climbing party reduced a possible lengthy rescue to a short, effective effort.

Alaska, Mount Marcus Baker. (See accident report) After getting Ruth out of the crevasse they walked her back to camp about 1/3 mile, then placed her on an improvised sled in a sleeping bag made of a polyethylene air mattress, etc., and slid her about 6 miles down glacier (10,600-7,500 feet) to the last level area before some extensive crevasse fields. They were due to meet their brush pilot on the afternoon of 25 June at Grasshopper airstrip (1,200 ft. elevation). Helga and Bousman planned to walk out leaving Aaron and Ruth with 4 days' rations for 4 (8 for 2) at 7,500 feet. However, the morning of the 23rd saw Dick Hamilton fly over and they gave him a standard ground to air distress signal, an "X", meaning unable to proceed. He also read the initials "RCC" they stamped in the snow and contacted the Rescue Coordination Center at Elmendorf for them. In all his dealings he has proved to be an astute and responsible brush pilot whose contribution to the rescue was invaluable. About 1½ hours later a HUIA – flown by Capt. Toso of Ft. Richardson with crew chief and medic, flew in, picked them up and deposited the three at Palmer and Ruth in Anchorage where she visited a doctor and was found to be in reasonably good shape – no broken bones or other injury.

Analysis: This was a dramatic time-saving example of the value of climbers (and rescuers) knowing ground to air signals. At least two days were saved in this instance by being able to communicate.

British Columbia, Mt. Sir Donald. (See accident report) The victim, James Given, was given first aid for hip and leg injuries and considerable back pain. Fear of a fractured spine made a request for a litter evacuation necessary. A party of French-Canadian climbers on an adjacent peak were made to understand the need and went for help. Due to language difficulties, their report to Illicillwaet Campground was misunderstood and the victim was believed to be only 200 feet up, rather than the actual 700 feet. As a result, sufficient equipment and clothing were not carried, nor were there sufficient men experienced in technical climbing. The victim was reached about 5:00 P.M., and though it had been snowing all day visibility permitted the evacuation to start. Given was lowered a few hundred feet, but the party was overtaken by darkness before completing the rock descent. During the operation one of the less experienced rescuers rappelled from an untested piton which pulled out, and fell about 80 feet. Fortunately, he was using a rappel brake, so did not go off the end of the rope. His injuries were not serious, eventually requiring only a few stitches.

The rescue party descended at 8:00 P.M., taking with them two of the climbers who were now suffering from exposure after 40 hours on the mountain, and reached base camp at 3:00 A.M. A member of the climbing party who had gone for aid the previous night returned during the afternoon and spent the second night with James Given.

About 2:00 A.M. two experienced climbers reached the bivouac with

sleeping bags and food. From this time on, the victim was reasonably comfortable. The following morning the rescue leader, with one hour sleep, arrived with an experienced rescue party, and the victim was brought down to the glacier, where evacuation to a hospital was completed by helicopter. The rescue party was directed by the guide, Freddy Schleiss, whose work was commended by all those involved.

Analysis: This is the third report in two years in which a language difficulty has misled rescue teams. In two cases it delayed the dispatching of an adequate number of qualified personnel and of necessary equipment. This did not cause a fatality in either case; in other conditions it could! Intense interest in the immediate problem probably caused the failure to test a piton – this points up the recommended procedure of appointing a safety observer in rescues whenever possible.

Miscellaneous Items from Other Reports:

In one rescue on Mt. Rainier, an improvised sled made of an Ensolite pad and sleeping bag was successfully used to lower a victim 500 feet.

Several rescues made use of visual ground to air signals.

One rescue saved many man-hours by placing a radio with ground-party frequency and a rescue observer in the rescue helicopter. There was a very low overcast and almost zero visibility except for a partially clear spot about a mile from the accident scene. Split-minute evacuation timing and a safe course to the lift-out point was obtained by talking the pilot up a river valley by a series of ground radios, each station in the chain talking him over them as he came into range.

Tables indicating the comparison of the results of the first two years of gathering statistical information on the activities of organized mountain rescue groups in North America follow. Twenty units reported in 1963, and nineteen in 1964, or about 60% of the known mountain rescue groups on the continent.