

1120 02

tom
26 Aug 82
1.14

48° 25' N
121° 8' W

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B Peabs.

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S. 2? jagged
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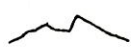
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1120 02

TOM
26 Aug 82
1314

48° 25' N

121° BW



A - Rising Peak fellies

B - Pecks

Mtn range

S-2 jagged
Rock PC^o
Dark Browns

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...n 7,440-foot Mix-
...and other students
...y of Washington
...rugged Cascades.



Icebergs sprinkle Glacier Lake, a cup of cobalt at the foot of 8,976-foot Glacier Peak,

himself suddenly face to face with two moun-
tain climbers no more than 50 feet from him.
"I poked my camera out the door," said
Jim. "As anyone would, they began waving
and striking noble poses.

"Quit hamming!" I yelled. "Look away
from the camera." But the engine was so loud
it was 10 minutes and five gallons of gas later
before they caught on to what I wanted."
Jim turned frequently to helicopters for
photo trips into the high country, and some-



left, northernmost of two mountains of the same name in the Cascades; this panorama looks west toward snow-smothered Mount Baker, upper left, and the Canadian Cascades, right.

Although small, it is steep, plunging nearly
vertically into the valley it has carved in the
mountainside over the centuries.

Our pilot was Bill Wells, who lifts fire fight-
ers, the Geological Survey's mineral scouts,
and other hardy folk into the mountains. He
picked a flat-topped, house-size boulder on
the glacier bank for a landing pad.

Icequakes Make Glacier a Scary Perch
Gusts of icy wind blew us away from the

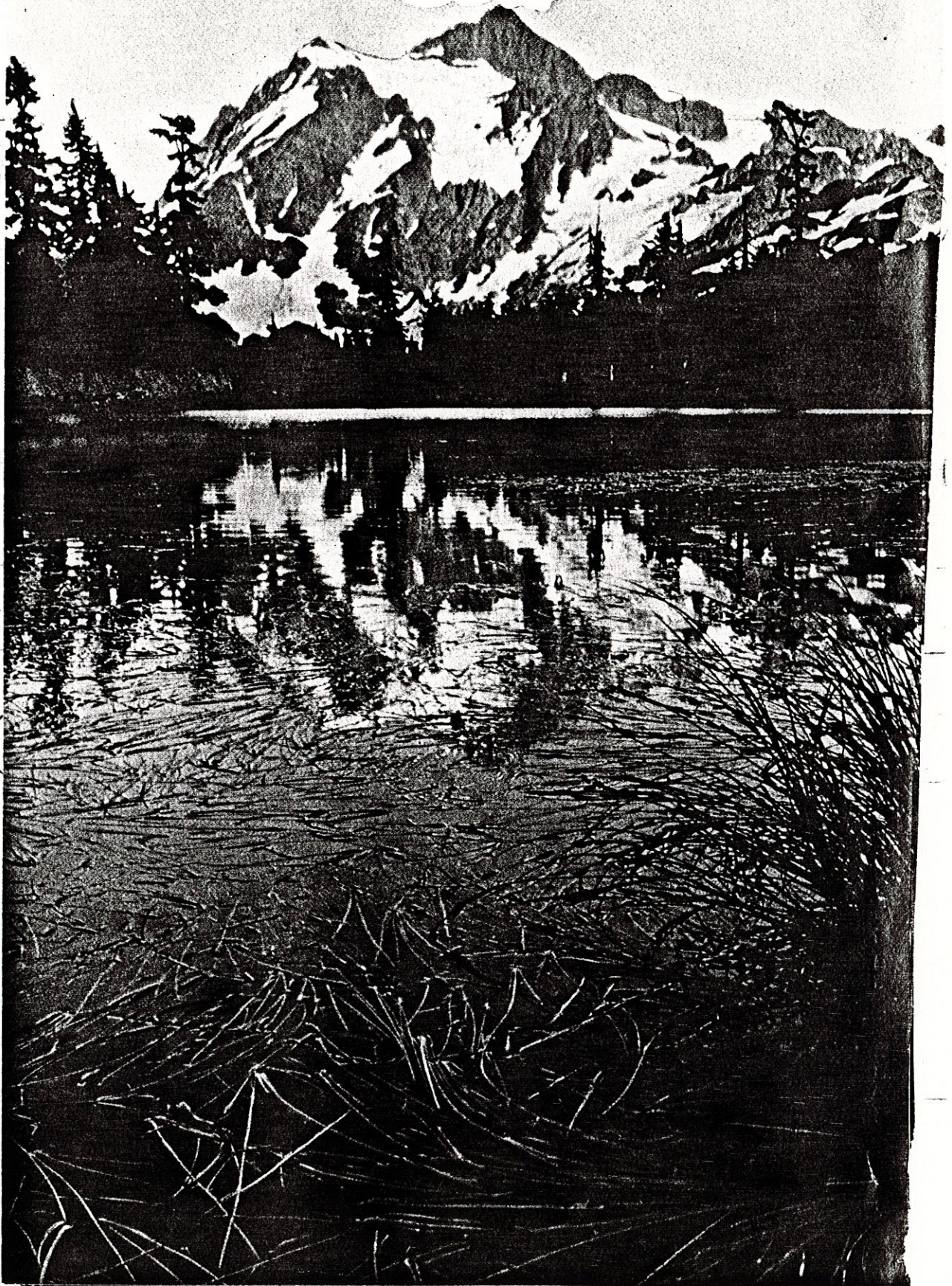
go with a sharp crack, followed by a roar like
summer thunder.

