

esting crevasse patterns and a sharp ice ridge, we pitched our tent at 8000 feet on the north face. But luck was not with us, as a snowstorm blew up and would not quit for two days. We retreated to Base Camp and almost left when Sheldon flew in, but he felt the improved weather would last and said he would pick us up in a day and a half. We set out again, this time without overnight gear, and in our old steps we were able to reach the summit ridge quickly by climbing through the night. The final swoop upwards of the peak, which steepened dramatically for about eight leads, was very spectacular. A great cornice kept us on the south side. Four pitches required much step-cutting and ice pitons for safety. Because the steep pitches were very exposed and almost all blue-ice traverses, the descent demanded equal protection. (For the account of the *first* ascent, see James Richardson's above.—*Editor.*)

FRED BECKEY

Hayes Group. Hayes, Deborah and Hess have received a good deal of attention in the past, but several unclimbed 12,000ers and many fine smaller peaks attracted Larry Muir, Tom Knott, my wife and myself to these mountains. Our approach was from Black Rapids on the Richardson Highway where a cable allowed us to cross the Delta River. From here our route followed first the northern slopes of the foothills and then the Trident Glacier to Base Camp at 6500 feet on its westernmost fork, a distance of 35 miles from the highway. Larry and Tom preceded us to this point and received one of our two airdrops on the day we had planned. During the four days Lydia and I spent walking in, Larry and Tom climbed a prominent 9760-foot peak south of the junction of the west and middle forks of the Trident. Upon arrival we prepared to tackle a 12,360-foot peak some five miles southeast of Hayes. From a high camp at 8500 feet we gained the west ridge at a 10,000-foot notch and followed this to the near summit and thence to the higher peak some $\frac{3}{4}$ mile away. All four of us reached the summit shortly before midnight on July 25. From here on things did not go as smoothly. Bad weather greeted us on our return to Base Camp but we moved eight days' supplies to the base of Hayes for an assault on its east ridge. From this camp a rock ramp leads up at 45°, steepening slightly near the top where it joins the ridge at 10,000 feet. Although it was snowing heavily, we tackled this with heavy packs and had almost reached the top of the ramp when Larry, our best technical climber, fell and gashed his forehead badly. His pack, containing all his personal gear, disappeared down a couloir into the clouds. From this critical situation we retreated to the 7500-foot camp where Larry was given a complete rest. After a day of inaction in a whiteout,

Lydia and I, who had been most uncomfortable stuffed together in a single sleeping bag, returned through falling snow to the scene of the accident and descended the couloir down which the equipment disappeared. Our industry paid off and one by one we recovered the most important pieces: sweaters, crampons, and finally the sleeping bag. Larry's condition also seemed to have improved and our spirits were high for another attack on Hayes. But continuous rain for two days and another of snow forced us back to Base Camp and thence down the western fork of the Trident to embark on the second phase of our expedition. I had placed a second airdrop several weeks before in the high basin of the middle Trident Glacier at 8500 feet. As we reached a difficult icefall separating this basin from the Lower Trident, the clouds lifted and gave us our first view in over a week. The next day we climbed a rock flank on the western side, thus bypassing the first, and worst, 1000 feet of the icefall, then followed the bench on the eastern side and reached the drop site a few miles beyond. As I had feared, all traces of the large duffel bags had been covered up by the week's fresh snow. Sadly we descended to the Lower Trident. Our situation was now difficult. The rock ridge on Mount Shand from this basin was now out of the question with only six days food remaining, three of them for getting back to the road. One last gamble was to try the even more difficult icefall of the eastern Trident, which would give access to a fairly easy route on Shand and McGinnis, both unclimbed. After two days on the icefall we were still only at 7500 feet but on the following and last day, August 5, luck was with us. We split up after reaching the top of the icefall. Larry and Tom climbed McGinnis (11,400 feet) by its west ridge and Lydia and I ascended Shand (12,660 feet) by its east ridge. Our return to civilization was uneventful by comparison.

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Mount Deborah, Hayes Group, Alaska Range. The 6000-foot east face of Mount Deborah ($\frac{2}{3}$ of it is at an average angle of 64°) is the most impressive of all its magnificent sides. It has but one weakness: the east ridge, which climbs steeply from the col between Deborah and Mount Hess. Don Jensen and I chose this ridge for our two-man expedition in June and July. Don assisted in two airdrops, one at the foot of Deborah and a second 15 miles away in a basin just west of Mount Hayes, to which we hoped to traverse after Deborah. After four days of hiking from the Denali Highway, we found our first airdrop intact. In order to reach the Deborah-Hess col, we set up a route over the shoulder of Hess, which ended by descending 1000 feet to the col (9400 feet). This route