M. calm, clear - 0 degrees F.

May 10, 1960

Wind picked up and blew all night with gusts estimated to 40 mph. Wind stopped and sun came up at 7:00 A.M. - plus 4 degrees, absolutely cloudless. We packed camp up to the 12,000 ft. site and put up the tent by 1:30. Helga was not feeling well, so the rest of us left her at camp and carried the extra loads up to 13,000 feet where we cached them next to a pile of Meiji University supplies; then back to our

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12,000 ft. camp where Helga had supper waiting. To bed at 7:00 P.M. Clear - calm - temp. minus 10 deg. F.

May 11, 1960

It warmed up during the night to plus 17 degrees, calm and snowing. We did not start packing up the slope until 10:00 A.M. Helga, Rod and I were all suffering from altitude (headaches and upset stomachs). Helga was especially bothered, but we all managed to get packed up. Carried camp up to 13,200 feet where four members of the Waseda University Group were camped. We decided to make camp here because of their report of avalanche dangers just ahead. Leaving Helga behind to make camp, the rest of our party returned to the 13,000 ft. cach and lugged the supplies up to about 14,000 feet beyond Windy Corner where, because of visibility and snow conditions, it seemed advisable to make another cache. We returned to the 13,200 ft. camp about 5:15 P.M. and had a tea party with the Japanese, then had supper and to bed at 9:00. Weather cleared and wind started about 8:00 - 30 mph gusts, plus 10 degrees.

May 12, 1960

Left with camp about 10:00 A.M. Clear sky and plus 4 degrees. We encountered 25-30 mph winds rounding Windy Corner, but were through it to relatively calm weather in the big bowl by 10:45. Helga had been having an upset stomach for a couple of days and I decided when we reached our 14,000' cach at 11:45 that she was in no shape to travel. We pitched the two-man tent, put Helga in it with her sleeping bag and carried the rest of the camp on up to 14,400 feet where we arrived at 2:00 P.M.

Chuck and Andy immediately went back to get part of the cach and to bring Helga back with them. Rod and I leveled a campsite and made camp below the ice wall and out of range of avalanches.

Chuck, Helga and Andy arrived at 4:45. Weather at 9:00 P.M. clear - wind 10 mph and minuse 2 degrees F.

May 13, 1960

Day started at 7:15 with weather clear and plus 4 degrees with gusts of wind to 10 mph, although at night we estimated gusts to 40 mph.

Rod and I went down to our 14,000 ft. cach and brought up the rest of our supplies. Andy and Chuck left at 10:00 up the ice wall for the top of the West Buttress (16,200') with light loads and reached it at 4:45. They used the thousand feet of fixed rope the Meiji University group had installed, and estimated a saving in time for our party by at least two days by the use of it. The wall was about 50% clear of snow and the step cutting in the exposed blue ice would have been tremendous.

Andy and Chuck returned at 5:30, at the same time that we received three visitors from the Meiji University group. We had another tea party, then to bed at 8:30. Weather calm, clear and minus 1 degree.

May 14, 1960

Rod, Andy, Chuck and I left for 16,200-foot level on the West Buttress at 9:30 with the rest of the supplies. We stopped at 15,000 feet to visit with the Meiji's at their camp, then went on to the top of the ridge, reaching our cache at 2:00 P.M. Returned to camp by 4:30, had supper, then carried camp up to 15,500 feet just below the fixed rope. We carved out a site on the lower lip of a huge crevasse, had tea and were in bed by 10:30. After her day of rest, Helga seemed to be in fine spirits. Weather starting to blow - clear and minus 2 degrees.

May 15, 1960

Woke up to a noisy tent. The wind was blowing in gusts up to 30 mph. Helga was bothered by altitude sickness, so after getting all packed, decided against climbing today because of weather and sickness.

Andy and I dropped down to the Meiji camp for a visit and learned that the entire high camp (Meiji) is being brought down today - another reason for not climbing; they will want sole use of their fixed rope.

Don Sheldon came over about noon and dropped a lot of items on the glacier below at 14,400 feet. Later in the day four climbers arrived from the direction of Windy Corner and started gathering up supplies. We knew it must be the John Day party, who were going to try for a speed record in climbing the mountain.

