

to gain access to the North-east ridge, a rickety half-mile of rock ridge and an elegant mile of curving snow ridge, before we set foot on the small, squat summit at 1 p.m. On another peak (4A in Map 2) we made several attempts on two separate days, which ended in honourable failure about 200 ft. below the summit. The mountain is guarded to an exceptional degree by séracs, gaping schrunds and crevasses.

During the last four days the weather became so bad that very little climbing was possible. Anxiety mounted on account of the marooned parties and the communications with the outer world; everything depended on the tenuous link provided by two small helicopters. We found some interest in studying the wild life. The big white Dall sheep were seen, often in large flocks, not far from camp. Someone sighted a grizzly bear. Smaller mammals (ground squirrels, lemmings, weasels, pikahs, etc.) became fearless and sometimes positively importunate.

So bad did the situation become that the whole programme for evacuating the first group of 100 climbers and replacing them by the second group, had to be postponed by at least twenty-four hours. The Alaskan Highway was cut in a number of places by flood water and landslides, the telephone lines to Whitehorse were broken and a crisis loomed near.

As I was tied to a programme of youth activities in Ontario, we were the first to leave as the crisis receded. We flew out on July 29 and were driven fast along the Highway to Whitehorse, only to see the plane on the scheduled flight to Edmonton take off as we approached the city. So ended a memorable fortnight in the far North-West. Despite, and even because of, its setbacks and misfortunes, it was a wonderful experience. We saw some splendid new mountains. We acquired a considerable respect for the North American climbers; what is more important, we found many new friends.

Mr. W. S. DOCHARTY was also present and wrote to the Hon. Secretary: 'I duly performed the pleasant duty with which you had charged me of conveying greetings from the Alpine Club to all assembled at the second general climbing camp. The little ceremony was warmly appreciated by all present'.

MR. J. V. HOEMAN writes:

The principal climb of the Y.A.C.E. was the first ascent of the border summit of Mount Vancouver, which has been tentatively designated 'Good Neighbour Peak'. At 15,673 ft.,¹ it was the highest unclimbed

¹ Readers will note that there are minor differences between these heights and those in Lord Hunt's article, which are based on earlier surveys.—EDITOR.

summit on the Alaska-Canada border, where it is second in height only to Mount Saint Elias, 18,008 ft. The higher north-north-west summit of Mount Vancouver, 15,820 ft., is the fifteenth highest mountain in North America, but it had been climbed only once before, by Dr. Alan Bruce-Robertson, William Hainsworth, Robert McCarter, and Professor N. E. Odell in 1949.² Selected for the 1967 climb to represent Canada were Montague E. Alford, Glendon Boles, Dr. Alan Bruce-Robertson (veteran of the 1949 climb), and Leslie McDonald. To represent the U.S. were Daniel R. Davis, George Denton, John Edward Williamson, and myself. Monty and I were designated co-leaders.

The evening of June 18 Monty, Alan, George and I were flown from the Kluane Lake headquarters of Walter Wood's Icefield Ranges Research Project across the great glaciers of the Saint Elias Range to land at 7000 ft. elevation on the Alaskan side of Mount Vancouver. As we stepped from the two ski-wheel equipped planes we became the first climbers to set foot on the 200 square mile drainage of the Valerie glacier. Weather is the major limiting factor in the Saint Elias, and the next day we left George in camp to radio for the planes to bring the others if the low clouds lifted. Meanwhile Monty, Alan and I pioneered the route through the ice-fall to the foot of the south ridge of the South-east buttress of Good Neighbour Peak (Illustration no. 10).

On the 20th at noon the planes brought Glen, Dan, Les, and Jed. Soon George and I with these four, wearing snowshoes, followed the trail of wands left the day before to fix ropes on the 20-ft. ice cliff and 30-ft. steep slope to the crest of our chosen ridge, and cache our loads there. The following day we abandoned Base Camp, taking the remainder of what we intended to use on our climb with us. At the base of the ridge we left our snowshoes and shifted to crampons. It turned out to be a long day, as the ridge crest was narrow, avalanchey snow followed by a long section of very fractured rock, but by evening we had gained the flat top of a ridge at 10,300 ft. Here we set up Camp I.

June 22 saw us bringing up supplies from the ridge cache to Camp I and fixing ropes along 500 ft. of the steepest parts of the route to Camp II whose site we picked at 11,800 ft. on the lower lip of a big sérac-forming crevasse near where its end could be turned. The next day we moved everything to Camp II and in the evening Les and I reconnoitred above to find our final camp site in another large snow-filled crevasse just below the crest of the South-east buttress. We put in another 100 ft. of fixed rope. Setting up this 14,000 ft. high camp the following day, we were ready to bid for the summits on the 25th. High cirrus and lowering atmospheric pressure predicted an end to our uncommonly long period of good weather. We knew we'd only have a few hours for the summits.

² See *A.J.* 57. 484.

Les and I led out and found the ridge easier than we had expected. The steep steps in the ridge we had noticed from below were easily turned on one side or the other and by 11.30 we topped Good Neighbour Peak. Only the highest Saint Elias ships spread glacial sails above the sea of clouds, but ours was one of these, a five-master whose farthest sky sails nearly two miles into Yukon Territory beckoned highest. So we started across the intervening three summits and the gaps between them. The central of these was the highest, but the one beyond it the tougher to pass as we balanced between rotten cornices to the west and steep avalanche slopes to the east. At 3.25 in the afternoon we reached the summit of Mount Vancouver for its second ascent, by a wholly new route. Dan and George came after us, and an altimeter they brought showed 150 ft. difference between the summits which would make this one about 15,820 ft. I'd promised Professor Odell some rock specimens and gathered them from the highest exposed ones 100 ft. or more south of the summit. Monty had come as far as the Central Summit (everyone reached the border summit) with Dan and George, and he roped in with us returning. He and I went to the top of the South-east buttress, 14,300 ft., to watch for the return of our last two companions and reflect on our good fortune to have accomplished our summits before the storm which was obviously soon to pin us down. It was 2° F. (as low as we recorded) and the wind was beginning to gust.

That night we were all safe in our tents at 14,000 ft. when the storm hit with winds and heavy snowfall that continued interspersed with calmer periods of whiteout for the next two days, but on the 28th we were able to wade down through it to Camp I on the tongue and the next day carefully negotiate the snow-covered rock ridge, make a partially new route through the ice-fall due to collapsed snow bridges, and re-establish Base Camp. Not till July 3 did the weather permit our being flown out to the other world.