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News of the Washington Rock Climbers

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UPS AND DOWNS

Don Hubbard
Arnold Wexler
Harold Stimson
Ted Shad

Dolores Alley
Betty Alley
Billy Alley
John Meenehan

Pussy Combs
(nee Behrenberg)
Rocky Combs
Willis Armstrong

Sunday August 11, 1946. The group went to Carderock, spending the morning on the Spider Walk. Every one tried without success. Don led the Golden Stairs, after giving Betty and Rocky lessons in rapelling, with John, Dolores, and Willis following. A face to the right of the Golden Stairs was climbed by Arnold and Ted. John made an attempt to climb, but half way up he decided to make a quick descent.

Stimmy joined the group during lunch and gave a nature talk on the beautiful colored mushrooms which were gathered in the morning. Stimmy and John worked on Sterling's Crack, which Stimmy ascended and descended. What did you have for breakfast, Stimmy--Wheaties?

The Chris-Wex-Don traverse was led by John followed by Don, Ted, Willis, and Stimmy. The same traverse was climbed in reverse led by Stimmy with John and Don.

* * *

Don Hubbard
Arnold Wexler
Bill Welsh

Dolores Alley
Betty Alley

Helen Baker
Eleanor Tatge

Sunday, August 18, 1946. Near Great Falls, Virginia, Don, Bill, Dolores, and Betty climbed the Corkscrew Climb while Arnold, Helen, and Eleanor collected mushrooms and worked on their identification. After lunch, Don helped identify also, with so much confidence that he even cooked and ate one of his identifications.

In the afternoon Dolores, Helen, and Bill, belayed by Arnold and kibitzed by Don, made a fine ascent of a handsome crack

THE WIND RIVER COUNTRY By Helen Scoredos

Chris and I could see the snow-capped mountains of the Wind River Range for many miles before we reached the section we expected to explore. Late in the afternoon we parked the car between two large green lakes--the color is typical of glacial lakes--and started walking, along a trail not too hard to follow.

Late in the afternoon of the second day we reached Goat Flat, 12000 feet high. We camped at a little stream about 500 feet from the summit. In the distance we could see the peaks, and we had no difficulty picking out Gannett. Chris discovered that the heels of his climbing shoes were coming off, which made a return trip to the car for another pair necessary. On his return late the third afternoon, we decided to try to locate a little lake I had seen from above--there were a number of these little lakes, close to 200 in all we later

THE WIND RIVER COUNTRY--Continued.

learned. We climbed half-way down the mountain, and although we didn't find the lake, we saw a beautiful cascade and little green valley cut by the Dinwoodie Stream.

The fourth day we found a trail leading into the canyon. It had at one time been a very fine trail; we were so grateful to find it that we cheerfully climbed over logs and forded streams where the bridges had washed out. I really wish I could adequately describe the trail and the lovely scenery. At the end of the fifth day we arrived at Gannett Peak. Floyd Wilson was putting up a camp for the Colorado Mountain Club, and although we did not see him, we met one of his cowboys, who told us that they reached the mountain by a trail through the "Ink Wells," so-called because the mountain lakes look black when viewed from a distance. That night we camped at the timberline.

The sixth morning Chris and I started on a reconnaissance trip to get a close view of the mountain. After scrambling over several hundred feet of loose stone we reached the ice field. The ice field was solid and fairly easy to cross. Chris estimated that we were within 1200 feet of the summit when we stopped for lunch. After eating and resting for a short time, we started the return trip to camp. We had lots of fun glissading over the densely packed snow. It was mid-afternoon before we finally crossed the glacier proper. The going was really difficult over the loose large stones piled at the base of the glacier, and we were glad to reach the canyon leading to the base camp. Here we found the stream coming from the glacier swollen to three times the size it was in the morning, and we had some difficulty crossing it. We reached the base camp tired but happy at having seen the peak. Chris said the peak would not be too difficult, and that either a snow or rock climb could be made to reach the summit. However, we were well content to leave the climbing of it to some time in the future since our chief purpose had been to see the country. The return trip was made in a day and a half.

We packed in 52 miles--not counting the trip Chris made back to the car--and altogether we covered close to 100 miles of the country. We both think the country is well worth a return trip, and feel that any member of the Club would enjoy it even if they weren't interested in climbing the peak, which is the highest in Wyoming.

LEMBECK REPORTS

Arthur Lembeck gives us a very respectful idea of Sierra Club climbing. He reports on the "Second Chimney," a fifth degree climb on Mt. Williamson, as follows:

"It actually was a broad Vee-shaped crack where two faces joined. A broad ledge 250 feet up on the 400-foot climb divided the 85° section from the gentler-sloping higher stuff. Roy Gorin led, I was second, and one of the newer members, Ray Van Aken, was third. We used 5 pitons, and at one spot used direct aid for the leader. (I followed without using it, having the benefit of Roy as an upper belay).