Our present camp was the first where we felt we had line-of-sight with the radio relay station atop Mount Susitna. Prior to this we had been hidden from the station by Mount Hunter. Accordingly we got out our small portable Motorola, warmed up the batteries and made contact almost immediately. I called up Betty (my wife) at our Anchorage residence via phone patch, and passed on all of the news of our trip to date. Went to bed at 8:30. Weather: calm, scattered clouds - minus 4 degrees F.

May 16, 1960

Started up ice wall at 10:00 A.M. with camp, arriving at top at 1:00. Andy and Chuck started up the West Buttress ahead of Helga, Rod and me, as Helga did not feel like climbing very fast. They were soon back down again, however; they had had some unfortunate luck - our cook kit had somehow come loose on one of the packs and was now half-way down Peters Glacier! Fortunately we carried a second stove, but the loss was still disheartening. By the time we had recovered from the loss we discovered that the Day Party had overtaken us.

After a short rest they passed us and went on up the ridge, where they camped at about 16,600 feet. Because of Helga's altitude sickness we made camp at 16,400', just below their camp. Weather: Clear, calm. Temperature minus 17 degrees.

May 17, 1960

Got off to a late summit start. Helga was still suffering from altitude sickness. She could definitely not make the summit in her present condition, and we other four decided to make the summit try while the weather is good, leaving Helga in camp. Perhaps in a day or two, if she were to properly acclimatize, we would try again. When the decision was reached to climb without her, it was 10:40. As we left she mournfully took pictures of our departure.

We passed the empty Day camp about two hundred feet above ours. As we reached 17,000 feet and looked across the snow field we saw the Day party about half-way up Denali Pass. We climbed behind them, perhaps by an hour. They were following the Meiji markers, and adding some of their own, so we had no trouble in following. At about 6:00 P.M. we reached and passed them, just below the final ridge and took our turn kicking and chopping steps. We finally reached the South Summit at 7:15, with the Days right on our heels. The weather - clear, calm, minus 30 degrees F.

Susumo Takahashi of the Meiji University group and one member of his party had previously carried a two-man Meade tent to the Summit and had camped overnight. They had also erected a new plastic pole at the summit, and had flown from top to bottom flags in the following order: U.S., Japanese, Alaskan and Meiji University. It made quite a colorful display at the top of the continent.

After numerous pictures were taken we started the descent at 7:45 P.M. The Day Party stayed behind for more pictures. We were back to Denali Pass at 9:30 and were on the 17,000 foot snowfield at 11:00. We noticed that Day's party was perhaps 40 minutes behind us, descending a steep, crevassed section of wall.

Shortly thereafter Rod looked around and found that the entire Day Party was heaped up in a pile at the foot of the slope. They had just taken a fall of about 500 feet. We were about 3/8 mile from them, but by shouting were able to establish that they were in trouble and wanted a tent.

Our party (as apparently was Day's) had reached a point of almost complete exhaustion. Andy Brauchli and I were at the moment apparently the least exhausted, so we hurried down the ridge to the Day camp and took down their tent, packing it on a board. Then, while Andy went on down to our camp to warm up the radio batteries in case we needed communication, I started back up the ridge with the Logan tent. At about 16,900 feet I met the Day party (without Day) descending the ridge. They were roped, but were suffering from head injuries and frostbite. Lou Whittaker seemed to be in good shape, but Jim Whittaker and Pete Schoening were apparently not aware of much and were in a state of shock.

In view of the fact that they could travel and that I had their tent, I suggested to Lou that they pick up their sleeping bags at their camp and drop the 200 feet to our camp. Lou said they would but it was too much for them. They finally crawled into their sleeping bags (without tent) at their own camp.

When I got the tent up to Day, I found him in a sleeping bag, dressed warmly in down clothing and prevented from sliding down the hill by a packboard and two ice axes. I leveled a tentsite around Day, slit a hole in the tent bottom and set the tent up over him, returning to our camp at 3:30 A.M. Weather: clear, calm, minus 15 degrees.

May 18, 1960

I awoke at 4:30 to find Rod getting ready to go up and see his patients. He had been exhausted the night before that it was physically impossible for him to do more than return to camp. Now, with about 3 hours sleep behind him, his hypocritical oath took over and he was impatient to be off. We discussed the situation and, as he left for the upper ridge, Andy, Chuck and I started getting the radio ready for an emergency call to Anchorage. The call was made about 6:00 A.M. and read as follows:- All members John Day party suffered fall 11:30 P.M. May 17. Day injured seriously, probable broken leg. Needs air evacuation. Present location at 17,000 ft. level top of West Buttress 200 yds. from flat area. Can pack to flat area. Bring fresh batteries for Motorola Model H23-1 Handy Walky. Will standby your message at 8:00 A.M. and every 2 hours. Repeat, send batteries. PWL CREWS. The first call was made to John Johnston, chairman of the newly formed (only 1 month old) Alaska Rescue Group. Subsequent calls were handled by Hal Sherman who coordinated with the Military Rescue Coordination Centers at Elmendorf AFB.

