



Up
Rope

EAGLE ROCK

South end of Smoke Hole, W. Va.
as seen from the river

NEWS OF THE WASHINGTON ROCKCLIMBERS

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Eagle Rock

Bill Schlecht had driven safely six hundred miles from Cincinnati, Ohio to join us here. The rest of the gang had gotten there first. By stooping down and looking out of the right hand car window he could make out four ropes on the wall. Well, you know how hazardous driving is now-a-days. It took a truck and quite a crew to put the car back on the road OK.

The rock, here shown above a midsummer screen of trees, rises almost from water level to a height of two hundred feet above the South Branch of the Potomac. The rock is limestone with a strata nearly vertical. Leo Scott, with Marian Churchill second, pioneered a route up the left-hand end; Eleanor Jacobs with Donald Hubbard followed the first break from the left; Paul Bradt with Fitz Clark second scouted the route up the center of the formation. Bill Kemper and the Baltimore gang worked between the two cracks at the left and the center one. They got to the top but refused to let their itinerary be called a route. It was loosish.—Paul Bradt.

CHANGE IN EDITORSHIP

Jo and Paul Bradt have passed the editorship of "Up Rope" to us. They have carried on the publishing of the paper for two years in spite of the growth of a family and other increasing responsibilities. To Jo and Paul we tip our tyrolean hats and many thanks.

Our experiences for over a quarter of a century have been concerned with traverses, pitches, chimneys, belays, snow, etc. With this issue of "Up Rope" we are venturing into the unfamiliar field of writing. We hope you will be patient with our mistakes and give us what help and suggestions you can in order that we may serve you in every way possible.

UPS AND DOWNS

Sunday 22-29 Those present--One editor

Both trips were to carderock. Each day's climbing was different. On the first Sunday the rocks were wet and provided very good basis for experimental exercises with the army mountaineering shoes. The following Sunday was clear and bright and the rocks dry. With a rappelling rope in position near the Golden Staircase, climb followed climb. The most interesting climb of the day was the Key Climb.

* * *

Donald Hubbard
Dolores Alley
Arnold Wexler

John Reed
Chris Scoredos
John Westfall & Friend

December 7 -- Great Falls, Maryland

The group left the Hot Shoppe in high spirits although somewhat disappointed that none of the Baltimore climbers appeared, and went by car to the Maryland side of Great Falls. The day was begun by attempting a very ticklish crack directly opposite the falls on which none of the climbers were successful. Later on a traverse nearby was completed by John and Chris. After lunch the party moved downstream, where John made a piton lead on one of the faces with Dolores second and Don third man on the rope. Chris and Arnold made alternate piton leads on an inside corner. Numerous rappelles were made as well as several less important climbs were completed while an interested and somewhat incredulous audience watched from above.

PAUL'S SQUIRREL TRAVERSE

by Arnold Wexler

There are two large oak trees in Paul's backyard, separated by at least 25 feet. One of these trees possessed a dead limb which Paul feared would someday crash onto the roof of a neighbor's garage. But did Paul head for that tree? No! With the eagerness of a rock climber about to attempt a first ascent, he led up the other tree, brought up Don, then climbed to a perch about 30 feet above the ground. Don belayed me while I did some gymnastic's getting ensconced on a lower limb. Then I suddenly realized that we were in the wrong tree. To my repeated inquiries as to what we were doing on this tree when the dead limb was on the other tree, Paul simply grinned. While a raw chilly wind whistled through the air and my metabolism dropped to a dangerous low, Paul rigged his rope over a high notch to serve as a belay point, and with Don playing out slack, he ventured out on the limb to its very end with very little to support him except his own precarious balance on the $\frac{1}{2}$ -in. thickness of the branch. It suddenly seeped into my befuddled brain that Paul was attempting a traverse from tree to tree something I thought only squirrels and monkey's did. Only there was a wide gap from the end of the limb Paul was on to the tip of the limb on the other tree that he was trying to reach and furthermore, there was no miscellaneous branches for balance or support. While I gaped, and gulped, Paul gingerly straddled across five feet of empty space and then by dexterous switch of his weight, hooked his advance foot over a small joint in the limb of the far tree and as he oozed his way onto the second tree I kept wondering about the breaking strength of this ancient length of manila that Paul had resurrected from his basement. Now he was across and working his way to a safe stance near the trunk of the tree. He signaled for Don to proceed. Not too happy about the prospect in store for him, Don followed. From his concentrated effort and delicate footwork I could tell that Don was wishing he had gone wood chopping instead of tree climbing. By the time my turn arrived, I was frozen stiff. Besides, I could see that the limb along which Paul and Don had traversed had a thin coating of ice, due to the perspiration that had dropped from them and had been congealed by the low temperature. So I declined with a few appropriate remarks about squirrels and monkeys and left Paul and Don to their own devices while I retreated to the ground and then into the house for a cup of tea and a cozy chair to restore my circulation.

