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News of the Washington Rock Climbers

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November 14, 1945

Notice

Sunday, November 4, 1945

Without being in any way impatient, it is well to note that next month is election month. Election means voting by qualified voters. Brace yourself. Those questionnaires on which we so carefully recorded our qualifications were lost, perhaps in the confusion of marriage or moving.

Chris is making out a pre-election preliminary check list which will be sent out with UP ROPE. Please, for history's sake, search your memories again. If you send them in to UP ROPE (your publication) we promise that they will be preserved and recorded.

Chris Scoredos	Arnold Wexler
Helen Scoredos	Eleanor Tatge
Jimmy Maxwell	Bill House
Fitz Clark	Clinton Morrison

The first serious climb of the day was made by Jimmy Maxwell, who ascended Socrates' Downfall from the bottom by the Hubbard route. Long-legged Jimmy scorned the chimney at the bottom with which this climb is usually started, but grasped the edge of the broad but thin sheet on the right wall of the inside corner, swung his long legs up to the right, and made a wonderful layback, climbing in several seconds a pitch that takes most climbers many minutes. The top part of the climb he found just as overhanging, off-balance, and exhausting as the rest of us do. Most of the remainder of the day was taken up by practice belaying, practice rappelling, scrambling, and sketching by Helen. During the afternoon part of the group went up the river to practice rappelling off the Oscar's Fall Rock, and worked on climbs in that area. They met Bill House and Clint Morrison.

Scheduled Climb
CARDEROCK
Sunday
November 18, 1945

Ups and Downs

Sunday, October 21, 1945

Fitz Clark	Mary Judy
Jean Clark	Dottie Hagerman
Margaret Clark	

The Carderock section of this Sunday's rock climbers made the cliffs quiver with their hearty attacks on the Beginner's Crack, the Barnacle Face, the Buckets of Blood Chimney, and the Layback Crack, as well as the terminal part of the Chris-Wex-Don Traverse. They found, sadly, that Oscar, with whom they had played so happily the week before, had found a watery grave. (See last week's issue of UP ROPE regarding Oscar's rescue.) It seems that some robbers and murderers tossed poor defenceless Oscar in the Potomac in order to avail themselves of his rope.

Sunday, November 11, 1945

Chris Scoredos	H. F. Stimson
Helen Scoredos	Ann Dickinson
Paul Bradt	Gene Emery
Jo Bradt	Bob Stevens
Alan Bradt	Eleanor Tatge

Editors

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The chilly, damp weather fortunately never quite matured into rain. A Carderock party spent the morning limbering up on various beginner's climbs, with Herbie's Horror added for spice. Stimmy paid a flying visit to the cliffs and was introduced to some of the main climbs. In the afternoon Chris and Ann worked on practice belaying at Major Leonard's Jumpoff (the lower part of Leonard's Lunacy), and later climbed on the Easter Egg Climbs. Paul led a rope of four--including Gene, Bob, and Eleanor--on the first part of the Chris-Wex-Don Traverse. Before leaving the cliffs for the day Chris took time out to prove that he can maneuver Sterling's Test with his pack on his back. Sterling, you are put on your mettle.

Sterling Hendricks	Donald Hubbard
Andy Kauffman	Arnold Wexler
Betty Kauffman	Jimmy Maxwell

A second trip this Sunday, to various Virginia climbing areas, is described below in a feature article by Arnold Wexler.

Virginia Trip, by Arnold Wexler.

At the unearthly hour of 6:30 A.M. on Sunday morning Sterling drove out of Washington with his car loaded-- Andy and Betty Kauffman, Jimmy Maxwell, Donald Hubbard, and Arnold Wexler--headed in a westward direction. The weather looked dismal, and we were undecided as to our ultimate destination until we were about an hour out of Washington.

We debated whether to stop at Bull Run Mountains or to head for the Blue Ridge or the Massanutts, and this indecision was finally ended when we arrived at Buzzard Rock in the Massanutts. Donald Hubbard and the Kauffmans started from Passage Creek at the base of Buzzard Rock and scrambled to the top, while Sterling, Jimmy, and myself climbed the ridge from the Fishery. The rest of the morning was spent on some easy but delightful scrambling and traversing on the slippery, wet slopes of Buzzard Rock. Activities were terminated by making several attempts to climb El Capitan Jr. Jimmy Maxwell made the first ascent of El Capitan Jr. by ascending to the

diagonal underhang crack and moving diagonally upward to the right by means of a layback. It was a magnificent example of fine rock climbing. Sterling Hendricks repeated the climb with minor variations. Exploration was made on the rock face to determine the feasibility of other routes. It appears possible in dry weather to ascend El Capitan Jr. directly to the top along small nubbins. This should prove an elegant route if and when completed. After lunch the party drove to Overall Run in the Blue Ridge Mountains and hiked up to the main waterfalls where the rocks were reconnoitred for climbing possibilities. The rock there is igneous in nature, well broken up, and possesses fine possibilities for continuous climbing of vertical pitches amounting to 30 or 50 feet and traverses of perhaps 100 feet. Overall Run should in drier weather prove an interesting addition to our rock climbing repertory.