Helga did not feel well at all and we did not feel that she should be left alone in the tent. Chuck and Andy, therefore, went up above to help the Day party, while I kept radio schedules every two hours.

Rod and Chuck returned at 12:00. Rod's report of casualties:

John Day -- fractured left leg
Pete Schoening - severe head injuries and frozen left hand.
Jim Whittaker - head injuries and frostbite
Lou Whittaker - possible frostbite.

In the meantime I had learned by radio that an Air Force or Army helicopter was to pick them up in the afternoon. Chuck and I immediately climbed up to the Day camp at 16,600' and were able to get the Whittakers and Schoening to climb (despite injuries) back to 17,000' to their tent, the only logical helicopter pickup site. It took them about 4 hours to make the climb. Andy, Chuck and I stood by waiting to load John Day when the helicopter arrived. We knew that we would have to carry him about 200 yards from the tent to the level landing site, but were afraid to move him until the last minute because of his broken leg. About 4:00 P.M. we heard the chopper but it flew by with no attempt to land. 20 minutes later Sheldon flew over and dropped batteries and medical supplies. The chopper never returned and at 5:00 P.M. Andy and I started down the ridge. Andy stopped at the 16,600 ft. camp, loaded up and returned with the Day party's sleeping bags, stove, fuel, etc. while I went down to radio Anchorage of the situation and see what was keeping the helicopter away.

At camp, Rod was quite perturbed over Helga's condition. He felt that not only the Day party should be evacuated but that Helga should also be taken to a lower altitude immediately. Apparently the shock of the news of the accident above had not helped Helga's condition. This information was duly radioed in, together with a request for another tent and stove at the upper camp.

In the meantime Rod packed up his sleeping bag and started the climb up to the 17,000' camp to stay the night with the Day party. At the next radio schedule I was informed that a civilian "Allouette" helicopter would be over at 6:00 A.M., Sheldon would show him where to land, and then he would shuttle the injured to the base of the mountain where Sheldon would ferry them out. I was also told that the Air Force would make an air drop yet tonight.

Rod knew nothing of the air drop when he left our camp and Chuck and Andy left for the lower camp when he arrived instead of waiting, and missed it. Two tents, a stove, fuel, oxygen and other supplies were dropped at 17,000' that we were unable to utilize until morning when we returned to the upper site. Chuck and Andy got down to the lower site at 12:00 dead tired. When they had left the upper camp at 11:30 P.M., Rod and

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Rod and all from the Day party were in the Logan Tent cooking. The airdrop arrived about midnight. I made a hot supper for Chuck and Andy and in bed by 1:00 A.M.

May 19, 1960

Got up at 4:00 A.M. so that Andy and Chuck could be up the ridge by 6:00 A.M. for the scheduled landing for the first helicopter. I called on radio schedule at 5:00 and things were pretty much as planned. Sheldon went overhead at 6:20 with 'copter in tow. Nothing further happened until 8:00 A.M. when I discovered (by radio schedule) the 'copter had a portable radio #320. Army 'copter buzzed lower camp for about 45 min but would not land because of altitude and turbulent air. Tried to contact the chopper on #320, but ineffective. Chopper buzzed our camp then went to upper camp about 9:30, made a number of passes but never landed. Notified Hal Sherman of this. I also told him that if the Army helicopter would stand by on a 24 hr. basis we would notify them of favorable landing conditions. I went to upper camp at 11:00 right after Chuck came down too cold to stay longer.

