

*Alaska, Kenai Range, Mt. Alice.* John Vincent Hoeman, David Perry Johnston, Don Stockard, Mike Campbell, and Dennis W. Hitt, at 0630 on 1 July drove around the head of Resurrection Bay as near as they could to the base of Mt. Alice. Hitt had trapped the previous winter on the lower slopes of Mt. Alice and was able to find trails that got them through much of the brush. The south ridge of Mt. Alice was reached about noon. They followed it as it narrowed with considerable exposure at some places as the western side became the cirque wall of a small glacier. The going was easy rock scrambling, they did not plan to rope up till they reached the base of the summit tower itself. Just before the accident Hitt was asked by Stockard if he'd like to rope yet, to which he replied "No."

At 1305 hours Johnston and Hoeman were travelling ahead with the Kelty packs picking the easiest route to the base of the summit tower. Campbell was halfway in between and Stockard and Hitt brought up the rear, perhaps 100 feet behind. Stockard screamed something unintelligible, then that Dennis had fallen, and all ran back to him, but there was nothing to see over the cirque wall where Stockard indicated he had fallen. He said he had heard the noise of rocks moving behind him and had looked just in time to see Dennis pirouette off into space with arms outstretched above his head. He hit some rocks with his shoulder and head once while Stockard watched, then disappeared from view.

Hitt died shortly after members of the party reached him as a result of extensive head injuries. (See rescue report.)

*Source:* J. V. Hoeman.

*Analysis:* (Hoeman) Had we been roped and belaying, the accident would have been avoided, but it was an area where mountaineers would use caution and rope only if some climber seemed unsure of himself. He was a splendid athlete, a better runner than any of us, we had no qualms about letting him accompany us up Mt. Alice, and he seemed to have none himself. All four of us had passed over the exact spot where he fell. Perhaps a head-encircling type hard-hat would have saved his life, but none of us wore hard-hats.