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## News of the Washington Rock Climbers

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### Meeting

CHAMPE AND NELSON ROCKS  
by Arnold Wexler

Wednesday, October 17, is the date set for the next meeting. Chuck Haworth's movies of the Katakhdin trip and the Kauffmans' slides taken on their last trip to the Selkirks will be shown. Proceedings will start at 8 P. M.

Seneca Rock, Champe Rock, and Nelson Rock are razor-sharp fins of quartzite that rise in almost frightening sheerness for nearly 1,000 feet above the North Fork of the South Branch of the Potomac

Note that Sterling has moved recently. His phone number is SHepherd 4603. To reach Sterling's home by car, follow Georgia Avenue to Silver Spring and turn right on Colesville

Pike. At Dale Drive (Mrs. K's Tea House) turn left. Sterling's house is no. 1118, about 0.3 mile from the turn.

The junction of Dale Drive and Colesville Pike may be reached by either the Z-4 or Z-6 busses, which start from Georgia and Alaska.

### Please Note

Our Chairman requests that we print the following words of advice: Most of us realize the seriousness of our duties while belaying, but occasionally instances of thoughtlessness have occurred. We have passed the stage of adolescence in our climbing, and should govern ourselves accordingly. As has been called to our attention before, the safety rope is a life line, not a plaything.

### VACATION PICTURES

Wed. Oct. 17--8 PM

At S. Hendricks'

1118 Dale Drive, Silver Spring

River in Germany Valley of Pendleton County, West Virginia. Seneca Rock, impressively dominating the countryside above the little village of Mouth of Seneca, has been the major attraction in

this valley for climbers for many years. Champe and Nelson rocks are more isolated and secluded. It may be for this reason that they have been visited so infrequently. The records indicate that it was not until Labor Day of 1939 that a party of climbers reconnoitered and climbed on Champe Rock. On July 4, 1940, Champe Rock was besieged in earnest and a major ascent was pioneered up the redoubtable north face of the east ridge. Nelson Rock was subjected to attack on May 31, 1940. The first and second pinnacles of the east ridge were scaled for the first time. During 1943 and 1944 the Mountain Troops utilized Seneca, Nelson, and Champe rocks for training activities, but no record of their climbs is yet available.

Chuck Haworth, Fitz Clark, and I were eager to see what Champe and Nelson rocks had to offer in the way of climbing. None of us had had more than a distant glimpse of the rocks. Even tho the past ascents had been so few in number, the rocks had become enveloped in an aura of formidable-

### Editors

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ness. We can now report that Champe and Nelson rocks have just claims to fame. Both are similar in their basic structures. Each consists of two parallel knife edge flakes that are startling in their ruggedness and grandeur, running northeast and southwest, and each is bisected by a little stream flowing north into Germany Valley. There is ample opportunity for severe and difficult rock climbing, always accompanied by exposure that at times becomes extreme.

On Saturday, September 22, 1945 we made an attempt on Champe Rock. And on that same day, Champe Rock reared up at us and fought back with a ferocity that nullified our best endeavors and made us take to our heels. We spent seven hours on Champe Rock, but our ledger shows that we only ascended 175 feet, and in that 175 feet we drove in 10 pitons. Our route was up the chimney-crack on the east edge of the north face of the west flake. We ran into a succession of exposed and difficult pitches that were sometimes hazardous and sometimes nerve-racking. The leading was divided between Chuck and myself, but to Chuck goes the credit for courageous and faultless judgment under trying and fatiguing circumstances. The descent was a remarkable feat of engineering skill, effected without mishap or confusion, involving the interchange of positions on the rope by Fitz and myself on a sloping semblance of a shelf not large enough to accommodate one person with safety.

