



NEWS OF THE WASHINGTON ROCKCLIMBERS

Editors

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SOME TIPS FOR THE APPRENTICE MOUNTAINEER

by Andrew J. Kauffman

Editor's Note: Limitations on space and time have caused us to publish the summary before the article, contrary to usual procedure. The text will follow in subsequent issues.

SUMMARY:

1) Equipment:

- a) Before setting out, check all equipment for reliability.

2) Strength of Party

- a) Never climb alone;
- b) Test your companions before undertaking a major climb;
- c) Never undertake a climb which will seriously tire your companions;
- d) Never let yourself be urged to undertake a climb which you do not feel capable of accomplishing;
- e) Never leave a companion alone;
- f) If a companion cannot go on, make sure he is escorted back to camp.

3) Route Finding and Reconnaissance:

- a) Never attempt a first ascent;
- b) Do not travel in remote areas where aid is not easily available; Stick to known climbs during your first season;
- c) Select your climb by consulting guidebook, talking to local mountaineers familiar with region, personally inspecting the terrain;
- d) Do not be over-ambitious in your selection;
- e) Make a plan and stick to it;
- f) Consider each part of the proposed ascent in its relation to the general strategy of the climb;
- g) Follow the easiest, safest way you can find;
- h) If stopped by an obstacle which can be overcome only at your peril, cancel the climb or circumvent it.
- i) Pick your route down on the way up; look behind you and build cairns;
- j) Inform local people of your intentions.

4) Weather

- a) Remain in camp or go on an easy hike if the weather seems threatening or is bad;
- b) Do not set out on a climb in a storm;
- c) Carry extra clothing for use in case of storm;
- d) Turn back if weather looks ominous or if caught by storm on way up;
- e) If travelling on extensive snow slopes and neve, carry a compass and take readings during fair weather;
- f) Keep off exposed ridges in case of electric storms.

5) Rock Slides

- a) Do not dislodge stones that may fall on companions;
- b) If you do dislodge a stone, give adequate warning;
- c) Avoid gullies in general; especially those that bear trace of rock-fall at their base;
- d) If caught in a rock-fall, seek out the nearest shelter immediately; if there is no shelter, flatten out against the face of the cliff.

6) Time and the Elevation Differential:

- a) Plan your trip in terms of hours and elevation to be gained and lost;
- b) Above 10,000 feet allow for slower progress because of the affects of altitude;
- c) Climb slowly and stop infrequently; maintain a rhythmic pace;
- d) Judge carefully the amount of time it will take to overcome the various parts of the climb;
- e) Allow from $1/3$ to $1/2$ as much time for the descent as for the ascent;
- f) Allow extra time for unforeseen difficulties;
- g) Do not climb at night except on a graded trail, and then stick to the trail and use flashlights; if caught by darkness on an exposed part of the climb, bivouac;
- h) Be more careful on the way down than on the way up.

7) Travel on Ice and SnowA) Glaciers:

- a) On that part of the glacier which consist of bare ice, put on the rope if the crevasses are wide and hard to cross;
- b) Avoid steep ice;
- c) Avoid stepping on the lip of a crevasse;
- d) If in doubt, rope up on any part of the glacier;
- e) Always rope up if snow is encountered, even if only inch-deep and not extensive;
- f) Remember that all glaciers are crevassed; just because a glacier is small does not mean that large crevasses are absent;
- g) The leader should sound with his ice-axe when climbing on snow;
- h) Avoid stepping at a spot where the ice-axe penetrates hilt-deep in the snow without effort;
- i) Distribute your weight and crawl on all fours over questionable snow-bridges;
- j) Belay the leader in delicate places;
- k) Keep a taught rope between the members of the party and keep them separated by a distance of 20-30 feet in crevassed areas;
- l) Travel at right angles to the direction of crevasses; if you cannot do this, travel in echelon; if you don't know the direction of the crevasses, travel in V-formation;
- m) A moraine is often the best route up a glacier;
- n) Avoid ice-falls; try not to cross under them except prior to sunrise; cross the danger zone rapidly;
- o) Take advantage of extensive hollow ground which is often crevassé-free;
- p) Reconnoiter the glacier from a good vantage point prior to the climb.

B) Rescue Methods:

- a) Be familiar with at least one of the standard rescue methods to get out of the crevasses;

C) Ice Climbing:

- a) Do not engage in any climb where ice-climbing techniques will be necessary;

D) Snowcraft

- a) Avoid slopes that are overhung by cornices or ice-falls; if you must cross them, do so quickly, early in the day (before sunrise), and keep away from the avalanche track;
- b) Do not climb on corniced ridges where you cannot stay on the rock; do not climb beneath cornices; do not step on cornices;
- c) Keep away from snow-slopes over 35°;
- d) Avoid slopes which have a visible or otherwise noticeable underlayer of ice;
- e) Do not glissade except where slope flattens out below and where there are no protruding rocks;
- f) Never glissade in crevassed territory or territory where the possibility of crevasses exists.

E) Injury:

- a) Make a plan to be followed in case of serious injury or accident; summon aid immediately;

- b) In case of injury, it is absolutely essential that at least two persons descend to seek aid, even if it is necessary to leave the injured person alone in order to do so.

