

the day when the party was coming down from the summit, the snow was mushy. There were two ropes of four persons each. The first party of four had traversed a steep snow and ice slope when an avalanche broke loose about 100 feet above the second rope (Whittaker's rope), knocking all off their feet. Each member of this rope attempted to stop themselves but the moving snow continually kicked their ice axes into the air. The avalanche carried the party over an offset crevasse, the lower lip of which was about 10 feet below the upper lip. Three of the party landed on the lower lip while the fourth fell into the small crevasse where he was buried waist-deep by the snow. Members of the other rope ran to their assistance although it was not needed. Three members of the party sustained minor injuries. Mr. Rod Reid received a sprained knee; Martin Popelka, Jr. received a cut on the right knee and abrasions on the right arm; and guide, James Whittaker, strained muscles in his back.

*Source:* Report of Preston P. Macy, Superintendent, Mt. Rainier National Park; the *Mountaineer* 47:4, 1954 (Dec.).

*Analysis:* This avalanche was unexpected and its occurrence surprised the park rangers and experienced guides; this in turn points out the need for great caution on all potential avalanche slopes.

*Mount Rainier National Park (2)*—On Wednesday, August 11, 1954, a group of climbers from the Mountaineers climbed Meany Crest, which is within sight of Summerland and approximately two hours away. The crest was reached at 12:30 p.m. where they enjoyed one hour of rest in bright sunshine. An alternate route of descent was selected which involved crossing a step snowfield below and to the northwest of Meany Crest. The leader climbed down the slope and as large boulders came into view, he cut diagonally right (east) to clear them. During this traverse he indicated that the others should cut across above him. Another member of the party had already traversed the snowfield and glissaded down using a self-arrest. Seeing the success of the blizzard the leader gave permission to the other five members to do the same. They were kicking individual steps. Clare Combat mentioned her fear, lost her footing in the snow, and began to slide down. She was wearing Tricouni boots. Albert Carlson, who was sitting on a rock leaped toward her in an attempt to arrest her fall. The shock of collision knocked Carlson 20-30 feet down the slope where he was able to make a self-arrest, suffering a dislocated shoulder. At about this time, Combat lost her ice axe and it stopped sliding in about 15 feet. She continued to slide in a sitting position, arms spread out for some 200 feet when she struck the outcropping of boulders, bounced into the air 5-10 feet, and then fell into a wide (5-10 ft.) crevasse between the vertical rock wall and a snow wall. She was given first aid and evacuated by stretcher, but died that night.

*Source:* Victor Josendal from members of the climb; the *Mountaineer* 47:3, 1954 (Oct.).

*Analysis:* Anyone who climbs on snow slopes should carry an ice axe and must be familiar with its use. In addition the climbers should have stayed together so that the stronger could have helped the weaker, and if necessary, use the one rope available.