The earth trembled. So did my knees.
"Can't we find a quieter glacier?" I asked,
turning to Bill. But he was already on top of
the mass with Jim.

I scrambled up and joined them, and there
we stayed for an hour, jolted every now and
then by icequakes as the great glacier ground
on down from the heights. The snow under a gla-
cier, I take it, the more heavily it is

KODACHROME BY W. WOODBRIDGE WILLIAMS (ABOVE) AND CHEL HINMAN © N.G.S.

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to produce a metal vital to our civilization.

Copper mining does change the face of nature, however. Anyone who doubts this should go to Holden, adjacent to the Glacier Peak Wilderness, 17 miles northeast of the namesake mountain itself (map, page 651). Here an underground mine, not nearly as destructive to the landscape as an open pit, operated from the 1930's until 1957.

I have seen Holden from the air. A broad yellow scar, waste from a processing plant, persists after 10 years. No grass, not even a blueberry bush, covers the poisoned tailings. Foresters tell me it may take nature a century to heal the wound.

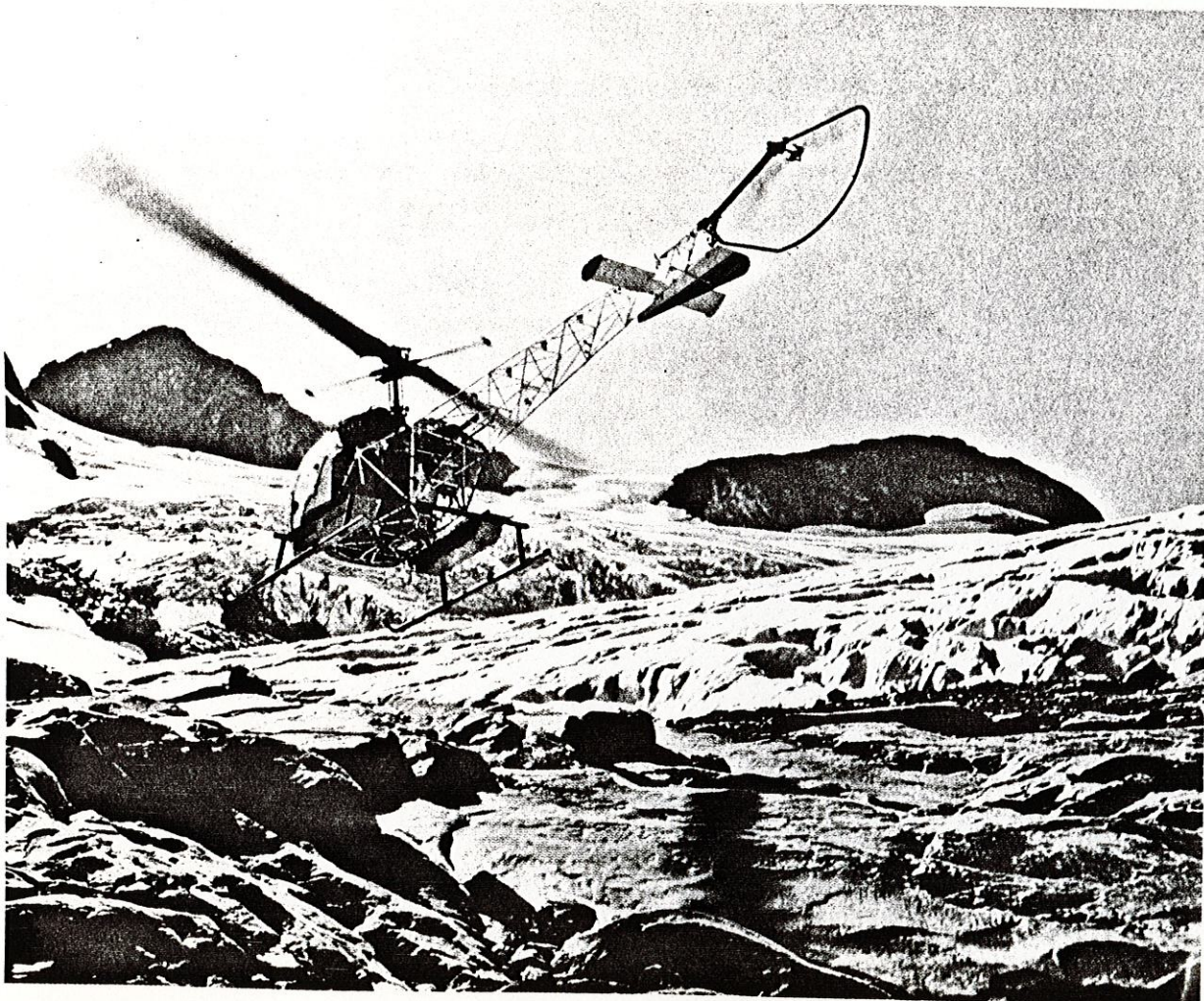
After it ceased operations, the mining firm deeded its buildings to a church group, and Holden is now a useful summer camp

To scout the high country I would visit later in the summer, I arranged an air tour with bush pilot Ernie Gibson. We took off from Stehekin in flurries of cold rain and snow.