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UPS AND DOWNS

April 25 Ups and Downs Continued:

Sunday dawned as one of our loveliest spring days, and since it had been planned earlier in the week to take movies of Juliet's Balcony the rockclimbers met at that spot, making it their headquarters for the day. John started a team of girls (Dolores, Marion and Pim) on Juliet's Balcony while the rest of the group scattered to scramble or climb. Other teams also made the climb.

After lunch Andy, Doug and John Reed made climbs and traversed along the water edge. Ken, Donald and Earl among other things, made a piton climb on the Flatirons. Jan and Herb worked on an inside corner that they had discovered. Chris and Jack Wilson climbed the Indigestion climb and made two new leads. Later Jan and Helen climbed the Cornice Climb. After all the serious climbing was done for the day the group worked on an aerial traverse. The traversing was very hilarious due to the antics of Rita who was rescued at the start by Don and secondly fished in at the further end by the same Don. Alan, Peter and Eric added additional merriment to the day by being roped together and photographed as the atomic climbing team of 1959.

Many other climbs were done in the course of the day by the group but a climbing reporter must attend to the important business of climbing first. Reporting is merely secondary.

* * *

The April 4 climbing was done at Sugarloaf Mountain and the April 18 climbing was at Bull Run in case you didn't recognize the climbs and were wondering where they were located.

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May 2

Valerie Bradt
Rita McAuliff
John Rockett
David Waddington
Arnold Wexler

Bob Crane
Eleanor Tatge
John Meenehan
John Reed
Pim Karcher

Ken Karcher
Earl Mosburg
Jean Hough
Donald Hubbard
June Mosburg

Carderock with the destination chosen by the climbers who met at the Hot Shoppe. The jeep was already at the rocks when our car arrived since we had driven first to Camp Lewis. We joined them in their climbing around the Beginner's Crack and very soon Arnold arrived with his guests. Three climbers lead by Pim Karcher made a climb of the Golden Staircase. Other climbers concentrated on the Spider Walk, Jan's Face and Sterling's Crack. The Easter Egg Climb was made by the Karchers, Chris and John Meenehan.

Ken and John Rockett, climbed the face that bisects the Golden Stairs. In the meantime Donald with his customary patience, instructed the novices in the fundamentals of climbing. During the lunch hour many interesting discussions were held about places, other climbs and climbers.

Up Rope May 15, 1948

Fortified by lunch the group went to Arthur's Crossover after a brief pause at the rock near the Jackknife. The Crossover was climbed by many of the members. While we were working on the Crossover, Sam and a friend in their boat, arrived and after watching the performance they continued down the river.

May 7, 8, 9, Old Rag

Fri. evening: Ken Karcher, Pim Karcher, Andy Kauffman, Betty Kauffman, Jane Showacre, Arnold Wexler, Dave Waddington, John Rockett, Dick Gaylord.

Saturday: John Reed, Earl Mosburg, June Mosburg.

Sunday: Don Hubbard, Ted Schad, Kay Schad, Jennie Schaefferman, John Meenehan, Jack Wilson, Howard Watson.

The cliffs on Old Rag were swarming with climbers this weekend. Fine weather made the trip a fine success. On Saturday, the major activities were confined to scrambles along the summit ridges. Several parties experimented with routes on the north ridge below the summit rock while one party worked on the slabs and gendarmes of the west ridge below the fire tower. Considerable effort was expended on some small but elegant pitches. A great boulder, just off the trail among the trees, near the top, provided some interesting climbs, especially an overhang covered with lichens that defied all comers. A low face near the summit also witnessed the contortions and groans as one after the other wrestled with its problem: a jam crack, an a cheval nose, an inside corner crack, and a parallel groove face.

On Sunday morning, two teams ascended "The Beginner's Climb". The first, led by Arnold, included John Reed, Dave Waddington and John Rockett. The second, led by Jane Showacre, included Pim Karcher and Earl Mosburg.

On Sunday afternoon, the western summit face was attacked by three parties. John Reed led Jack Wilson and Earl Mosburg up the Mummy Crack to the Fingertip Traverse, into the chimney and across the catwalk to the summit. Jane Showacre led John Rockett and Dave Waddington across the Boardwalk to the V-Cracks and into the Gully to the top. Don Hubbard, starting higher and around the corner to the right, took a team consisting of John Meenehan, Ted Schad and Spike (? a Wanderbird who wandered into the climbing) across the same route.

On Saturday evening, the group hiked up the Saddle Trail from the lean-to to witness the sunset over the Blue Ridge. Later the cheerful glow of the campfire kept tune to the songs, recitations and stories late into the night.

And Sunday on the way home, some of us cooled our feet and washed Ken's car in the waters of Robertson River and Cedar Run and reflectively appreciated the fine Black Angus cattle grazing in the valley!!!! A. W.

