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Jo & Paul Brodt

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Founders

Jan & Herb Conn

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MERRY CHRISTMAS

December 12, 1945

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and a

Happy New Year

Don't forget the Meeting

THURSDAY DECEMBER 13, 1945

With Chris and Helen Scoredos

THE ROCKSBORO

1717 R Street NW, Apartment 513

### With Our Contemporaries

The SATURDAY EVENING POST has been running a series of articles on the Army divisions which have participated in World War II. The December 8, 1945 issue, carried a very interesting account of the 10th Mountain Division. All rock climbers please note:

The YODELER, published by the San Francisco Bay Chapter of the Sierra Club, writes as follows: "We can't help a bit of gleeful gloating at the expense of the Press. No sooner had we reprinted a cartoon from the Washington Rock Climbers' UP ROPE! than there appeared in a well-known Sunday supplement another example of the popular fallacy which prompted the cartoon in the first place. In full color there appeared an excellent photograph of a girl rock climber roping down from an equally good-looking cliff. Nothing wrong with the picture. But the caption? 'GOING UP!' it said! All we can say is 'Hah!'"

We hope everyone has seen Sterling Hendricks' article on the Bull Run Mountains in the PATC Bulletin for October, 1945.

Also, have you all seen the cartoon by Richter in the Washington Star of December 5, 1945, "I guess Joe got up on the wrong side of bed this morning." Ask Donald Hubbard to tell you something about this.

### Complaint Department

"A serious oversight has been brought to our attention. In your issue of October 31 appears an article by a Mr. A. Wexler. This article (we presume) is supposed to cover the high points of a rock climbing expedition to West Virginia. As participants on that trip, we feel obliged to remind Mr. Wexler of an incident which we believe should not be forgotten.

"On the evening of October 19 Don Hubbard and the Conns climbed to the summit of South Peak of Seneca Rock by the light of the full moon, spread out their sleeping bags along the summit catwalk, lashed themselves to pitons for safety, and slumbered blissfully until awakened unnecessarily soon, to view the tardy sunrise. Some sleeping postures might be mentioned. Jan's head was on the summit cairn; her feet were suspended over Mr. Armentraut's farm. Don, as he tossed and turned, alternately viewed the scudding



clouds and the distant forest (400 feet distant--straight down).

"We believe this event should be recorded as 'Another Great First.' We have the vigorous backing of Mr. Hubbard on this issue. For in Mr. Hubbard's own words: 'That was history at its very best. It was out-pioneering Daniel Boone! One could truthfully say that George Washington never slept here!'"

Sincerely yours--The Conns

### Ups and Downs of Albuquerque Chapter

(This Chapter is still in its infancy, with a permanent membership of only two, Eleanor and Don Jacobs. But the supply of visiting members seems promising, while the rock climbing possibilities of the Albuquerque area have been scarcely tapped.--Herb Conn.)

November 10, 1945

Eleanor Jacobs  
Don Jacobs  
Chuck Haworth

By Chuck Haworth

Saturday found the "Albuquerque Local Chapter" of our Washington Rock Climbing group attacking one of the best known geological landmarks in Bernalillo, New Mexico.

The assault forces consisted of Eleanor and Don Jacobs (write to them at the Physics Department, University of New Mexico) and Chuck Haworth (on a business trip, honestly!).

The landmark is known locally as The Shield and is a cliff of 700' of overhanging pre-Cambrian granite approximately 1,000 feet high and 3,000 feet long, running north-south. I understand that it's been climbed before, possibly a number of times. Chris can probably tell you how many. Incidentally, this so-called granite appears to be a cross between Potomac granite and sandstone, and is sort of a conglomerate aggregate (or something) that can, and frequently does, come off in various sized hunks when stresses are incorrectly applied. It's also badly weathered and the corners are missing as on a pair of skis with which you have rushed the season by running the downhill trail with only a half inch of soft snow over the rocks and no steel edges.

