

mit. We spent the next day on the summit ridge, since the southern face and a couloir we had to descend was swept incessantly by avalanches. We had to wait nearly a full day, until 2 A.M., before the snow was frozen hard and safe to start our descent. The climb was made on June 15 to 17. My climbing companion was Richard Griesmann, of Seattle. (The first ascent of La Pérouse was made in 1942 by a U. S. Geological Survey party. *A.A.J.*, 1953, 8:3, p. 434.—*Editor.*)

LEOPOLD SCHEIBLEHNER

### *Washington—Cascades*

*Mount Rainier, Tahoma Cleaver.* On June 6, Paul Bellamy, Tony Hovey, Don Keller, Herb Steiner, and Klindt Vielbig left the Tahoma Creek Campground enroute to the Tahoma Cleaver, the last major unclimbed ridge on Mount Rainier. They took the Emerald Ridge trail to the point where the moraines of the Tahoma and South Tahoma glaciers converge and followed the South Tahoma Glacier on its south edge to about 7000 feet, where they crossed to its north edge. The ascent continued, keeping to the right of several rock islands and buttresses to about 8500 feet, where the Tahoma Cleaver begins. Here the flat, cleaver crest was followed, until they were forced onto the snow slopes on the left (north) at about 9200 feet. A small snow col at 10,000 feet, immediately above the base of two colorful rock towers proved to be the highest feasible campsite on the ridge. Early on the morning of June 7 the climb was continued upward on steep snow slopes toward a sharp, prominent gendarme on the ridge at 11,700 feet. They turned the gendarme on the right, some 200 feet below the ridge crest, and traversed the steep snow slopes on the south side of the ridge to the base of a huge rock buttress which apparently blocks the ridge crest. Observers of the ridge had long considered this buttress, sometimes referred to as "The Black Triangle," to be the key to the climb, and so it proved to be. Forty feet to the left (north) of the buttress, a 20-foot pitch on solid rock was selected, and this vertical pitch was followed by some 200 feet of touchy climbing to the steep, loose ridge crest. Rockfall was a hazard from the base of the buttress to the snow saddle at its top. The climb was continued to the northeast on a broad, steeply inclined snow ledge to its end at 13,700 feet, where it drops off to the Tahoma Glacier. The party continued on precipitous ledges around the corner to the right for 300 feet, where séracs were crossed to the summit ice cap. No problems are encountered from here to the crater rim. The ascent from the high camp to the top of the ridge required 11 hours.

*Little Tahoma, North Face.* This peak, adjacent to Mount Rainier, is

pyramid shaped and composed of disintegrating volcanic rock. The north face has long been considered a suicide route. Few climbers have seriously probed for a way up, since the steep, 2000-foot rock- and snow-banded slopes have borne the stigma of rockfall in the extreme. On Monday, June 22, after five years of planning and observation, Gene Prater and I left the shelter at Summerland at midnight, and in the light of a brilliant full moon, ascended Meany Crest and traversed to the notch between Little Tahoma and Peak 8849. Already roped, we donned crampons and descended the steep ice and snow to the Emmons Glacier. We had some trouble reaching it over a large moat. The shattered condition of the glacier slowed our ascent, and we finally crossed a large crevasse at 9000 feet to avoid further loss of time in route finding, a maneuver involving some delicate ice climbing. We arrived at the base of the prominent ice and snow slope on Little Tahoma's north face at 4:00 A.M. Having had previous experience with rockfall, every precaution was taken to minimize its dangers. We had selected our time carefully, taking advantage of a recent snowfall and prevailing cool weather. After close scrutiny of the intended route, we were relieved to see no sign of the usual dirty streaks from rockfall. We turned the left (east) end of the schrund by climbing 60 feet up a vertical cliff of loose, rotten rock, then continued to the right on a fragile snow ledge extending back to the main slope, the most delicate pitch of the climb with little or no protection for the leader. We crossed the ledge on all fours to lessen the strain. The climb continued up the left side of the steep, hard-crusting snow slope to the base of a prominent rock band which crosses the face about midway to the summit. Traversing to the left, with this rock band affording protection from the rockfall, we reached the snow terrace above by a break in its eastern end. We traversed upwards to the eastern end of the rock band immediately below the summit cliffs, then through a gap to the narrow snow ledge extending along the base of the summit cliff. At this point, at 8:00 A.M., because of extreme fatigue and the hazardous condition of the rock in the last 300 feet, we decided to forego an attempt on the final slightly overhanging pitch. We traversed downward on the upper Fryingpan Glacier on the east side of the peak to the standard route, which we ascended to the summit.

DAVID MAHRE, *Yakima Cascadians*

*Little Tahoma, Northeast Ridge and Face.* A party composed of Bob McCall, Dave Mahre, and Lex Maxwell climbed this previously untried route on August 23. From a high camp at Summerland, they ascended Meany Crest and traversed the Fryingpan Glacier to the col between Little