"The pitches were usually about 40 feet, and on the lower section generally overhung for a portion of their distance, usually toward the top of the pitch, in a way that was convenient because the top of the overhang would then become the belaying point for the next pitch. The last pitch on the 250-foot section was the direct aid place. Roy put a double loop of sling rope around a chockstone which was about the size of a grapefruit (Florida variety!) and used the loop for a stirrup to go up into a semi-chimney. I followed a little farther out, avoiding the chockstone. Beyond that point the difficulties gradually decreased. We used no more pitons the upper 200 feet. Above the 250 level it was Class III. We decided on "SunSight" for the christening--the sun had been very annoying the first two hours, blazing right down the crack into our eyes.

"We walked down the easy side back to the lunch site and had a belated attack on the water and food. Then it was time to hike back out to the cars. The uphill grind was quite different from the morning's dash down those same slopes. It had been a swell day's climbing, and we'll be going back soon for more fun."

Notes on Stimmies Western Trip

My first epistle was mailed from the Yellowstone National Park where we stayed three days. We stopped at the museum in the Grand Teton National Park and the ranger showed me the routes up Grand Teton on a relief model.

In Idaho we saw a rodeo one evening which was small but good. In Utah we went to Bryce Canyon National Park which is a badland formation in brilliantly colored soft rock. The shapes of the eroded rocks were very fascinating and so colorful that it took considerable color film. We then went to the north rim of the Grand Canyon and from the different viewpoints we got a better idea of the various temples in the canyon than we did from the south rim in 1940 when we had a snowstorm.

We then went into Zion National Park which is a canyon several thousand feet deep with nearly vertical walls cut by the Virgin River. While Florence and Edith went on a nature walk led by a park ranger Julia and I started up to Inspiration Point which is about 2000 ft above the river. The air temperature was near 100, there was no shade, and the trail was not easy to climb on foot, so we got only about half way up, but marveled at the engineering it took to get horse trails up those steep canyon walls. Zion offers lots of possibilities for the rock climber.

At Inyokern California we had lots of visiting to do and one of those I visited was Chuck Haworth on the afternoon before he left for the Selkirks. He had his equipment together ready to pack up. We then went over Tioga Pass, (10,000 ft), to the Yosemite National Park and spent two nights, one of them at the Mariposa Grove of Big Trees. We then went to the University of California at Berkeley, and then to Lick Observatory on Mt. Hamilton, and then to the Sequoia National Park where we saw the General Grant and the General Sherman trees before going back to Inyokern.

At Riverside we saw Janet Mabry Boyce and her family and stayed over night with them. Janet, who was paralyzed before her second baby came about two years ago, is now walking with two canes and except for her legs she is all right. She has two beautiful children, a boy $3\frac{1}{2}$ and a girl 2. * Her husband is an entomologist and division chief of insect control at the Citrus Laboratories at Riverside. When they go to camp in the desert it is to the Joshua Tree National Monument, so we went there and spent the night. We then descended to the Salton Sea, 244 ft below Seal Level, swam in it, and drove thru the date orchards all of which are just north of it.

On our way thru Arizona to Flagstaff we stopped at Tuzigoot, an old Pueblo ruin on a hill, which has been excavated and made a National Monument. While at Flagstaff I climbed Mt. Elden with Johnie Bennett (about 13 years), going from 6900 to 9200' in 100 minutes. Just east of Flagstaff we climbed the Sunset Crater National Monument which is a cinder cone 1000 ft high with a crater $\frac{1}{4}$ mile in diameter and 400 ft deep and it erupted in 1065 according to tree rings. Further east we stopped again at the Petrified Forest National Monument, then went on to Gallup New Mexico. From Gallup we went north by Shiprock. The main highway goes only within about 7 miles of the rock so we turned west on a gravel road just before we were nearest it. As we approached the rock we saw that that road turned south away from it so we took a dirt road north again which seemed to go straight for miles. This took us within about 3 miles of the rock and there was no road we could see that would get us any nearer, so after taking a good look we turned back out. It was near noon, and the air was in the upper 90s and there was no shade, so I did not choose to leave the rest of the family there to cook while I walked 6 miles over the desert and back, to get to the rock. Later we learned that we were as near the rock as any road would have taken us. That afternoon we went into Colorado to the Mesa Verde National Park where we spent a whole day.

Mesa Verde is the only National Park which exhibits the work of man; all the rest have some natural wonders but here there are the ruins of the Pueblo Indians that lived there up to 1300 A.D. The elevation is about 700ft. There is a plateau where they raised their corn, squash etc. on top of a 200 ft thick cap of sandstone but all their drinking water was at the base of this cap. Many of them lived on top and went down for their water but others lived in the cliffs where they were better protected from the weather and other enemies. Two of these Cliff Settlements interested me particularly, viz. the Balcony House and the Cliff Palace. The route to these settlements in both instances,

led up a cliff where steps, one or two inches deep, had been cut in the rock to help make the climb. At the Balcony House, after the ranger had finished explaining the use of the steps I told him I had hoped he would demonstrate but, as he didn't, I asked him if he minded if I tried it, and he said "go ahead". The climb was about 20 ft high and I used my fist jammed in a crack. The climb was not quite as difficult as Ronnie's Leap and when I came down my knees were shaking a little. After seeing a similar climb at the Cliff Palace, which was not as steep but the steps were shallower and sloping, I was impressed with the idea that probably they used ropes of Yucca which they were known to have, and with them the climb would have been very reasonable. When I got home I wrote a letter to the rangers telling my idea about the rope, but have not heard from them yet.