Before Chuck came down he and Andy pitched the 2-man tent received in the airdrop the previous night. Peter Schoening wanted to get out of the larger Day tent, so Andy and I helped him move over to the small 2-man tent. Andy took Rod's sleeping bag from the big tent and stayed with him all night. Adjacent to the 2-man tent and received in previous night's airdrop was a completely equipped inhalator. I tied it to Rod's pack-board and started for the lower camp. Arrived about 4:00 P.M. and Rod applied the entire 1000 liters to Helga. She absolutely refused to wear a mask so we covered her head with her parka and dropped the oxygen inside her sleeping bag. Rod felt it was helpful, but was dubious of any great results. The wind came up strongly about 6:00 P.M. although it had been gusty all day. All night it blew, diminishing by morning. I didn't sleep all night waiting for a lull to get a chopper in. The wind also broke our only thermometer. Helga had become progressively worse. She was no incoherent and could keep nothing in her stomach.

May 20, 1960

About 3:30 A.M. the wind had died down so I walked to the edge of the ridge with the radio and called Hal Sherman. I asked him when he could send the chopper as Helga should be evacuated immediately. He stated that the small chopper (that had attempted an earlier landing) had flown back to Fort Greely but that they were converting an E-21 to skis and that it would be here in about 5 hours. I called back at 4:00 A.M. and was told to get ready for an air drop in about 30 minutes. Sure enough it arrived at lower camp at 5:00 and we received an akja, batteries and medicine for Helga in free fall. We also received a paradropped package that landed somewhere 1500 ft. down on Peters Glacier. I was told it as plasma for Helga that Ome Daiber had brought for her from Seattle. A similar drop was made above at 6:00 to include 2 akjas, and radio batteries which Andy brought down just in time to help us evacuate Helga.

As soon as we received the airdrop at the lower camp I called Sherman on the radio and asked about the choppers. He told me that the 'copters had been cancelled and that plasma had been included in the drop. We were to administer it to her immediately. He also said that there were now 50 men on the glacier below, being supported to 14,500 ft. by helicopters. Rod said it looked like the end of Helga unless we got her down the ice wall immediately. It was probably 1500 ft. down to the paradrop and would take 3 hours to recover. It was also about 600' down to the akja. Rod said that in his opinion getting Helga down the ice wall was the only answer to save her. The plasma would have to be thawed and at best conditions were bad. I radioed Sherman that had better get the choppers up to Day to save him and the frozen limbs of Schoening. I then informed him that I was going to bring Helga down in the akja in view of the fact that we had chopper cover to 14,500' and directly below us.

Chuck and I dropped down to Peters Glacier to the akja and dragged it to camp.

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We loaded Helga and our sleeping bags in it and with Andy's help (he had just returned from a night above with the Days) Chuck and I started down the ice wall to 14,400' with Helga at 10:00 A.M. We got off the wall into softer snow at 15,500 feet and Andy started the tiring climb back up to camp alone. The wind was dead calm during the descent and it was extremely hot on the glacier. Helga, in her heavy Bauer sleeping bag, was suffering from the heat. She started to show signs of consciousness at 15,500' and indicated that she was hot. Chuck and I tried to cool her off as best we could, and then continued on down the mountain. At the fixed rope we lowered the Akja, using an ice axe anchor wherever possible, or with a carabiner brake anchored to the fixed line at a piton, or with a prusik on the line itself. We moved down a rope length at a time, anchoring the akja between rappels with a prusik to the fixed rope. Below the rope was softer snow and we used ice axe belays entirely.

At 14,400 ft. we were met by John Johnston of the Mountain Rescue Group and Don Sheldon who had just landed his Pipter Supercub for a new high altitude landing record. We loaded Helga into Sheldon's plane and he immediately took off (3:00 P.M.) for lower altitudes and a hospital. (Helga subsequently made a complete recovery within a week.)

Chuck and I were flown to 10,200' level for the night. About 9:00 P.M. Link Luckett, a contract chopper pilot, in his Hiller helicopter was able to land and evacuate John Day from 17,000 feet. We also learned that a Cessna 180 with two aboard had crashed and burned at 17,000 feet.

May 21, 1960

Chuck and I were flown from 10,200 feet to 14,400 feet, arriving at 8:30 to find the ground party encamped and preparing to climb.

We tied into a rope with Dee Molenaar of Seattle and left 14,400 feet at 9:30. We were to bring the Whittaker brothers and our camp. Link Luckett had picked off Schoening in the meantime). We reached 16,400', our old camp, at 12:00 to find that Rod and Andy had already brought the Whittakers down this far. (For an account of the previous 24 hours on the ridge see attached story by Dr. Wilson).