Oh yes, the dead limb was removed.

ACROSS THE ATLANTIC

By Eleanor Tatge

With the invitation to Switzerland from an encouraging friend and fellow member of the Rock Climbing Club, I found the prospect of a trip there irresistible. Since I wanted very much to see a little of Spain and practice my limited Spanish vocabulary, I flew first to Madrid. After five days in Madrid and Barcelona, I boarded a train for the French border and was soon in sight of my first European mountains, the Pyrenees, which, while not at their loftiest here on the Mediterranean shore, are sufficiently impressive. The border was closed, which necessitated a rickety taxicab from the last Spanish town to the top of the mountain pass, and a French taxi, in a little better condition down to the first French town, Cerbère. Here, waiting for our French train, I went swimming with a French acquaintance in the Mediterranean, which particularly interesting because I had written a landing beach report about this very beach for the Army Engineering Corps during the War, and had examined it in minute detail from aerial photographs.

After an overnight journey through France and the western tip of Switzerland, I met Sally Chamberlin at the Lausanne railway station at noon, and was soon settled comfortably with her "Swiss family" and being made to feel very much at home. Our little back porch, or balcony, looked out across Lake Geneva to the blue French Alps across the border, which Sally had grown so familiar with that she reeled off their names like a list of old friends. Off to the left, at the west end of Lake Geneva, and beyond our view, lay the Rhone valley, up which Sally was already planning our first bicycle trip, she, her roommate, and I. We started on a Friday morning, after her University exams were over, pedalled past the Château de Chillon, a beautiful old castle perched on a rock in Lake Geneva, about which "The Prisoner of Chillon" was written, past some of the finest and best-known vineyards of Europe, to the Rhone river valley, and up to the town of Sion. From Sion we turned sharply right and pushed our bikes up the Hérens valley into the heart of the Valais Alps, to the town of Les Haudères. From Les Haudères we shouldered packs, hiked, practically straight up, to the Arolla glacier at the foot of Mount Colón. The day was blue, without a cloud in the sky, and the mountains breath-taking in their serene splendor. The glacier, exquisite in its whiteness, gave rise to a foaming milky mountain torrent. Sally did a very wonderful job of biking and hiking on a leg that had been broken in the Spring skiing. Our next excursion was with the University students (I too registered for school, studying French four hours every morning), who, in place of a trip to Zermatt cancelled because of the weather, climbed up the Rochers de Naye to the ski resort where Sally had broken her leg. From the lookout on top of this mountain we could see on the one hand the mouth of the Rhone valley and the shore of Lake Geneva to Lausanne, on the other the row upon row of peaks of the Bernese Oberland, again old friends to Sally. The last excursion of my visit was another bicycle trip up the Rhone with Sally and an English schoolmate. We went up to the St. Bernard pass, snapped photographs of the Hospice, the great dogs, and the Italian Alps across the lake. Then we went off on a mountain trail through high steep passes, across narrow deep valleys, past the Lacs du Fenêtre, beautiful blue mountain lakes presenting a different aspect at every turn of the trail, and down to Ferret for the night.

In between excursions we studied, got berry-brown swimming at the nearby beach, Belle Rive Plage, visited Sally's roommate at her home, a typical Swiss farm where we both enthusiastically and indiscreetly stuffed ourselves too full of cherries which we picked from the trees from the tops of tall shaky ladders, and joined in family parties at the little summer cottage of M. and Mme Bettex high on a mountain slope above the Lake. I had arrived in Switzerland on Navigation Day, and was treated to a great display of fireworks; I left after Swiss Independence day, the 1st of August, celebrated with fireworks and with bonfires built all over the mountain sides and flickering across the distance to us in the soft twilight dusk like fallen stars.

THE RETURN OF JAM-CRACK JOE.
by Herbie Conn

Gather 'round you mountain climbers and attend the tale I tell
Of a Sunday not so very long ago,
When I chanced to spend the day upon the rocks of Carderock,
And a second time I climbed with Jam-Crack Joe.

I had searched the highest summits of the Andes and the Alps,
Of the Tetons, and Himalayan peaks galore;
But in forty years of travel I had never found my friend
'Til that day upon the steep Potomac shore.