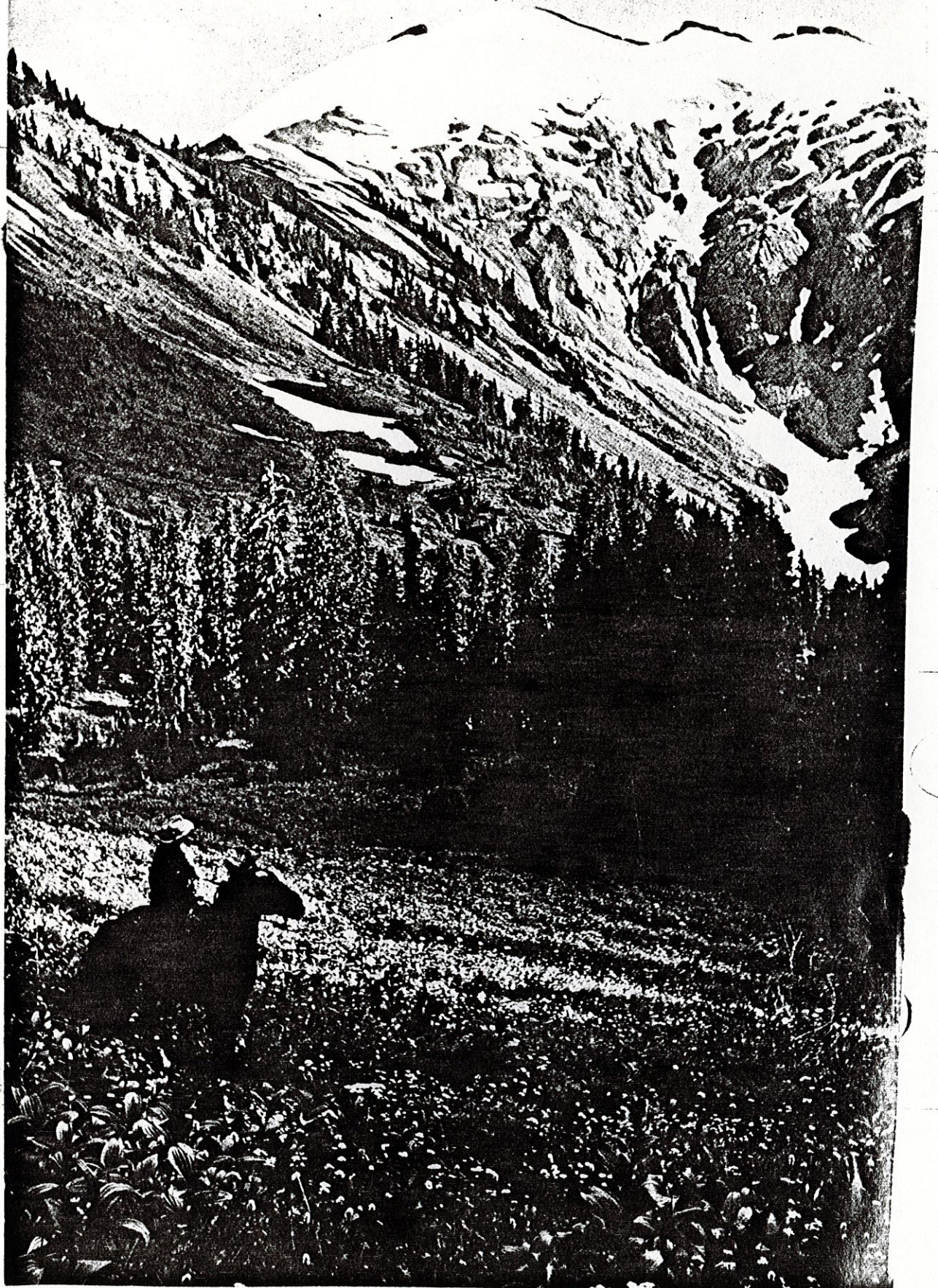
"No guarantees today," said Ernie. "In a float plane you don't try to fly over 9,000-foot mountains. You detour through the passes—and if clouds suddenly close them behind you, you look for an ice-free lake big enough to land on until the passes clear up."

Peaks Look Down on Climbing Plane