May 9

Dolores Alley
Billy Alley
Betty Alley
Rita McAuliff
Ken Cole
Eleanor Tatge

Jean Hough
Sgt. Harold Drewes
Chris Scoredos
Helen Scoredos
Eric Scoredos

Up Rope May 15, 1948

In spite of the absence of some of the regular climbers who were climbing at Old Rag, climbing at Carderock was not neglected. Eleanor, Harold and Rita climbed the face near the Golden Staircase. Beginners were instructed in the use of the rope and other climbing techniques. The Spider Walk was attempted by Ken and Helen. Later in the day Chris climbed Sterling's Crack. The remainder of the day was spent working on a chimney near the "Horror".

* * *

It has been the custom of the Rockclimbers to meet at the Wisconsin and Van Ness Hot Shoppe for some time. Anyone who cares to join the group, whether they are a member or not, is welcome; the only equipment needed is a filled canteen, lunch and rubber-soled shoes. Lack of experience need not keep you away, for instruction on the various rockclimbing techniques is usually available. But please, try to have your breakfast by 8:30 A. M. so we can leave promptly.

MEMORIAL DAY WEEK-END TRIP TO NEW YORK

A trip to the Shawangut Mountains, New York has been planned for May 29, 30, 31. There will be excellent climbing on high cliffs in beautiful country. For details on transportation and other information contact Arnold Wexler, 2511 Wisconsin Avenue, N.W., Tel. EM 8658.

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NEWS

Miss Bea Howell, who used to climb with us when she worked for UNRRA, is now temporarily located at 444 East 58th Street, New York, 19, N.Y. % Mrs. William Cherin. She expects to attend the World Health Organization meeting in Geneva around the first of June.

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Correction: In the April 30 edition of Up Rope, we mentioned Mrs. Finn Ronne who used to climb with us. We listed her maiden name as Virginia Maslin and it should have been Edith Maslin.

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Dr. Harold Stimson, sailed for London, May 12, and will return in the latter part of June. He is the United States delegate to a Conference on the International Temperature Scale at the International Bureau of Weights and Measures, Paris, May 25. He has a date to climb with George Marchalle of Brussels who has climbed on the Bull Run Mountains.

* * *

Jan and Herb Conn write us that they have been climbing on Seneca Rock and are going farther south in West Virginia to see what they can find. They expect to be back in Washington by the end of the month.

VERTICAL CLIMBING FROM THE YEAR, 459 TO 1950.

by Gustave A. Gambs

Nine weeks of hard labor on a precipitous granite wall, 2900 ft. high, much exposed acrobatic day and night climbing, performed by eight braves, equipped with several tons of hardware, ropes and firemen's hose and a gracious invitation extended to the reader to look just a few years into the future to get all the facts about the unclimbable "monolith" El Capitan--all this reads like the tales of Jules Verne.

Now, if El Capitan, actually were a monolith (Gr.: Single stone shaped into a pillar) the water supply problem for the toilers would have retarded the game, unless a helicopter could have come to the rescue with a ram.

Herb's report brought to my mind the Meteroa (Gr.: things in the air) of Thessaly, Greece. In the 14th century when asceticism was running high in Eastern Europe a number of monks conceived the idea of building hermitages in remote places and on inaccessible heights. They chose the region of Kalabaka 14 miles N. W. of Trikkala. There are found quite a number of gigantic red sandstone monoliths from a 1000 to 2000 ft. high, at their base about 400 ft. circumference and offering hardly 2000 sq. ft. at the top. The question arises as to how the first monk reached the summit of any of these monoliths. Of course, red sandstone yields to the chisel quicker than granite. Rope ladders 100 to 200 ft. long belayed around cleats sealed to the stone by lead, undetectable from below and removable at will was the accepted practice for keeping out intruders. Then the windlass followed to hoist building material and soon the hermitage was built, the roof had to be elaborate to catch rain water next came a cistern, the planting of grape vines and as much vegetables as space permits. To the Greek monk wine is food. In the course of a century these modest retreats developed into prosperous monasteries. At the beginning of the 16th century the airy strongholds, called Meteora reached the number of 24 as well as the height of their prosperity. But soon discord set in and with it disintegration.

On my visit to Greece in 1933 I found that the number of Meteora had dwindled to four with a flock of 38 anchorites, all of very ripe age. During the last century there had been little influx of new blood and as the treasures faded away either by sale or by theft, the problem of keeping these cloisters inaccessible also vanished. Generous visitors were welcome. The most difficult, exposed or dangerous pitches were provided with handholds and foot steps, freight was still hoisted as of old, but the use of tackle for visitors had been abandoned.

Now the question arises: who started all this?--It must have been Simeon Stylite, the Syrian ascetic who passed the last 30 years of his life on a pillar near Antioch and died in the year 459.

Considering all this it looks as if our 8 braves passing only nine weeks on the face of El Capitan could not qualify as stylites.

* * *

Sam Moore has called our attention to a bibliography on mountaineering literature written by Francis P. Farquhar of the Sierra Club. It is in the December 1939 and June 1940 issues of Appalachia.

Also an article by Herb W. Conn and Arnold Wexler entitled, CARDEROCK CLIMBS, July, 1944, P. A. T. C. Bulletin, pp. 56-66 was not included in our listing of mountaineering books and articles.