

that end of the stretcher, was used successfully. It proved invaluable as it was struck a number of times by falling rock.

*Montana, Delmo Lake, Granite Batholith*—On May 17, Gary D. Alexander (21), Force F. Bany, Jr. (19), John Sikkar (25), and Gary Harper (18), were planning to do some practice climbs. Alexander and Bany were attempting to climb a face about 200 feet high. Alexander had just attempted a route that would not go and had descended to the shoulders of Bany. As he was descending beside Bany, Harper shouted "Head's up" meaning that a rock was falling. A rock weighing about 600 lbs. fell from the top of the face and slid across a shelf about 20 feet to one side of the climbers. Harper, who was on this shelf about 60 feet above the climbers, attempted to stop it unsuccessfully. The rock fell to a point about three feet above Alexander bounced, and broke in half. One half struck Alexander in the head, and the other Bany. Alexander was killed immediately. Bany sustained a few bruises and abrasions, Harper suffered a few abrasions and a bruised leg from his attempts to deflect the rock.

*Source:* Force F. Bany, Jr.

*Analysis:* The rock that fell may have been loosened by recent rains or the annual spring breakup. In addition, there had been a slight earthquake (force 1.5-2.0) in the area that day which conceivably might have loosened the rock. Alexander wore no hard hat and Bany did. Apparently, the same sized rock struck both men and it seems likely that Bany's hard hat saved his life. He noted that in previous rock falls, his hard hat had been a successful protection.

*Oregon, Mt. St. Helens*—On June 6, 28 persons began a climb of Mt. St. Helens. This was the Tacoma Climbing Course's experience climb. Equipment was adequate but climbing experience was limited. Three out of four persons would be rated as basic climbers with little experience on steep snow. For many, this was the first climb with crampons. There was no reserve of rope leaders.

The party roped-up at 7000 feet. Difficulties with loose fitting crampons, improper use of the crampons, and individuals traveling too close together were evident. At 8500 feet, for various reasons, six climbers turned back including the leader and three rope leaders. From this point three inexperienced climbers (George Cashman, Kathryn Cockrell, and Jim Stelling) made up the last rope. They trailed by some distance and were having trouble slipping on the steep snow just below the false summit (point penetration was reported as good by other climbers). At this point they turned back. On the descent one slipped and the other two attempted self-arrests but were yanked loose. The climbers cartwheeled down the slope at a high speed a distance of 3500-4000 feet (losing about 1700 feet in elevation) before being stopped by soft snow below the "Little Lizard."

Fortunately, they stopped near the first party that had turned back. By this time the entire party was widely spread. The summit climbers did not know of the accident until they descended hours later.