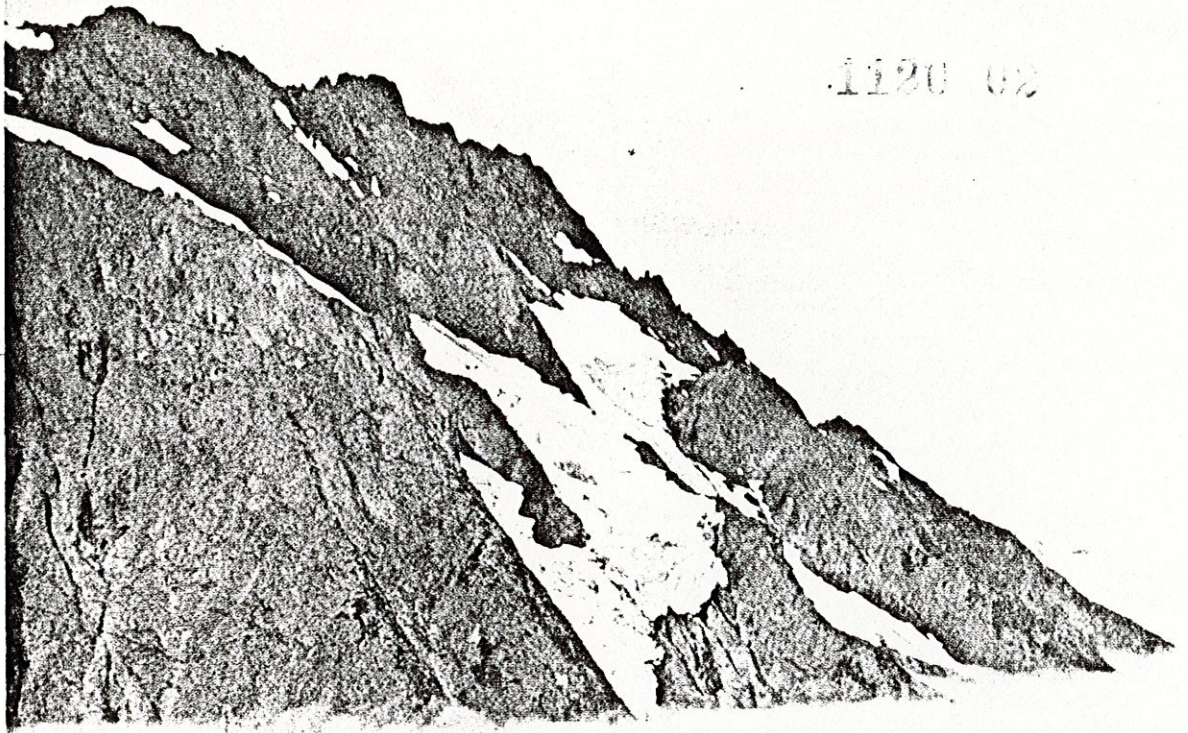
We winged north and west up the Stehekin Valley. As we climbed, so did the peaks among which we threaded. I glanced at the altimeter. It read 8,000 feet, yet the summits still looked down upon us—Sentinel and Spider on our left, Buckner, Booker, and hoary Sahale,