After tea, Molenaar and three other rescue members who had climbed behind us, escorted the Whittakers down and off the mountain. Rod, Andy, Chuck and I broke camp. Our packs, including salvageable items of the Day party, weighed around 75 pounds each. Andy's pack exceeded 90 pounds, in addition he was towing Peter Schoening's pack like a sled. It must have weighed at least 50 pounds. With the load it was a slow descent. An expected storm hovered over us as we started down the fixed rope with blowing snow (visibility 100 feet). We arrived at the 14,400' rescue camp at 5:15 in the midst of a blizzard.

Molenaar, several of the rescue group and the Whittakers had gone on down to a lower camp but there was a total of ten of us remaining in two Army tents and we camped out the storm at 14,400 feet. (See attached report of this evacuation by Jon Gardey.)

May 22, 1960

The storm blew all day with gusts to estimated 60 mph and temperature about plus 20 degrees. No one left the tents.

May 23, 1960

Storm let up about 4:00 P.M. after dumping two new feet of snow. There was one pair of snowshoes in camp, so as a party we were trapped. I climbed back up to 15,500 ft. with the radio in hopes that we might request an air drop of snowshoes. Also for a flight out for one of the Seattle climbers, Ron Priebe, who as also a victim of altitude sickness and too weak to walk. This time we had no radio contact.

May 24, 1960

Snow was too soft to travel, although stiffening a bit. We hoped that by May 25 the snow would bear our weight. Also the avalanche danger at Windy Corner would be minimized. We hoped to pull Ron Priebe out on the same Akja we had used to get Helga down the ice wall.

May 25, 1960

Don Sheldon flew over and after returning to 10,200 feet flew in snowshoes for us and flew Priebe out. We packed up camp, leaving 14,400 feet at 10:00 and arriving at 10,200 ft. at 2:00.

An Air Force H-21 helicopter took Rod to Talkeetna at about 7:00 P.M.

May 26, 1960

Three Army H-21's evacuated the entire rescue camp at 10,200 feet and the party arrived in Anchorage at 6:00 P.M.

The retreat from the mountain was not in the script but at least everyone was off the mountain.

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Supplement to the account of Mt. McKinley ascent
by Paul Crews, Anchorage.

by Rodman Wilson, M.D.

May 20, 1960

About 5:00 P.M. I was informed by radio that an airplane had crashed at 17,000 feet and was asked to look for survivors. Andy returned into our camp at 16,400 ft. very tired from having ascended the ice wall for the fourth time. I then ascended the ridge to the Day camp. The Whittakers had already determined that two men had been killed in the crash of a Cessna 180 about 250 yards from their camp at 17,200 ft. at the top of the West Buttress. I also learned that Lockett had landed his Hiller helicopter near the camp and had left a radio with which he later gave instructions to Schoening for setting markers, flares, etc. for his return.

Lockett landed again in a gentle westerly breeze after several passes at about 9:30 P.M. We quickly slid Day in an akja to the 'copter and stuffed him in next to Lockett. Day was obviously in great pain but did not complain. Lockett then quickly swept off down Peters Glacier to Base Camp. I remained the night with Schoening and the Whittakers, all of use in high spirits.

May 21, 1960

Andy arrived at 17,200 ft. at about 8:00 A.M. to tell us that he had a radio report that a storm was gathering. A few minutes later Lockett fluttered in again in his stripped down 'copter and picked up Schoening, who was recovering rapidly from his head injury but whose left hand was seriously frostbitten. Andy and I went over to inspect and photograph the Cessna wreckage and the bodies in it. We then packed quickly and with the Whittakers walked down the ridge for the last time to our camp at 16,400 ft. About an hour later, shortly before snowfall began, Crews, Metzger and Molenaar arrived in camp.

by Jon Gardey

Initially I was flown to Summit in a C-123 along with the second group of about 40, most of whom were from Seattle. We arrived at Summit about 8 A.M. Thursday. From Summit we were transported in a helicopter to a sand bar away from the terminus of the Ruth Glacier. Soon after our arrival at the sand bar Sheldon made two flights to 8,400 ft. on the Kahiltna. Further flights to the glacier were prevented by squirly winds over the upper portion. About 10:00 P.M. Sheldon returned with three others and took four climbers to the Maiji base camp at 10,200 ft. Sheldon and the others then returned to Talkeetna.