At any rate, you find when you arrive at the base (having scrambled upward 2,000 feet from your car, left parked about 7,000 feet elevation above mean tide level) that The Shield appears vulnerable via a very broad buttress running up the center to within a few hundred feet of the top. A nice 30-foot chimney gets you onto the buttress, where you forget the rope for a while as you travel to the right along easy broken ledges for perhaps 200 feet (up). This gets you into a small grove of pines nestling in a V-shaped gully, which is a good resting spot before switchbacking to the left out onto the buttress face. The latter lies at about a 45° angle, and consists of ledges running generally up and to the left and forming a natural route to the buttress top. Some of these are fairly narrow, and while easy to stand on, offer somewhat treacherous walking because of the tendency of the sand composing the granite to loosen under foot pressure and movement and to impersonate little ball bearings underneath your sneaker soles. Also, your sense of security isn't helped by the dearth of handholds. To make a short story shorter, we all scrambled over the face. The Jacobs parked while I reconnoitered alone up to a second patch of trees which furnished hair for the otherwise bald head of the buttress. I spotted what looked like several good routes to the top of the cliff, then returned to the rest of the party, who had wondered what had become of me until a few pebbles bounced off Don's head. Then down we went with a rappel at the chimney--in Kodachrome. We had a swell trip, top or not, and the Jacobs received an introduction to the Sandys, where there is enough rock climbing to keep even them busy for a while.

November 17, 1945

Eleanor Jacobs  
Don Jacobs

Herb Conn  
Jan Conn

By Herb Conn

Enchanted Mesa lies 60 miles west of Albuquerque. Walls 430 feet high of sheer sandstone isolate its large flat top from the surrounding desert. According to legend, an Indian village was located on top until the only route up the cliff was destroyed by earthquake. Those trapped on top died of starvation, while those who happened to be working in the fields below at the time of the catastrophe were forced to build homes elsewhere. This they did on a nearby mesa, where the pueblo of the Acoma Indians is still located.

The eastern wall of the Enchanted Mesa offered promise of a route to the Jacobs and Conns. Highlights of the climbs which they made were a "hodag ledge" traverse across the slippery sandstone, and a 50-foot vertical inside corner full of loose and rotten rock. The top of the mesa was gained in good time, an enchantingly sequestered area of sage and juniper trees. There was no sign of the legendary Indian civilization. However, signs of more recent visitation, such as footprints and tin cans, were unfortunately present. One avenue of approach, a ladder arrangement of shallow and seemingly inadequate steps carved in the cliff, was discovered leading up the western wall. It was suspected that easier routes might exist in the chimneys on the north side of the mesa.

The descent was engineered by the light of the full moon, and the summit was abandoned to an enthusiastic but disappointed audience of vultures.

The road to the mesa passed many sandstone formations, buttresses, pinnacles, and rows of cliffs. Many of these look to be excellent rock climbing playgrounds for future trips.

Ups and Downs, Washington Branch, by Eleanor Tatge

Chris and Helen Scoredos

December 2, 1945. Chris and Helen report a fine "duet" at Carderock. where Helen led the Chris-Wex-Don for the first time. Helen said it had been a long time since they'd been out alone, and it was just like another honeymoon. They finished the very lovely day at the Camp Lewis rocks.

Don Hubbard  
Mary Neilan

Pussy Behrenberg  
Arnold Wexler

Eleanor Tatge  
Jimmy Maxwell

December 1 and 2, 1945. The party assembled at Chimney Rock, Thurmont, Maryland, Saturday after lunch. A delicate traverse on this rock was followed by a reconnaissance of the not far distant Table Rock. The night was spent at Wolf Rock shelter, where thick steaks and thick snow provided noteworthy memories. Don's jungle hammock proved completely insect-proof; he wasn't bitten by a single mosquito all night. Sunday a trip to Sugar Loaf Mountain was made via Harper's Ferry and Point of Rocks. The view from Jefferson Rock at Harper's Ferry was very interesting, especially to Eleanor because of her Sink Stopper trip through these very rapids. At Sugar Loaf Jimmy led the Climb out of the Cave in unorthodox fashion without using the usual piton belay. He also made the Butterfinger Climb (A-4). Pussy followed Jimmy on the Cave Climb. Meanwhile Mary and Eleanor struggled mightily with cracks in the cliffs to the left of the Cave, belayed by Arnold.

Don Hubbard  
Ruth Anderson  
Sally Chamberlin

Bob Stephens  
Pussy Behrenberg

Bill King  
Eleanor Tatge

December 9, 1945. The "Carderock Gang" had a delightful time figuring out a way to get on the towpath this bright Sunday because all the bridges over the C & O Canal had been taken down. A dam has been constructed near Reed's place, diverting a stream into the canal to raise the waterlevel in order to permit barge traffic next summer up the canal to this point. Until new bridges are built, crossing the canal is something of a problem. The group finally drove through the Carderock underpass near the Taylor Model Basin, then climbed up to the towpath from the Potomac side. Don led Ruth, Bob, and Sally on the Chris-Wex-Don. Because the trip started rather late lunch was nearer 4 o'clock than noon. In the meantime Eleanor and Pussy



climbed the Beginner's Crack, the Chockstone Chimney, and Margie's Chimney. Before the latter, they were joined by Bill King, who had never before done any roped climbing. He made very fine climbs of the Beginner's Crack and Margie's Chimney. After a little practice rappelling and lunch, the group leisurely headed for home.