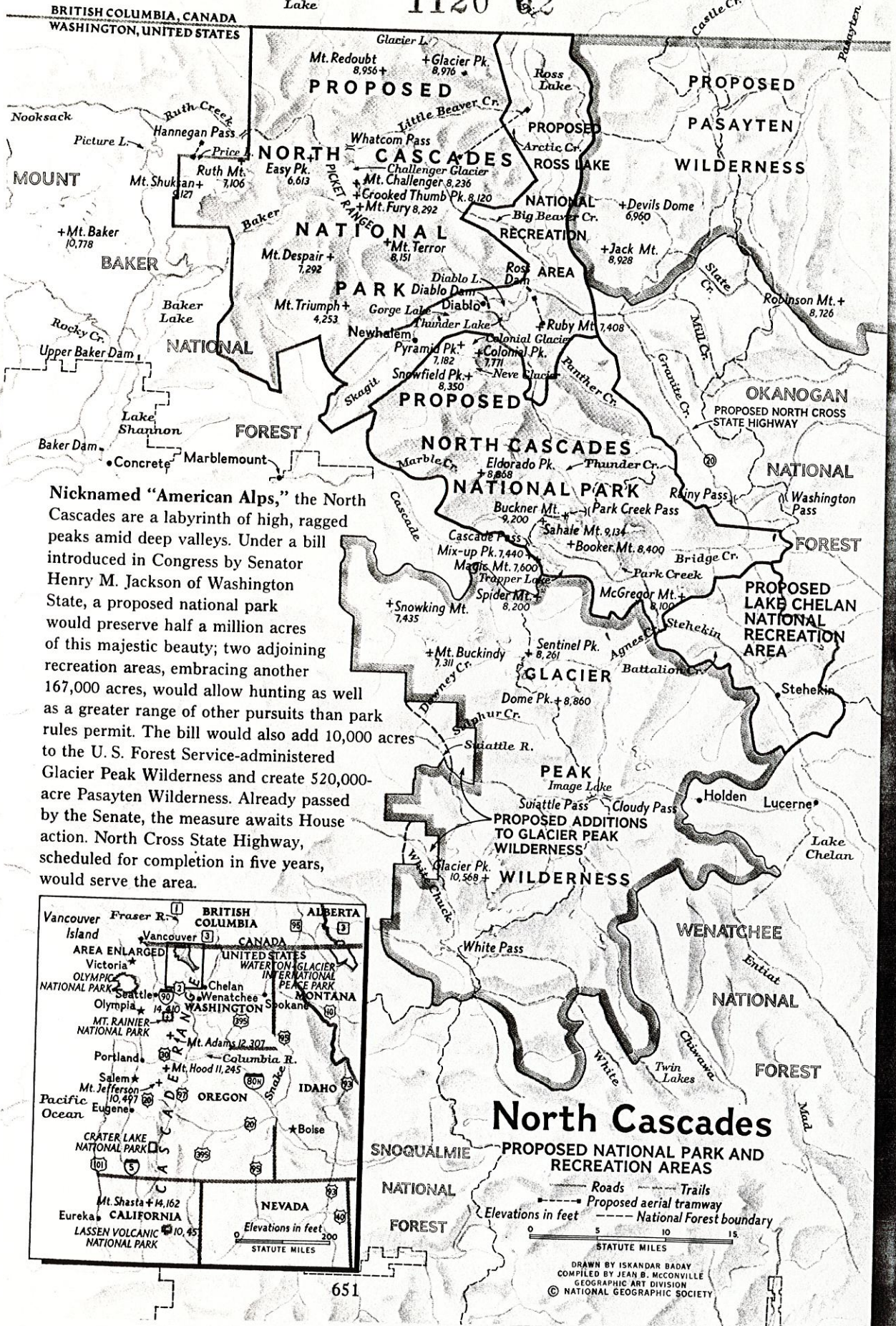
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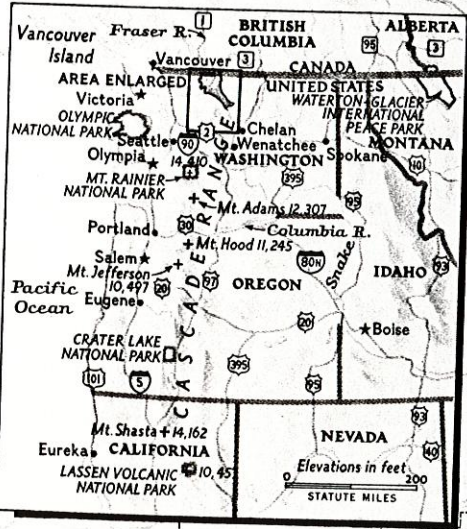
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Camped above a sea of clouds, a trail party at Cascade Pass can gaze across treetops toward snow-splotched peaks seemingly afloat. Indians and early settlers threaded this



