

this side and it took us six days to hack our way through virgin jungle. The ascent was more exciting than I had anticipated. We climbed the glaciated and crevassed east flank. Throughout our ascent we were bombarded by large rocks, thrown out by earlier eruptions, which set off down the slope as the ice around them melted. Since we completed the ascent in a sleet blizzard, we could not see anything on the crater but could feel the hot air of the vent and were nearly gassed by fumaroles. As I had been unable to get good pictures, I decided to climb it again, but we had now run out of food. We returned to Quito and then approached from the west by Riobamba and the Hacienda Aloa, in the direction from which Sangay had been climbed on previous occasions. (First ascent by P. Austin, R. and T. Moore, L. Thorne, 1929.) This much easier approach over heavily eroded grasslands took us three days. There was no ice on this side and the walk up to the crater was straight-forward. It pays to have a high camp at about 13,000 feet to save too long a plod to the crest.

CHRISTIAN BONINGTON, *Alpine Club*

*Chimborazo.* On March 3 David P. Johnston and Peter H. Robinson climbed all the way from the refuge at 16,000 feet over "Punta Veintemil" and across the deep soft snow to "Punta Whymper" (20,563 feet), the farthest point from the center of the earth. Meanwhile I had to remain in the refuge sick with an infection from sunburned lips.

VIN HOEMAN

#### *Peru—Cordillera Blanca*

*Huascarán Norte, North Face.* Our expedition, set up by the Himalayan Committee of the *Fédération Française de la Montagne*, left Paris on June 9 with the north face of Huascarán Norte (21,834 feet) as our objective. The expedition was composed of Lucien Bérardini, Georges Payot, Robert Jacob, Claude Jaccoux, Dominique Leprince-Ringuet, Fernand Audibert, Yannick Seigneur, Dr. Guy de Haynin and myself as leader. We reached Base Camp on June 14 at 13,125 feet above the eastern end of the magnificent lower Llanganuco Lake after a very simple approach, mostly by truck. The north face of Huacarán Norte is bounded right and left by tortuous ridges with impressive cornices. The center is concave; the bottom third is smooth and nearly overhanging and a veritable hell of falling rock, but on the right there is an enormous spur, which seemed to offer a route. Both Payot and Jacob succumbed to respiratory ailments and had to be evacuated to the lower altitude of Yungay.\* At dawn on the 18th Audibert and

\*This account has unfortunately had to be greatly condensed from the author's original version. From the symptoms described, it would seem that both suffered from high-altitude pulmonary edema from such a rapid rise to this altitude. See *A.A.J.*, 1965, 14:2, pp. 363-372.—Editor.

Leprince-Ringuet left Base to climb the slopes towards the glacier that gives access to the north face. On the eleven o'clock radio schedule, the former told me that they had found a well sheltered spot for Camp I at 17,000 feet. This same pair was first able to occupy Camp I on the 20th. Reconnaissance above had already shown a way onto the broken glacier that protects the access to the wall. On the 24th these two were to start fixing ropes on the bergschrund. As I ascended towards Camp I, I decided to try to make radio contact and was surprised to hear Leprince-Ringuet's voice. He was descending from Camp I for help, since Audibert had slipped at the schrund and was seriously hurt in a 300-foot fall, with a broken collar-bone and a massively bruised thigh. Fernand was lost to us for the expedition. On the 29th we were back up again in Camp I and left to push the route higher. In great form, Seigneur attacked the first rather steep, rock-swept snow slopes above the schrund and also fixed ropes. Soon we were skirting the first rocks, where at 18,375 feet an overhang protected us from rock-fall and let us breathe more easily. The steepening rock was very rotten and we had to take precautions. We reached 18,700 feet that day before descending the route, now completely covered by fixed rope. On July 1 Bérardini, Leprince-Ringuet and Seigneur were by ten o'clock already above our high point of two days before, heading for a tormented ridge which led to an enormous spur, soon called the "Pear." On the radio they pointed out that the terrain was difficult and unstable. They left their loads at the base of the "Pear" with ropes fixed to 19,350 feet. On July 2 Jaccoux, Jacob and I climbed along the fixed ropes. It would be work to construct a platform for two tents at 18,850 feet, but we had no choice. Jacob began to terrace, while Jaccoux and I first followed the fixed ropes and then pushed the route higher. After a day of snowfall, on July 4 Bérardini, Seigneur, Payot and Leprince-Ringuet headed up to sleep at Camp II. On the 5th, loaded like mules, Jaccoux, Jacob and I climbed up to meet the rest as they descended from above. They had prepared the first third of the "Pear." The incessant noise of rockfall inspired Bérardini to call Camp II "Verdun." The next morning three hours above camp at the end of the fixed ropes we found ourselves under a yellow overhang that ran nearly around the "Pear." Spying a route to the left I moved with great caution until the climbing became somewhat easier. At the top of the "Pear" at 20,500 feet we found a small platform for a single tent sheltered by a huge block. That would be Camp III. On July 7 Bérardini, Seigneur, Payot and Leprince-Ringuet left Camp I, hoping not to return before reaching the top. Luck was against

Dominique, who was struck by a fair-sized rock, and he had to return to Camp I. He was able to join Jacob, Jaccoux and me when we set out for Camp II on the 8th. A radio contact told us of the arrangement at Camp III that night. The single tent held two, the lower man carefully tied in place with ropes. The other would bivouac as best he might on a spot smaller than a chair. The next day we arrived at Camp III just before the others returned from above. They had prepared some very difficult leads, especially on ice. On July 10, Jacob, Jaccoux, Leprince-Ringuet and I were away early and at the upper end of the fixed ropes at dawn. A traverse left seemed the most reasonable route. Jaccoux led with me on his rope. After several not too difficult rope-lengths, he reached a ledge which led us 100 yards across the face. Finally we were at the base of the slabs, directly below the summit, which was about 1000 feet above. The slabs were of magnificent granite, solid and in places overhanging, crowned by a 200-foot-high cap of ice, which would lead to the summit snow slopes. Jaccoux led with extraordinary skill. Solidly belayed, I climbed these rope-lengths, which were of Grade VI. Finally, as we fixed the last rope we had with us, we reached the ice. Towards the left an ice slope let us slab around the icecap. Ice axe and crampons paved the way up the 200-foot slope above that terribly impressive empty space. Then easy snow slopes, and we were on top. It was five P.M. Scarcely were we back at the first fixed rope when night fell. Happily we had this continuous line to follow. At nine P.M. we rejoined Seigneur, Bérardini and Payot at Camp III. (Space prevents continuing this interesting account. Seigneur, Bérardini and Payot climbed the next day, the 11th, and reached the summit at eleven A.M. Meanwhile the others descended. At more or less the moment the second group got to the top, Leprince-Ringuet was struck by rockfall as he was shifting his descending ring from one fixed rope to another and hurled down the cliff. His body was never recovered.—*Editor.*)

ROBERT PARAGOT, *Club Alpin Français*

*Huascarán.* Peru's highest peak had not been reached outside the months of June, July and August till the Alaska Andean Expedition reached its 22,205-foot south summit on the Ides of March. David P. Johnston, Peter H. Robinson and I left commercial transportation at Mancos at 8425 feet on March 12 without pack animals or porters. We made our high camp at 19,000 feet in the Garganta on the 14th. After our successful summit day, a storm kept us from visiting the north peak too. We walked out the 1962 avalanche gorge to Yungay on the 18th.

VIN HOEMAN