Face Traverse and Semi-chimney, Herzog (A-13 as a lead, B-16 not as a lead)

This climb is on a pronounced expanse of rock downstream from the middle of the Herzog cliffs. The cliff face is identified by a ledge several feet wide that extends across its lower part downstreamward into the river.

The climb begins near water level around the downstream nose of the rock. Moving upward and to the left one gains a ledge about 8 feet higher and moves delicately around the corner of the nose onto the face. Traversing about 10 feet to the left one is below a little bulge which can be used to gain a higher ledge where one again moves to the left on good holds until he is below a small cedar tree. The route is up to the tree and then to the left several feet to a point below a semi-chimney. Getting into the chimney is delicate. However, it may be negotiated by straddle technique and takes the climber to the top and the end of the climb.

This climb should not be led without adequate piton protection. Falls are frequent.

This climb was scouted in 1943 and first led by Don Hubbard. Arnold, Jan, and Sterling also have led it.

Inside Corner of Flatiron Rock
near Great Falls, Virginia
(B-14)

Below and across the river from the fish ladder at Great Falls and about 300 feet above the exit of the George Washington Canal into the Potomac a flat triangular rock formation facing upstream abuts the river at an angle somewhat resembling a flatiron sitting on its broad end. If one traverses to the left across the base of the flatiron, parallel to the river, and rounds the corner, a short vertical pitch leads him to a sloping balcony. This balcony is the base of an open, V-chimney, with sheer walls 15 feet high. The inside corner of the chimney possesses an incipient crack too narrow for toes or fingers and sides completely barren of handholds or footholds. It remained unclimbed until Chris Scoredos, following a suggestion by Marion Churchill, reached the top by straddling from side to side upon roughnesses and supporting himself by outward thrust of his hands against the rock. This proved to be the key to the climb, for others have succeeded in repeating his performance by using the same technique for the first 12 feet and then utilizing a crack on the right wall to ease the strain for the last 3 feet.

Letters

Donald Hubbard received the following letter from the Conns:

"1027 14th St.
Boulder, Colo.
Nov. 1, 1945

"Thanks a million for the use of your hardware. It served us in good stead yesterday. We are returning it to you special handling today. Hope it arrives in time for your next West Va. trip.

"We have found the housing situation in Boulder considerably worse than it ever was in Washington. Therefore we are living under an overhang of the Fourth Pinnacle, part of a rock formation known as Gregory Amphitheatre, near Boulder. We are picking up our mail at the address at the head of this letter.

I have been notified to report for induction Nov. 5, but I am getting the induction location

changed to Boulder, and that will delay the date probably until Nov. 29. We are wondering if we can weather our overhang until then.

"We have rock climbed five out of the seven days that we have been here. But our big adventure was climbing the Matron (alias the Maiden). It is a ferocious looking rock six miles south of Boulder. When I was at college here I knew it as the Matron (so-called because some fanciful person saw in its shape the figure of a hooded woman with head leaned forward and an infant in her arms). I had looked at it often and longingly, and had been told that it had been tried but was unclimbed and probably unclimbable.

"Jan and I looked it over Monday and decided where the one hope of a route lay. The south face is vertical and overhanging, without foothold for a bird. The east side is a narrow ridge broken by troublesome overhangs. The west side is a prodigious 150-foot overhang. The north face is vertical until quite near the top, and looks this: (See Figure 1).

"Yesterday we climbed it, up a steep friction face at the west end to the 'First Bench,' a 45-degree sloping face leading to the 'Second Bench,' a knife edge as sharp as Seneca. (Jan says sharper.) The first difficult pitch was a traverse to the first spruce tree, but each of us, by traversing at different levels, managed to do it belayed from almost directly above. A second difficult pitch brought us to the top of a semi-detached block from which we could climb easily around onto the east fact at the second spruce tree. From there it was 120 feet up an angle-of-repose 'flatiron' face to the top. We found that two Colorado Mountain Club fellows, named Roy Peak (aged 17) and Mark Taggart had beat us to it by exactly a year. They followed almost the same route, and christened it the 'Maiden.'

"We hope to take some pictures, if we can get some film. The view from the benches is sensational (Figure 2), some of the bulge at the top being due to perspective, as it overhangs toward you, and some of it real.

