III) for three ropes' lengths. The final major difficulty to be ascended is a leaf of rock between the summits, only ten feet high, but alpine grade V. Here the exposure was 8000 feet to the north and 6000 feet to the south. Another 150 horizontal feet of a very acute-angled snow arête led to the top. A piton was inserted at the top of the rock leaf to act as a belay, and to fix an abseil on the descent. Both ropes had to bivouac on the way down, above Camp IV. John Hartog's toes were frostbitten. The summits (West, 23,850, and East, 23,860 feet) were reached on the 6th and 7th of July, each rope supporting the other. All the climbing members of the party got up. The four high altitude porters and the liaison officer did not go above Camp III. Weather followed the alpine pattern. Fifty percent of the days were bad. Three rock pinnacles, between 19,000 and 20,000 feet, behind Base Camp were ascended by some of the members of our party.

JOHN M. HARTOG, *Alpine Club*

*Second ascent of the Mustagh Tower, Eastern Arête.* While the British were attacking the Mustagh Tower from one side, a strong French party under Guido Magnone was on another, consisting of André Contamine, Paul Keller, Robert Paragot, and Dr. Francois Florence, with Captain Ali Usman as Pakistani liaison officer. The French ascended the Younghusband Glacier which descends from the north into the Baltoro. Base Camp was established at 14,750 feet June 12. After reconnoitering the western fork of the glacier to a col at 18,400 feet, they saw that the north ridge was utterly impossible. They attacked the eastern branch of the glacier, which was difficult but possible. Camp I was at 16,750 feet, above a ropeway that was installed on the rocks to bypass a steep icefall. Camp II was higher on the glacier, at 17,700 feet. Here the attack on the mountain itself lay up a rock- and ice-spur to Camp III at 19,700 feet. Four hundred meters of fixed ropes were used in this section. Camp IV was at 20,675 feet, at the base of the summit pyramid. It took the climbers two days to work out a route from their high camp up the 800 feet to the summit ridge. It was then, just before a two-day snowstorm, that they had the disheartening sight of the British climbers on the summit. Fixed ropes allowed them to regain the summit ridge July 11 in only 3¾ hours, but difficulties were so great, especially on two great rock towers, that by 4 P.M., they had only reached the base of the final tower. There, at about 23,000 feet, they bivouacked. They felt that the last part of the climb was less difficult, but deep snow, which was in danger of avalanching, made it arduous. They reached the summit at 1 P.M. July 12, and finished their descent to Camp IV in the dark.

*Gasherbrum II.* On July 7, 1956 a strong Austrian party reached the top of Gasherbrum II, 26,360 feet, the world's thirteenth highest peak and the third 8000er to be ascended by a citizen of that country. The climbers were plagued by porter troubles on the march-in from Skardu. The final straw came on Baltoro Glacier, just two days' march from Base Camp, in the form of a snowstorm. All but the eleven high-altitude porters quit there, and the latter and the Austrians were left alone to establish Base Camp at 17,425 feet, May 23, on South Gasherbrum Glacier. [The accuracy of this name is questioned, since Gasherbrum Glacier lies north of the group and we understand that the Austrians approached the peak from the Baltoro and therefore from the south.—Ed.] A ten-day snowstorm pinned them at Camp I, at 19,700 feet. During this period a huge avalanche carried away a nearby supply-dump and buried forever much of the high altitude equipment, including seven of the lightweight tents. A consequent change in plans reduced the number of high camps from five to three and established a much shorter time schedule. Camps II and III were carried to 22,000 and 23,300 feet, respectively. On July 7 the leader, Fritz Moravec, with Josef Larch and Hans Willenpart, left Camp III and started up the ice slopes above, which they felt were too steep for porters. They spent a planned but frigid bivouac about 1500 feet from the summit. Although they slept but little, and although Moravec and Larch received slight frostbite, they climbed to the summit in about seven hours July 7.

On July 19 Hans Ratay, Heinrich Roiss, and Dr. Georg Weiler climbed from Camp II an unnamed 25,350-foot mountain between Hidden Peak and Sia Kangri, above East Baltoro Glacier. The two other members of the party were Richard Reinagl and geologist, Dr. Traugott Erich Gattinger. Dr. G. O. Dyhrenfurth announces in *Die Alpen* that he is sure that this peak is the western summit of Sia Kangri (*ca.* 24,000 feet). This mountain was first climbed by Dr. and Frau Dyhrenfurth, Hans Ertl, and Albert Höcht, April 3, 1934. The main peak of Sia Kangri is 24,350 feet, an even 1000 feet lower than the height given by the Austrians.