After our unsuccessful encounter with Champe Rock on Saturday, we were a little wary on Sunday, September 23, when we surveyed Nelson Rock. Altho it looked grander and more inspiring than Champe Rock, Nelson Rock responded with more friendliness to our efforts. The crestline of the south member of the east flake presented an appealing outline against the sky, while the first two needle-like pinnacles irresistibly attracted us. We scrambled up the east face of the east ridge on easy but delightful rock to the chimney between the first and second pinnacles and then climbed up the chimney to the base of the second pinnacle. With Chuck leading we climbed the first pinnacle, then continued on a skyline traverse to the fifth step, where we

were turned back by rain and lateness of the day. The climbing was open and airy, moderate and thoroughly enjoyable. There was no lack of technical problems, but after our previous experience on Champe, these problems seemed comparatively easy. We completed half of the ridge traverse before we rappelled off the rock to seek shelter from the rain.

In all probability our climbing on Champe Rock was along a route never before attempted. The only evidence of previous climbing was a solitary Army piton, several feet above the starting point, left there as if a party had contemplated making an attempt but had suddenly realized the folly of such an endeavor and had departed in haste. On Nelson Rock the first two pinnacles had previously been ascended. Along the ridge we found indications that the Army had been there before us, but we had no way of knowing what they had climbed.

We are, of course, anxious to return to Champe and Nelson to complete our unfinished business. In addition, we have put on our agenda of climbs the north edge of the west flake of Champe Rock, the north edge of the east flake of Nelson Rock, and a repetition of Charlie Daniel's famous lead on the north edge of the east flake of Champe Rock.

When do we go back? The line forms on the right!

#### COLORADO OUTING by Bill Kemper

One hundred and twenty miles southwest of Denver is a group of not too well known mountain peaks, the Elk Mountains, all over 14,000 feet: Snowmass, Capital, North Maroon, South Maroon, Castle, and Pyramid, all of which have been climbed before but yet remain off the beaten track of most mountain travelers. To climb as many as possible of these peaks was the purpose of 110 people who set out on August 11 on the annual outing of the Colorado Mountain Club.

The first camp on the trip was beside Snowmass Lake, 10,800 feet elevation, 10 miles by pack trail from Snowmass Ranch, and 30 miles from Aspen, Colorado, the nearest community. Here, under the shadows of the towering cliffs and massive rock walls of Snowmass and



Haegerman, isolated from the outside world, the news arrived 30 hours late by pack train that World War II was over.

Snowmass was the first ascent and was accomplished by 40 members in an 8-hour trip. It was a relatively easy climb. As the summit was reached, the clouds suddenly lifted and revealed the surrounding country with the craggy peaks, vari-colored rock masses, hidden lakes and forests.

On successive days we climbed the Maroons, an unnamed peak overlooking our camp, reascended the South Maroon, and then Pyramid Peak. Other parties climbed Capital and Castle.

On the east face of South Maroon we had to slide down a very steep snow field which became precipitous at its lower reach. The first members to reach this precipice lined up across the snow field in football formation to tackle and stop those following who had fallen and were sliding down somewhat out of control.

After this climbing I went with the Junior members to Glenwood Springs where there is a Navy Convalescent Center and a hot springs fed swimming pool. While waiting for the pool to open, the Juniors practiced rock climbing on the stone piers of the large bridge across the Colorado River, and

rappelling from under the bridge to the ground. This activity was not interrupted by the local constabulary, which was busily engaged in stopping other members of the party from galloping borrowed horses down the main street, but was witnessed by some incredulous citizens and Navy personnel.

The outing ended the following day, and I left with much regret and a desire to climb again with the Colorado Mountain Club.

#### Ups and Downs

September 22 and 23, 1945

Fitz Clark	Arnold Wexler
Chuck Haworth	Leo Scott
Lowell Bennett	Ned Simpson

While Arnold, Chuck, and Fitz climbed on Champe and Nelson rocks (See front page) Leo, Lowell and Ned explored a cave west of Mouth of Seneca, on the property of Mr. Rains. This cave is known to the natives as the Mystic Cave. It is composed of a series of passageways formed by an underground stream which in its course drops or cascades over three waterfalls, the highest of which is over 10 feet, with a deep pool at the foot. The three explorers wandered about for several hours, admiring the many and beautiful formations and

reveling in the unusual cleanliness of the cave environment. The general plan of the cave reminded them of the galleries of Schoolhouse. The exploration of much of the cave was left for another visit.