Friday continued clear with relatively light winds aloft and the first load including myself of about 10 departed the sand bar in a Sikorsky twin engine helicopter. A hovering landing was attempted at the 10,200 ft. camp but proved unsuccessful and the aircraft crashed heavily into the snow shearing the downlock pin on the left gear. The strut was forced into the side of the fuselage and the helicopter sank into the soft snow. We quickly betook ourselves and our packs from the machine and, lightened, it managed to hobble off down the glacier.

At the Meiji camp we joined Molenaar and the others flown down the previous evening. A group of about 10 immediately put on packs and started up the well flagged trail up toward the West Buttress. We left the snowshoes at the base of the first steep pitch above the camp and continued in the tracks of a group of Japanese who were on a picture taking jaunt. During this entire day the sky had only scattered cirrus with a calm wind. Sensible temperatures were extremely high particularly along the trough below Windy Corner.

About 400 ft. below Windy Corner the Japanese decided to turn around and Keith Bart and Hans Metz took over for a hundred feet or so. They had rushed up to overtake us and after this help they returned to Meiji base. The effects of little or no sleep and scanty and sporadic eating combined with the sudden rush to altitude continually slowed the party and stops became more and more frequent reaching a frequency of every 10 to 20 ft. as we approached the cache at 14,400 feet. An attempt at making a camp for the night was even started at 14,000 ft. as we were extremely exhausted and didn't know how far the cache was. But someone mounted a rise and saw the boxes so the party staggered on reaching 14,400 ft. in early evening.

The night continued clear, but by morning a thin cirrus overcast had moved in and some alto cu were piling against the 19,000 ft. ridge above camp. During the morning a group from the camp who were joined by Crews, and Metzger flown into camp by Sheldon, Kitchen and Wilson, climbed to the 16,000 ft. ridge north of camp. They returned in the early afternoon with the Whittakers. By this time the mountain was obscured down to 16,000 ft. by alto cu which showed evidence of being driven by a southwest wind. The top of Foraker had also disappeared. Sheldon and friends took off about noon in a light southwest wind to evacuate the Japanese camps. The Whittakers, accompanied by 4 or 5 of us departed the 14,400 ft. camp about 4 p.m. At the time of our departure the sky had an alto cu to alto strat overcast at 15,000 ft. but temperatures were mild, winds were light and no gloves were needed. The winds continued light as we proceeded along the wall toward Windy Corner, but as we rounded the Corner we were met with a blast of wind and blowing snow. Visibility was soon down to

1/2 mile in blowing snow. Already by this time a Co-op 2-man mountain tent had been ripped apart by the wind. It had been set up just below the ridge at the Corner. We made our way to a group of tents about 500 ft. below Windy Corner. I was informed the winds had been blowing at this strength all day at this camp. During the night the wind continually increased in velocity, but direction remained constant ... from Windy Corner down the trough.

About 9 A.M. I attempted to reach the large 10 man Army tent from the modified Logan where I had slept and was blown down several times. When I reached the lee of the Army Tent I found it to be a virtual vacuum; I couldn't breathe and ran back to the Logan. The distance between the two tents was about 20 ft. Visibility at this time was about 15 ft. in blowing snow with possibly some snow, although it was very difficult to ascertain which was which. By this time the pole had worn through the top of the Logan and after one attempt at a fix it collapsed. We tried to stay in it longer but were unable to keep up with the drift. I reached the Army tent on the second attempt and found it already brimming with the occupants of a downed Itisa tent, a French Isothermic and a Keith Hart creation. We joined them which made a total of 18 in the tent. About noon two went out to reinforce the outer wall and tighten the guys. The tent had C ration boxes and snow piled along the windward wall, with two climbing ropes to the top of the center pole. Two ice axes anchored the main guy; other axes gathered from the fallen tents helped out along the other guys. Inside seated climbers lined the walls and two in shifts stood against the windward wall in an attempt to relieve the strain on the top of the center pole.

During the afternoon gusts managed to lift the windward wall off the ground in spite of the people and boxes. During the day cooking was moderately successful but with 18 climbers nobody got or seemed to want much to eat. Toward evening the storm increased with the wind tearing around the tent in a most fearful manner. About 8 P.M. an altimeter we had reached its highest reading and held steady. Our situation at this time was very serious as it is doubtful we could have survived had the tent gone. It would have been impossible to descend, two of the other tents were drifted full, the other two would have been habitable but not for 18. Actually throughout the storm one climber did survive in the downed Hart tent by a quirk of the drifting snow.