Nicknamed "American Alps," the North Cascades are a labyrinth of high, ragged peaks amid deep valleys. Under a bill introduced in Congress by Senator Henry M. Jackson of Washington State, a proposed national park would preserve half a million acres of this majestic beauty; two adjoining recreation areas, embracing another 167,000 acres, would allow hunting as well as a greater range of other pursuits than park rules permit. The bill would also add 10,000 acres to the U. S. Forest Service-administered Glacier Peak Wilderness and create 520,000-acre Pasayten Wilderness. Already passed by the Senate, the measure awaits House action. North Cross State Highway, scheduled for completion in five years, would serve the area.



North Cascades

PROPOSED NATIONAL PARK AND RECREATION AREAS

— Roads — Trails
 - - - Proposed aerial tramway
 - - - National Forest boundary

Elevations in feet
 0 5 10 15
 STATUTE MILES

DRAWN BY ISKANDAR BADAY
 COMPILED BY JEAN B. MCCONVILLE
 GEOGRAPHIC ART DIVISION
 © NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

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KODACHROME BY BOB AND IRA SPRING © N.G.S.

pass, perhaps the easiest of all trails through the North Cascades. The campers breakfast by a blazing fire before striking tents, packing up gear, and hiking deeper into the wilds.

Next morning we saddled up at first light and pushed for Whatcom. Breakfast, I am compelled to say, consisted not of trout but of pancakes topped with sun-sweetened blueberries and thimbleberries Jim gathered in dewy meadows.

Trail traffic, for wilderness, was heavy. First we overtook a Forest Service crew carrying tools and camping gear on pack mules. They were bound over Whatcom to open the trail to Ross Lake, a job that might keep the men in the open for a week or two.

Next appeared a man on horseback, flanked by a pair of huge hounds. These beasts unnerved our horses, which started kicking in every direction. The only casualty was a saddle box splintered by a flying hoof.