'Twas the middle of the winter, and the rocks were slick with ice.
I was trudging through the snowbanks at their base;
When I saw a man rappelling on a length of nylon rope,
And I gazed into that well-remembered face.

Oh, his hair was white, his features lined, his body stooped with age;
To his pack a pair of crutches he had tied.
But I knew him by his clothes - he hadn't changed them since that day
When so long ago I'd scrambled at his side.

As he reached the ground beside me, oh, he slapped me on the back,
"Who'd have thought," he said, "That I would meet you here?
'Tis like yesterday that I recall our climb along the ridge,
And that night we spent tied up with climbing gear."

Oh, I pestered him with questions, but he only shook his head,
"Do not ask," he begged, "the things that happened then.
I have climbed from Aconcagua to the Mountains of the Moon,
But I've vowed that I will never climb again.

"I am tortured with lumbago; all my toes are frozen off;
and high altitudes have strained my heart to death.
So I've left this mountain madness to a younger race of men.
Here at Carderock I'll draw my dying breath."

I was touched with sad emotion as I listened to his words;
Yet his eyes were bright and happy as could be.
While he coiled his rope, he told me of the wonders of the place.
Of the dread Crossover and the Lunacy.

Then we walked along together, through the February snow,
And he pointed to a rock not very high.
"Do you see that climb?" he asked me. "'Tis the Spider Walk, I'm told.
'Tis the one thing I must do before I die."

So without a moment's pause he tied a bowline in his rope;
Tenderly he layed his hands upon the cliff,
As he thrust his bony fingers deep into a crack, he said,
"'Twould be easy if I weren't so old and stiff."

Then he swung his feet up on the face, just underneath his hands,
With his body doubled up and laying-back.
How he stuck upon that icy wall is more than I can see -
But he did it with his fingers in the crack.

In this terrible position he in some way freed a hand,
And he stuck a piton in the stubborn schist,
Saying, "I have aged so much that now to pound a piton in,
I am forced to wear a glove upon my fist."

When the rope was running through the carabiner properly,
We climbed higher, and I held his nylon taught,
'Twas a wicked bit of lay-back, and he grunted through his beard,
"Oh, this Spider Walk is tougher than I thought."

Then he reached his hand onto a ledge and hauled himself erect;
There he paused and rubbed his fingers free of ice,
With a final burst of effort he was standing on the top.
"You are next," he said, "The climb is very nice."

So I tried it, but my fingers were not equal to the cold,
And the handholds did not satisfy my hope,
I was just above his piton when quite suddenly I slipped,
And I found myself a-dangling in his rope.

Cont'd (The Return of Jam-Crack Joe.)

"Try again," said Joe, and laughed at me, but now another voice
From below cut through the air just like a knife;
"At your age! This monkey-business! Come along, you're going home!"
And I knew beyond a doubt, it was my wife.

So I said good-bye a second time to dear old Jam-Crack Joe,
As he waved farewell my heart pinched like a vise,
"There are rocks on Herzog Island," were his final words to me -
On his crutches he was crossing on the ice!

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JOHN MENEHAM SPEAKS AT P.A.T.C. OPEN HOUSE

On Wednesday, December 3 John Meneham showed slides of schoolhouse and other caves to a large audience of enthusiastic listeners. A high light in the talk was John's interesting description of the lively rivalry among the early explorers of the caves in Tennessee. Pictures of caves as far as Oklahoma were shown. Climbing shots of local rocks and slides of Tom Culverwell's Schoolhouse drawings rounded out the evening's entertainment.

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DECEMBER 4 MEETING AT DR. SILSBEE'S

A meeting was held at the home of Dr. & Mrs. F. B. Silsbee on December 4 to see kodachrome slides taken by Dr. Silsbee on his recent trips into the Canadian Rockies. Dr. Silsbee covered by talk and pictures the regions around Moraine Lake, Lake Louise, Lake O'Hara, Mt. Assiniboise and Mt. Robson.

Several slides, taken by Joe Walsh this spring at the Shawangunk Mountains of New York, of Paul Bradt and Don Hubbard on the Lone Horseman Climb were also shown.

* * *

COMING EVENTS

There will be a scheduled trip to Schoolhouse cave during the Christmas holiday. This trip will leave either the day before Christmas, Christmas or the day after depending on the number of persons willing to go and transportation available. For further details call Arnold Wexler at EM 8658.

Between climbs ice skating will soon be an additional pleasure.

To each and every one of you we do wish A MERRY CHRISTMAS.