

and ropes. Siegel with a cravat ankle bandage to support his injuries began to hobble his way down the mountain at 5:45 p.m. A testimonial to his determination is shown by the fact it took him in his condition nine hours to cross the lower glacier (including two crevasses) climb the lateral moraine and descend the trail to timberline, a distance of two miles. At timberline he made his way to the Crag Rats club cabin where he alerted the weekend guests there (3:00 a.m.). Two climbers immediately left for the glacier with sleeping bag, food and first aid supplies while another was dispatched down the road to alert the mountain rescue group in Hood River, Oregon. The first two reached Gibson about 6:30 a.m. and found him in good condition (the night temperature was no more than freezing). The main rescue team (30 men) with radios and rescue sled arrived at about 7:30 a.m. Gibson and Siegel were evacuated from timberline by pickup camper to Portland, Oregon, by 11:30 a.m. Both recovered in a Portland hospital.

*Source:* Ross Petrie, Bud Siegel, and Chuck Gibson

*Analyses:* (Gibson and Siegel) More attention should have been paid to crampon technique; an ice screw might have secured the belay position; the belay rope perhaps should not have passed over the rucksack.

(Ross Petrie) Even though this was a Saturday practice session under ideal weather, both climbers were fully equipped with climbing gear, clothes, food, first aid supplies and hard hats. Complete knowledge of first aid and terrain and the fact that they did not wait to be found lessened the seriousness of a possibly disastrous situation.

*Washington, Mt. Adams.* On 17 September a Mazama Club group led by Lisle Walker (51) and consisting of eight others set out to climb Mt. Adams after having camped overnight at Mirror Lake. They left the camp site at about 3:15 a.m. At the bottom of Mazama Glacier the nine climbers roped in three groups of three and put on crampons. Walker was carrying wands to be placed at crevasses and as route markers. Walker started the climb in shorts as the visibility was good, with scattered clouds and a moderate wind. As the party progressed up the glacier the weather deteriorated, wind velocity increased and the temperature dropped. Part way up the glacier Walker put on long pants and warmer clothing. Between 11:30 and 12:00 noon the climbers reached the top of the glacier proper. A rest stop was taken, crampons were removed and the group unroped. By this time Tommy Carr, age 11, was quite tired. He and his father, Bernard, decided they would not go on but would wait until the others returned from the climb. John Hill, the most experienced climber except for Walker, decided to stay with them. The remaining climbers continued up the bare rocky slope unroped. They reached the false summit about 2:00 p.m. The climbers were spread out from each other as each had moved up the mountain at his own pace. At this point clouds were obscuring the summit ridge and the wind was blowing hard; Walker estimated gusts up to 50 miles per hour. By 2:30 p.m. the party had crossed from the false summit to the true summit base. Some members of the party took off their packs, leaving them with the climbing ropes preparing to ascend the final summit. The weather continued to deteriorate. At about 3:00 p.m. Walker, Karle, and Vanhorn were from 300 to 400 feet from the summit. The other climbers were scattered below them. Walker asked the two if they felt they could go any further and

if they wanted to try for the summit. They replied that it was Walker's decision to make. He decided because of the high winds and poor visibility the party should descend. At this time a thick whiteout engulfed the climbers.

After a short rest at the base of the true summit where the packs had been left the party prepared to move on down the mountain. Vanhorn and Karle were sitting down putting on their packs. Karle was having difficulty with crampons that were tied to his pack and asked Vanhorn to assist him. They estimated it took from one and one half to three minutes to adjust the crampons. When they looked up they could not see any of the other four climbers. Walker, the two Tanquists and Joe Barney proceeded towards the false summit. Upon reaching the false summit they realized Vanhorn and Karle were not with them. Walker and Barney then turned back and crossed the summit ridge to the base of the true summit looking for them. Barney recalled that he and Walker searched approximately 45 minutes for the lost climbers. Walker was extremely depressed and informed Barney that if the two were gone they would probably freeze to death due to the adverse weather conditions. By this time the group was wet and cold from the soaking mist and strong winds that accompanied the whiteout. The group of four then started to descend the mountain. At 4:30 p.m. they reached the two Carrs and John Hill. They were also wet and cold, having waited four and one half hours for the climbers to return.

Meanwhile, Vanhorn and Karle shouted and looked for the other climbers. They could not agree on a correct route down and so decided to try a middle route. They headed south, while Walker and the main party were descending Mazama Glacier in a southeast direction. About 6:00 to 6:30 p.m. Vanhorn and Karle reached timberline and a mountain trail that led them to Morrison Creek campground. They persuaded a camper to take them to the Trout Lake Ranger Station. Arriving there about 6:50 p.m. they informed the district ranger, Roger Stamy, of the situation. After hearing their story Stamy took them to their car at Mirror Lake. Not finding the other climbers there he suggested that the other members of the party were still on the mountain searching for the two inexperienced climbers. The boys then changed their clothes and told John Hill's wife, who was waiting in the campground for the party to return, that they were returning home to Portland.