On Sunday the group came above ground and climbed upon the rocks across the gully from Nelson Rock to a position where they could watch the other team of climbers.

Don Hubbard	Eleanor Tatge
Dolores Alley	Herb Conn
Betty Alley	Jan Conn
Billy Alley	Betty Kauffman
	Andy Kauffman

Great Falls, Maryland was the scene of activities, on a dreary day that deluged the group with rain at intervals. The best climbing areas were pretty well under water because the river was in flood resulting from the hurricane. Great Falls was a raging torrent, and a great fascination to the group. Eager speculation as to what the Sink Stopper would do in the various chutes led to Don's determination to try a trip thru the rapids below. Don, Jan and Eleanor climbed in, promising to be back in half an hour. The first rapids produced a ducking for Jan, but she was hastily hauled back in the boat. The boat was then landed on Cleft Island for dehydrating and carried to the upper end of the island on the main channel of the river. Here it was launched again. At the first rapids the boat capsized and the occupants were submerged completely, and swept along clinging to the Sink Stopper. Below the rapids they were able to right the boat and climb in. But as the oars had vanished they were unable to land. At the Cupid's Bower rapids the boat took the widest channel, directly thru the worst of the rapids, into the backlash where the big waves boiled and foamed at the foot of the main fall. For what seemed eons the boat was suspended between the falls and the boil, accumulating more and more water inside until finally it swamped. Don, Jan, and Eleanor were again gasping for breath, but this time only for a moment. In calmer water they righted the boat and floated to the beach at Cupid's Bower where the Stimsons greeted them with a

fire. The Sink Stopperers met the rest of the group on the towpath two hours after they were due to return. Don proved that he at least was still fit by climbing the one climb that the others had been able to discover during the day.

September 29 and 30, 1945

Sterling Hendricks	Arnold Wexler
Betty Kauffman	Chuck Haworth
Andy Kauffman	

Sunday only:

Gus Gambs	Leonard Bolz
Harold Stimson	Mary Neilan
Florence Stimson	Herb Conn
Edith Stimson	Jan Conn
Chris Scoredos	Steve Yurenka
Helen Scoredos	Eleanor Tatge
Kathleen Culverwell	Bill Ostaff
Charlie Daniels	Grace Ostaff

Climbing at Bull Run began Saturday afternoon and continued thru Sunday despite occasional showers. The week end was noteworthy for the ferocious climbs attempted. Charlie's Crack came in for its share of attention, with one bare-foot ascent by Sterling Saturday and another Sunday, and with a "first-woman" ascent by Jan Sunday. The Overhang and Sterling's Corner were climbed by Chuck, Arnold, and Sterling, and Two Inches More fell to the entire Saturday group. The traverse, long unfinished, on the block north of Zeus' Throne was completed first by Sterling, second by Arnold. (Sterling: "Shift the rope!" Stimmy: "Are you OK?" Sterling: "No, but shift the rope!")

A severely overhanging layback crack near Chris' Struggle was besieged on both days, but still remains unconquered. Chris climbed highest, over half way up. Herb's heels-over-head swing in the rope suggested the name Swan Dive for the climb. Sterling and Herb climbed Chris' Struggle, and Helen came tantalizingly close to chalking up another first for the ladies on this climb.

Other highlights of the trip were Stimmy's barber shop, which provided excellent free hair cuts complete with views of climbing to entertain the customers, and an all-too-brief visit by Charlie Daniels who dashed up the mountain with Kathleen Sunday afternoon to reacquaint himself with the group. Charlie hopes to spend his week ends here for the next month.