*Lupke Lawo Brakk, Biafo-Hispar glacier area.* The London School of Economics Mountaineering Himalayan Expedition carried out its main objectives of traversing the Biafo-Hispar glacier system in the Karakoram Himalaya and of climbing peaks near Snow Lake at the junction of these two glaciers, despite persistent bad weather and the protracted illness of one member of the party. We left Skardu July 13, 1956 with forty porters. After a two weeks' march of a hundred miles we established Base Camp, at 15,700 feet, at the junction of the Snow Lake and

the Sim Gang glaciers. The journey was arduous, due to extreme heat, frequent difficulties with porters, and detours necessitated by the state of the rivers. Unfortunately, the weather, fine during the approach march, deteriorated a few days after our arrival and from then on we were continually hampered by heavy snowfalls.

Our attempt to climb Lupke Lawo Brakk, 21,650 feet, highest of the peaks around Snow Lake, absorbed all our energies for the next four weeks. Extensive reconnaissance of the icefalls defending the mountain were necessary to find a practicable route. Camp I was four miles from Base Camp, at 16,500 feet, and Camp II, at 18,300 feet, on a col below the south face of the peak. From here the route led up a steep snow col about 600 feet high, on the top of which we intended to camp below the ridge leading to the northern summit. The first part of the climb appeared difficult, but we felt that given five days' clear weather we had a good chance of success. On August 20, after fixing ropes on the lower 300 feet of the col, we were forced to retreat in a snowstorm. During the ensuing five-day storm one of the porters became ill. As soon as possible we evacuated the camps and got the sick man down to Base. Our time was now too short for a further attempt on Lupke Lawo Brakk. Accordingly, G. and D. Greenald, on August 27, climbed an unnamed peak of 19,300 feet on the south side of Snow Lake, a difficult ascent by alpine standards. The Greenalds and our Pakistani liaison officer then left for home down Hispar Glacier. Durbin and Williams, the latter now recovered from a five weeks' illness, remained behind to explore peaks at the head of Sim Gang Glacier. We were favored by fine weather, and after a two days' march from Base placed a camp at 18,500 feet, on the Lupke La. During the next four days the two mountains on either side of this pass were climbed. The northern peak, 20,340 feet, was a difficult climb of mixed rock and snow. The ascent of the southern peak, 19,780 feet, was a straightforward snow climb. We left for home on September 13.

The main scientific work was concerned with the action of the adrenal cortex in the process of acclimatization to high altitudes. Daily investigations were made on the members of the party throughout the whole period of the expedition. In addition, a day-to-day record was kept of hours of sleep for comparison with similar records from polar expeditions. Observations of pressure, temperature, and humidity were made at as many surveyed heights as possible to verify the relation between true height and height estimated from meteorological data. The rate of melting of snow at various points on Snow Lake was measured. Geographical features liable to change, such as glacial snouts, were photographed for

comparison with earlier records. Samples of soil were collected in the valleys for subsequent bacteriological analysis.

J. DURBIN, *London School of Economics Mountaineering Club*

### *U. S. S. R.*

*Pic Pobeda, Tien Shan.* The second highest peak of the Soviet Union, Pic Pobeda (Peak of Victory), 24,407 feet, is reported to have been climbed in 1956. This peak was discovered in 1937, attempted in 1938, and surveyed in 1943.

*Mustagh Ata, Sinkiang.* The Russians also report the ascent of 24,383-foot Mustagh Ata, July 31, 1956, by an expedition under leadership of E. Beletsky, made up of 19 Russians and 12 Chinese. Our honorary members, H. W. Tilman and E. E. Shipton, reached within a few hundred feet of the summit in an attempt in September 1947.

### *Africa*

*Punta Margherita, Ruwenzori.* The first ascent of the west face of the Punta Margherita, the highest summit of the Ruwenzori group, was made by the 73-year-old Piero Ghiglione and three other Italians (ethnologist Giorgio Gualco, cameraman Giorgio Brigatta, and guide Ernesto Franchez) on March 25, 1956. The difficult, extremely steep ice face below the 16,923-foot summit is 2000 feet high. Our French member, Bernard Pierre, in 1956, also reached the summit of this peak as well as the Punta Alberto.