We then went to a little hotel at Twin Lakes Colorado (9200') and I told the proprietress that I had come to find out whether I was too old to climb Mt. Elbert (14,431'). Julia and I looked over the start of the trail that afternoon and found a sign that said "Main trail Mt. Elbert 10". We planned to start the next morning, sleep at timberline, then climb to the top and return the following day. Next morning it was cloudy but looked as if it might clear so we started at 6:45. After a thousand feet of climbing we got nearer the cloud and had gentle showers. A little higher the trail did not seem to agree with the map so we kept on up the slope expecting to come to the trail eventually. While we were lost I found a pair of deer antlers on a skull so carried them on up thru the aspens till we finally came to the trail again. During this time I appreciated how skillful a deer has to be when bushwhacking thru the forest. By 11:00 we were already up to the timber line at about 11,000 ft where there was a sign that said "Mt Elbert 2" and "Water 1/2". We went to the water but it was too cold to take a good drink so we came back to the sign and ate lunch. It was raining harder then, and we were rather wet so we were chilly, but under a tree we did not get quite so much rain on us. By the time we had finished lunch I felt colder than I had since I was at the top of Pikes Peak at 2:00 A.M. 33 years ago.

Since it was not yet noon I told Julia that we could move on to keep warm till 2:00 P.M. and still have plenty of time to return to the hotel by supper time if we had to. Since she had seen the sign "Mt Elbert 2" she was all for going on up. By 1:00 P.M. we were above 12000 ft and it was clearing so we could see several miles instead of a hundred feet. By 2:00 P.M. it looked so promising that we thought we might be able to sleep on top. Before 3:00 we saw some thunder heads so decided to leave our sleeping bags and go on to the summit and at least get back to the bags before we had to turn in. As we gained altitude we went even more slowly and stopped every few feet to puff and blow. By this time both of us had a little headache but not nearly as much as I had had last year when we were going up Mt. Whitney in two days. Probably we were better acclimated, having been for several days at an altitude of from 7000 to 9000 ft and I had climbed Mt. Elden a few days earlier. We puffed up to the summit at 4:10 and since there were small thunder showers near we left at 4:15 and by 4:20 it was raining and almost snowing on us. I stopped every few feet on the descent to collect specimens of each species of the flowers that were blooming and I had one pocket well filled down to 13,000 ft and the other jammed full at 11,500 ft.

We had puffed so hard going up that we were parched but when we got to water it was too cold to take more than a few sips. We had finished as much as we could eat at 6:30 and then I suggested that even tho we were very tired we could still go down for an hour and a half before dark so Julia agreed and we started down. We picked up the antlers as we came to them but when we got down to the place where we were lost going up Julia thought we could go down by another trail so we tried it. After we had travelled on it about a mile it did not seem to be going where we wanted it to go so we started bushwhacking slowly and kept on till nearly 9:00 P.M. At that point I stepped in a brook, and a swamp seemed to be between us and the highway which was now only 1/4 mile away, so we decided to sleep right there even tho the hotel was only a half mile away. It certainly was much drier and warmer there than it would have been at timberline. Next morning we had breakfast in our bags and then arrived at the hotel about as the rest of the people were getting up.

After a couple of days in Colorado Springs with relatives we started home but changed our mind long enough to go to Cheyenne Wyoming to the first of the Frontier Days on Tues. July 23, which was a huge affair, and then got home by Sunday night July 28. -----Stimmie

* The newer members will not remember Janet. She was a graceful and enthusiastic climber and one of the first girls to climb the Bull Run Overhang.

Don and Eleanor Jacobs Allen, Larry Thackwell, Arthur Lembeck, and perhaps even Arthur's wife for she was on Seneca and Champe rocks with Sam, Stimmie and me. Truly I can claim no credit for Larry's climbing. He came to Bull Run with the Baltimore climbers one day and followed me up everything I showed him. (That was before the days of Charlies Crack.) We both had shaky knees as we ended up by climbing down The Overhang. I had demonstrated everything for him but the fact that he could do them probably proves that he was better than I.

Paul Bradt

Jan writes from New York:

"Herb and I have set our tent up in the yard and it attracts quite a bit of attention from visitors. It sure is a swell tent.

"While he was here we went up to our old underpass and tried to traverse it's whole length. We figure that at Carderock or any place around Washington it would be an A climb (neither of us made it as one continuous climb) It's a stinkeroo even if it is only a railroad underpass with cars whizzing by and trains rumbling overhead. Everyone in the world is crazy, but I think rock climbers top the list."