

spectacular position between overhanging walls above and below. The next morning was clear and I watched as they moved up to a 100-foot rock band that separated the steep lower wall from the massive icefields that led to the final buttress beneath the east peak. With growing concern, I saw them try one, then another and then a third route through the rock with no success. What appeared a minor obstacle from Base Camp was a vertical, compact wall. The ice runnels were too thin to climb and they had only two rock pitons. They descended to the top of the ramp and bivouacked for the last time on the face. I began my search at 9:30 the next morning at the point where they would have to cross the couloir at the bottom of the ramp. At ten they appeared and crossed the couloir, doubtless the end of the major dangers. I felt happy that I would be given a second chance to join them on the face. They moved to the crest of a small spur. When I looked again, there was only one dot, seemingly frozen on the slope. I knew immediately that there was only one explanation. When the remaining climber had descended out of sight, I ran back to Base, packed emergency gear and with Sherpa Pinjoo set out toward the face. Halfway up the ridge we spotted René descending alone. Alex had been killed instantly when a single stone that fell from high on the face hit him on the back of the head. He fell 1500 feet to below the bergschrund, where René buried him as best he could. Bad weather set in during the next few days and we could not return to the site. The loss of Alex MacIntyre in the same year as Joe Tasker and Pete Boardman has been a terrible blow to their friends and relatives and to the whole concept of alpine-style climbing. Alex was an especially accessible person. He was willing to help and advise climbers of any standard, an attribute which made him an effective National Officer during his days with the British Mountaineering Council. His climbing record was outstanding. He was a dedicated, inventive, composed mountaineer.

JOHN PORTER

*Annapurna Tragedy.* A three-man Japanese expedition was attempting Annapurna via the Dutch rib when on October 18 Camp II was buried by an avalanche. Susumu Akimatsu and Miko Ono died but Takashi Ozaki escaped.

MICHAEL J. CHENEY, *Himalayan Club*, and ELIZABETH HAWLEY

*Fang (Varaha Shikhar) Attempt.* Although the Fang (7647 meters, 25,088 feet) is the third highest summit in the Annapurna group, it has had less attention from climbers, possibly because its name does not have "Annapurna" in it. It lies southwest of Annapurna I. Our expedition wanted to make a new route by climbing the east side of the south ridge and continuing along the ridge. This was completely different from the only ascent yet made; the Austrians in 1980 passed Moditse on the other side from us, on the west, climbed from the southwest and finished on the west ridge. Unfortunately, due