Not being able to locate Vanhorn and Karle, Walker showed and expressed great concern and apprehension for their safety. He also recognized and expressed responsibility for the remaining members of the party. Because of their tired wet condition, the bad weather, and the late time of day, he believed it was mandatory they retreat from the mountain as fast as possible. After they reached Bernard Carr, his son, and John Hill the party roped up on two ropes, one rope of four with Walker as leader and a second rope of three. Bernard Carr made note of the dilated appearance of Walker's eyes when the two groups joined to descend the glacier proper. Whiteout conditions still existed, but they were able to follow the wands placed during the ascent. After about one-and-a-half hours of descent between 5:45 and 6:00 p.m. Walker missed seeing a wand. When it was brought to his attention he insisted they had not gone in that direction. Shortly after this one of the party noticed that Walker was faltering; Gerald Tanquist, who was on his rope inquired if he was all right. He insisted that there was no problem. Tanquist realized that Walker was confused and insisted he take

his arm so he could help him. However, without Walker's leadership the other members of the party were confused by the crevasses and the fact they could not find any more wands. Tanquist further noticed that Walker was having difficulty with his right foot and could not properly set his crampons in the glacier ice. Joe Barney, also on the same rope, then began to assist Tanquist to help Walker. At about 6:30 p.m. Walker fell forward to his knees and from then on was incoherent.

The members of the party felt they had to find shelter for Walker and decided to remain on the mountain and descend in the morning to seek aid. About 7:30 p.m. at about 9,100 feet a small crevasse was found that was nearly five feet deep with a flat bottom. The members of the party were able to carry and lower Walker into this crevasse for protection. He appeared to be unconscious at this time. Members of the party then huddled next to Walker to provide body heat and make themselves as comfortable as possible for the night to come. It was decided that one person would always stay awake and keep moving in order to maintain body circulation. A very uncomfortable night was endured because of blowing wind and snow, and wet clothing. Barney had Walker's head cradled in his lap and noticed between 8:00 and 9:00 p.m. that Walker was breathing heavily and in a labored manner. Barney estimated that Walker died about 9:00 p.m. At 5:30 a.m. Sunday, September 18, the party decided to leave Walker and proceed down the mountain. The crevasse was marked with his ice axe and wands. It was not until 8:30 a.m. that the six were ready after digging out crampons, packs, and ropes from the night's snow. Barney, with only one previous mountain climbing experience assumed the leadership of the party. They had to go around numerous crevasses which made the descent difficult and long. It was not until 2:45 p.m. that they arrived at Bird Creek Meadow where they informed Ranger Stamy of the fatality on the mountain. The body was brought to Bird Creek Meadow at 7:30 a.m. Monday, September 19.

*Source:* MRSCO Critique, Charles H. Adams

*Analysis:* (MRSCO Critique) In registering for the climb Walker had only listed himself as a leader of a party of eight or ten climbers. Members of the party did not know one another, consequently, Vanhorn and Karle could not provide the names or addresses of the other climbers still on the mountain. Names and addresses of all members of a climbing party should be registered with the administering agency before the climb. An experienced assistant leader should always be appointed before the climb. This party did not rope up or stay together between the false and true summits when whiteout conditions prevailed. There was no assistant leader to keep track of stragglers.

Walker was not adequately dressed for the weather encountered. The cotton pants he put on after the climb started were torn by being snagged on his crampons; the wind eventually shredded them. His boots were inadequate according to Ranger Stamy because the sole of one was loose and they were made of soft tanned leather that soaks up water and leaks.

Personal friends and climbing acquaintances of Walker who had seen him during the previous week commented unfavorably on his physical appearance. On Friday prior to the climb, Walker had told a friend he was tired, had been up late every night that week and wished he had not obligated himself for the weekend. At the start of the climb on Saturday, Walker

commented to Hill that he was not feeling well, was tired and that he felt he would not undertake the family climbing outing planned for the following weekend. Other climbers who were experienced and familiar with Walker's climbing habits felt his handling of the party was out of character and that he was in questionable health before the climb. They cited the prospectus "storm clothing, extra clothing, socks, and perhaps more extra clothing" as an example of his unusual behavior.

The autopsy report stated the cause of death was pulmonary edema brought on by physical exhaustion and extreme cold.

The climbers with the exception of the leader were generally inexperienced. They showed resourcefulness in a difficult and trying situation. They did all they could for Walker and for their own protection on the glacier during the night. The climb should have been abandoned earlier in the day because of bad weather conditions and lack of experience in the party.

*Alaska, Mt. Hunter.* During April of 1966, Dr. J. C. Duenwald was hospitalized for three days with a viral pneumonia after which there was a period of almost a month during which his physical activity was severely limited. Thus he had a great deal of difficulty training properly on the climbing season. To begin the climbing trip they drove the Alcan highway with its dust, etc., in three days from Pullman, Washington. Immediately on arrival in Talkeetna they were flown in to 9,000 feet on the Tokositna Glacier.

Almost on arrival at the glacier (in mid June) he began to experience difficulty in breathing. Upon exercise his heart rate also became elevated. During the first night on the glacier he was unable to sleep and breathing became a full-time job. It was during the second day that he began to feel worse and the climbing party decided he should be flown out. Don Sheldon flew him to Anchorage which took four hours. At that time a radiograph was taken which showed a small area of congestion around the hilus of the left lung.

During the flight out from the mountains he felt progressively better as they went lower. He was weak for several weeks after the trip.

*Source:* J. C. Duenwald

*Analysis:* I am not sure what the problem was and neither was the physician I saw in Anchorage. However, we both felt that it was a slight dust pneumonia and pulmonary edema caused primarily by high altitude and debilitation.