#### Sterling's Crack, Carderock (A-15)

(See "Carderock Climbs" by Conn & Wexler, Potomac Appalachian Trail Club, Bulletin, July 1944, pp. 60-62.)

Up the old Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, slightly more than one-half mile beyond the Taylor Model Testing Basin a blue blazed trail turns toward the Potomac to the Carderock climbs. This trail passes below Jungle Cliff, then, as it nears the river, turns to the left up through a break in the cliffs separating Jungle Cliff from Hades Heights. The first portion of Jungle Cliff reached by this trail includes an open face (Jan's Face) about 60 feet in height and nearly as wide. Following the foot of the rocks to the right a short distance beyond this face, one passes an N-shaped chimney, rounds a corner, and enters a 90° angle. The vertical crack up this inside corner is Sterling's Crack.

The climb up this crack is partly on holds and partly layback, until an excellent hold is reached above the overhanging portion of this climb. Once on top of this hold the climber can rest and meditate on a technique for the upper third of the crack.

#### Jan's Face, Carderock (B-17)

(See description of Sterling's Crack above.)

This face is broken right at its center by a vertical cleft, Margie's Chimney. To the left of this cleft, near a tree at the cliff base, starts the climb to be described. This description is copied from Conn and Wexler's article noted above.

"The take-off is delicate and offers full warning of what lies ahead. Fingerholds are used to lift the body to the first foothold. More finger-and-toe work raises the climber by degrees onto the obvious diagonal ledge, whereon a modicum of relaxation can be obtained. Then the climb continued straight up for another ten feet, until the utter absence of holds above forces a slight detour to the right. Bearing upward again, the climber may use the sharp edge of a vertical flake for his hands, but he should be cautioned against bearing outward pressure on this flake because of the imminent danger of flake and climber together becoming detached from the cliff."

Some of the holds present in 1944 now lie useless at the foot of the cliff, yet the route is essentially unchanged.

#### A West Virginia Sojourn, by the Bennetts.

Early in November, gas rationing over, we decided to revisit West Virginia. Accordingly, we left one Friday morning (after leaving the two lively members of the family with a somewhat dubious grandparent!) and headed for Petersburg, arriving in time for an excellent dinner at the Hermitage and a stay at Yutzy's. We decided to see the small cave on Raines' property near Teterton, and spent most of the next day exploring it. It is amazing how used to wading in ice water one can get! We travelled a good distance upstream, but were unable to find the other entrance. Coming out after dark we were met by the Raines family who insisted we spend the night with them. On Sunday morning they showed us the other entrance up on a hillside. This was small and quite wet, so we didn't explore it much and headed for home after visiting several old haunts. Two weeks later managing a 4-day trip, which was much more satisfactory, we headed for the north end of the Smoke Hole and camped on a farm about dark. The next morning we put our new rubber life raft and some lunch on the packboard and started upstream. We walked some distance having lunch on the way, and rode our "water jeep" back through the rapids

on her maiden voyage. It was really swell! The next day we went up the headwaters of Seneca Creek just west of Spruce Knob and camped there on a feather (?) mattress (about 4 feet of leaves). The weather was beautiful and we had an altogether perfect trip.

### Notes

Sam Moore has sent for and will try various kinds of pitons in a coral formation on Guam. We await with interest a technical report on this as well as a description of the high cliffs and extensive caves that we hear he is exploring.

The UP ROPE Editorial Staff will greet the returning Staff Sgt. Culverwell with open arms. You should see them struggling with cartoon ideas. So far they haven't dared to print any of their own ideas.

Jan says Herb has just gone into the Army. "We have no address at present. We will let you know as soon as we land in one place for a decent length of time. Could you hold our UP ROPES and send them when we have an address? I guess we will either be in Texas or California. Sure hope it is California. Herb and I celebrated the day before he went into the service by making a first ascent of a little (but overhanging everywhere) rock near Boulder."