"Tell Sterling we are sorry it wasn't Shiprock, and while the Maiden (or Matron) isn't as big or famous, it's just as forbidding to

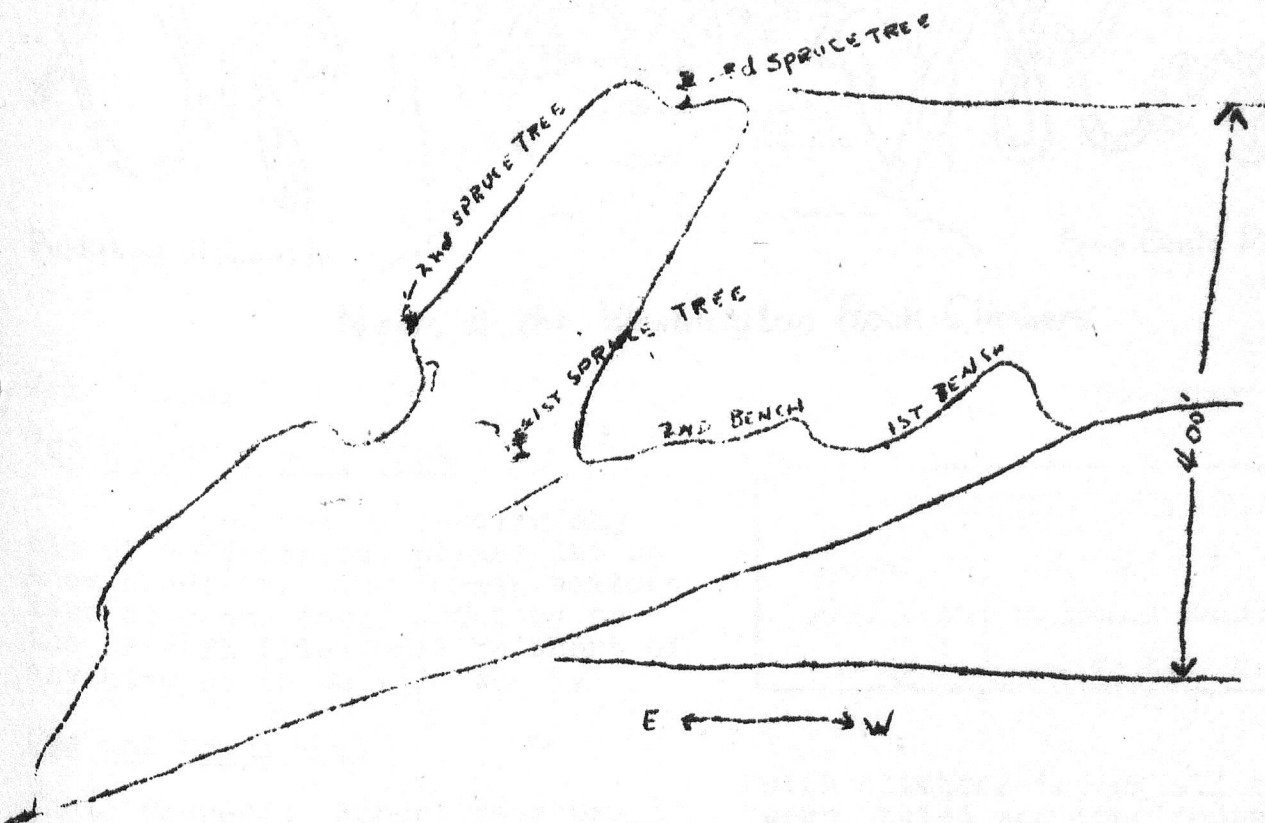


Figure 1

look at. In fact, we got weak in the knees every time we looked up (or down).

"As we have now shot our bolt, we won't be needing much hardware. We are retiring to the smaller pinnacles of the Amphitheater. (the Carderock of this vicinity) where the exposures are not more than 150 feet. These rocks are sandstone and almost entirely lacking in piton cracks. The few

pitons we used on the Matron we had to climb out of our way to place."

--Herb

Art Lembeck writes Elizabeth Vos that he has been prospecting by telescope in the Pacific and that he sees possibilities on Okinawa.

Bulletin Board Review

The Editors of UP ROPE are the proud possessors of a Bulletin Board on which anyone who is interested may find copies of P. A. T. C. Bulletin (quarterly), Mazama (Portland, Ore., monthly), M. C. M. Bulletin (Baltimore, quarterly), Potomac Hostel News (American Youth Hostel, monthly), The Mountaineer (The Mountaineers of Seattle, monthly), Trail & Timberline (Colorado Mt. Club, monthly), The Yodeler (Sierra Club, San Francisco, semi-monthly). We also have communications from members which have arrived since the last publication of UP ROPE.

Founders and Past Editors

Jan & Herb Conn

Now at:

1027 14th St., Boulder, Colo.

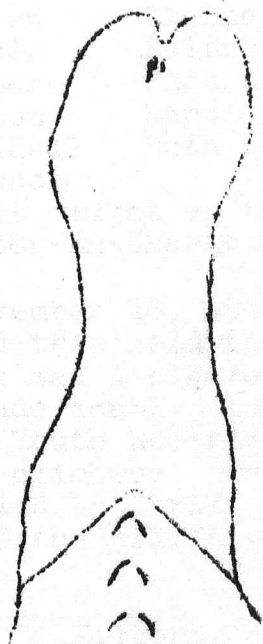


Figure 2