Noone left the tent during the night for fear the wind blowing in the door would remove the tent from the mountain. The constant vigil with the pole was maintained all night but by 5 A.M. the storm continued with undiminished force. By 7 A.M. the altimeter was falling and the wind became more gusty with longer quiet intervals. By 10 A.M. peak gusts were much less and the Whittakers and a few others left for the 10,200 ft. camp. By 1 P.M. contact was made by radio with the 14,400 ft. camp and as our presence was no longer needed our camp was evacuated. By this time several rips were showing up in the tent and it is doubtful it would have lasted another night. The storm had eroded away a total of 5 ft. of snow ... 3 ft. of powder and 2 ft. of old snow. The descent in still swirling snow was made to the 10,200 ft. camp in about 4 hours, with the wind dropping considerably as we rounded the corner at 12,000 ft. Three ft. of new snow had fallen at 10,200 ft. during the storm.

Departure from the mountain was made by helicopter and Sheldon Monday evening, and in my case by helicopter Tuesday morning.

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MOUNTAINEERING CLUB OF ALASKA

CLIMBING AND HIKING SCHEDULE

- JULY 3-4-5** **SNOWBIRD CABIN:** This would be a nice place for a 3 day weekend. There are quite a few climbing and hiking possibilities in this area. Drive to Palmer continue on the Glenn Highway for about a mile beyond Palmer, turn left on the Fishhook road to the Fishhook Bar bear right and continue on to the Little Susitna Lodge. Beyond the lodge the road turns to the left and starts climbing, about 3/4 mile about the lodge there is a road going off to the right continue on this road as far as you feel like driving. At the fork in this road continue right, and this may be as far as you can drive. At the very end of this road near the metal barn you'll find a small "house", this is the Snowbird mine cabin. Call Kiester's 344-1814 if interested.
- JULY 10-11** **CROWS NEST:** This can be a one day trip or on overnight. There is Technical climbing in the area for those interested. The cabin is reached by a hike from the end of the Girdwood road. The grade is steep in a few places, but not difficult. Call Leo Hannan 277-4748
- JULY 17-18** **PIONEER PEAK:** (Technical climb) This is a 6,398 foot peak located before crossing the Knik River bridge on the Glenn Highway. Call Gary Hansen 272-1145 if interested (Sunday July 18)
- JULY 17** **EXPLORATION TRIP IN THE EKLUTNA AREA:** There is a valley about half-way in on the Lake Eklutna Road that looks quite interesting. This valley is to the left or NW of the Lake. (Non-Technical) Call Theresa Overfield 277-3040 if interested. If you can't contact Theresa call Marge Prescott 277-2001.
- JULY 25** **WOVLVERINE PEAK:** (Non-Technical) In the Anchorage Area. Call Gwynneth Wilson 272-6219 if interested.
- JULY 25** **O'MALLEY PEAK:** Maybe Galye Nienhueser will be agreeable to leading a climb up this peak.
- AUG 1** **MCHUGH PEAK:** Can be reached from Rabbit Creek Valley or McHugh Creek Picnic Ground. (Non-Technical) Call Bill Hague 862-0136
- AUG 7 or 8** **TEYESKA PEAK:** Climb up the ridge from the chair lift to the peak then traverse to the Seward Highway. Call Dale Hagen 344-1783 if interested.
- AUG 7 or 8** **POWER LINE TO INDIAN:** One or two days, this is a non-technical trip and it also needs a sponsor
- AUG 14** **TWIN PEAKS:** Eklutna Area, Dave Meyers (Technical)
- AUG 14** **JUNEAU LAKE:** This lake is on the Kenai Peninsula so we will leave the Safeway Parking lot 9th & Gambell at 7:00 AM. Call Marge Prescott 277-2001 if interested
- AUG 21-22** **SHEEP MOUNTAIN:** There is a trail about mile 117 that goes back to Squaw Creek and this trail is about 6 miles long. It might make an interesting trip for those interested in this area.
- AUG 21-22** **EKLUTNA CABIN:** Climb up the Eklutna Glacier to the A-Frame cabin.
- AUG 28 or 29** **THIRD MOUNTAIN BEHIND FLATTOP:** Technical
- AUG 28 or 29** **EXPLORATION TRIP TO HOPE;**

pt for overnight trips and some technical climbs all trips will leave from the way Parking lot (9th & Gambell) at 8:00 AM unless otherwise specified by the leader.