Before we topped Whatcom at twilight, we had chatted with a dozen hikers. Two bronzed youths wearing backpacks filled with climbing gear said they were off to scale one of the many unclimbed, unnamed Picket peaks. Another pair had hiked in from the lake, and reported the Big Beaver Creek Trail in poor shape indeed.

Hornets Pose a Hazard

"Not only is the going bad, but the country fairly swarms with hornets," one of them said.

Often Cascades hornets build nests beneath rocks, likely as not in the middle of a trail. You can imagine what happens when your mount steps on a nest. The horse puts its trust in speedy departure from the scene. Personally, I prefer angry hornets to a frenzied gallop down a mountain, but I have yet to ride a horse that saw it my way, and I have more than once charged willy-nilly into the wilderness like a Light Brigade cavalrman at Balaklava.

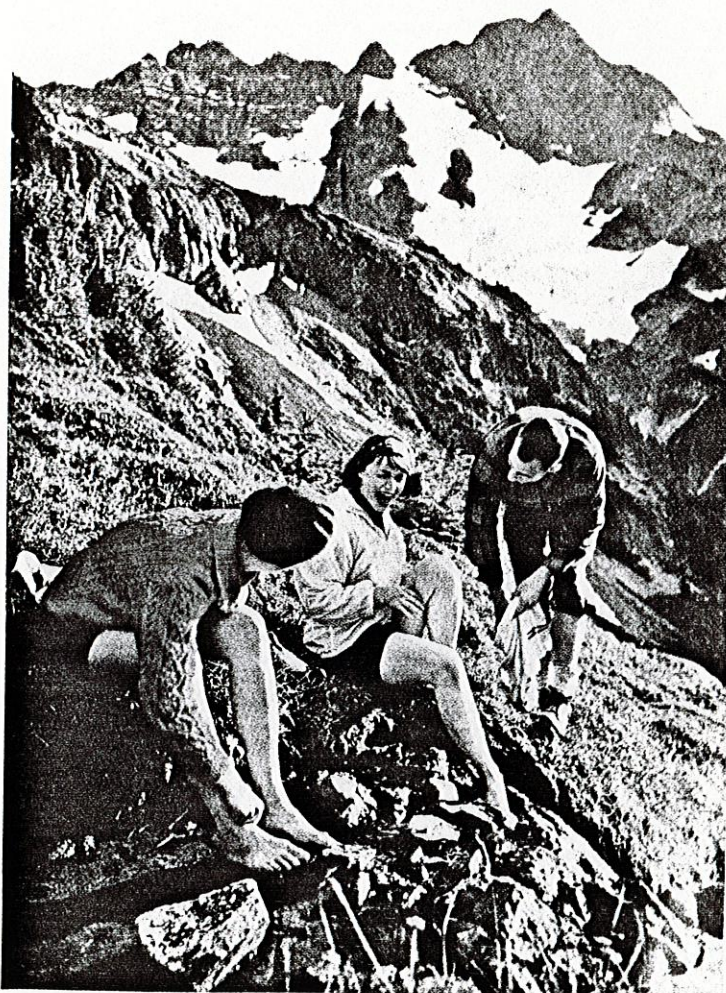
We spent a day on Whatcom Pass, feasting our eyes on the jagged Pickets we had ridden so far to see. To the south rose Mount Challenger, and in a cirque on its flank, Challenger Glacier, glory of the Pickets. Easy Peak frowned down upon us from the west; I wondered what humorist had given this steep mountain its name!

Wild flowers bloomed in all the high meadows. I recognized white avalanche and yellow glacier lilies, closely following the snow as it receded up the slopes.

Two kinds of heather, bearing white and red flowers, shared the meadows with lupine, Indian paintbrush, and harebells, which are the bluebells of Scotland. Everywhere the wild phlox tinted the landscape with lavender and white.

When finally we tore ourselves away, it was to ride back to our starting point in one strenuous day, for both Neal and Jim had temporary commitments elsewhere.

In their absence I made a foreign voyage—



KODACHROME BY BOB AND IRA SPRING © N.G.S.

Time out for tired feet: Hikers on Magic Mountain revive sore soles in cold spring water. The North Cascades offer more peaks than a climber could scale in several lifetimes—all of them "new" mountains not yet rounded by erosion, their knife-sharp ridges still being chiseled by ice.