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SHADOWS OF THINGS TO COME

April 20. If it is a nice day, we will plan to go to Echo Cliffs, Va. side of Potomac Gorge. Also, if it is nice and if enough people are interested, we will arrange to have supper at the cliffs.

April 26-27. Old Rag Mountain, Va. Leader: Paul Bradt. Join Paul on his favorite mountain. Come when and as you like, but if you need a ride, Paul or Peg can probably help you arrange it. Individual commissaries. This is definitely a camping trip; sleeping bags are essential. We may camp at or near the leanto (capacity 6) or on top of the mountain if you wish. Be prepared to backpack in, as both ends of the fire road are closed. Packing in from the Syria end is shorter than from Nethers. BESURETOREAD SPECIAL

Keep alert for an evening meeting around the first of May. George Bell has been invited by the Kauffnans to come down and show his pictures of last summer's Clemenceau expedition. You've seen Arnold's and Pete's pictures of the Hendricks expedition. This will be, so to speak, the other side of the record. Come and get the
rest of the story.

THE MATTERHORN, SEPT. 20-21, 1951 by Os Heard

At no time in my short life as a pseudo-mountaineer have the sensational and tragic aspects of mountaineering been so obvious as when I arrived in Italy in midaugust. The height of the climbing season with its daily toll of lives was featured in practically every issue of Corriere della Sera and La Stampa. Near the end of the season Lo Scarpone, Sept. 16, listed 61 fatalities for Italy alone. You can imagine how my brother felt about my climbing but I argued for at least a nominal use of my old climbing clothes toted across the Atlantic. At first, for his peace of mind, I settled for as many campanile as I could climb from Rome to Venice, but when I really glimpsed at last snow-capped lonte Rosa from the Val Sesia, the only course left was to persuade my brother to be on hand at Breuil-Cervinia when they brought down the guts.

For all the qualms of my relatives in Italy, I had to drag my own guts into

MATTERHORN (cont.)

the little inn after pounding down from the summit of Cervino (Natterhorn) 8000 ft. on a crisp September day. The entire descent was made with only a brief stop at the Rifugio Luigi Amadeo di Savoia to clean up the before-dawn breakfast mess we had left nine hours earlier.

In retrospect, when I consider the tragedy this mountain has known, from the day when it was first successfully climbed by Whymper after six failures, up to the death of Otto Furrer in late July of this year, the Matterhorn was indeed most considerate of this oldster. For me, my guide, and my porter, September 20 broke cool and almost cloudless, and as we crossed the head of the Valtournanche from the Plan maison for the Testa de Leone, we couldn't have asked for more ideal weather. Only the day before, my guide Pio told me, he had had to retreat before a barrage of rocks as he was rounding the corner leading to the Col de Leone. At that time, down in the valley, I saw nothing but fleecy cloud puffs as I scrambled up to the snout of the Glacier di Cherillon, never imagining things were flying off the face of the mountain to my right.

But, to return to our own climb, the way to the Col de Leone was uninteresting with several steep snowfields which we traversed without incident. The tricky rotten corner of metanorphic materials, just before the col, with its steep pitch of snow requiring step-cutting, reminded me that it was probably here that Whymper had an almost fatal fall. We lost no time getting around it and traversing into the col. Both my guide and my porter Giovanni urged with Avanti and Presto; when we were met with a real up draft in the col, we didn't linger but continued climbing toward the rifugio.

Nowadays the way is so clearly defined with fixed ropes at the touchy spots, one wonders as one climbs if it was the rivalry between the Italians and Whymper or superstitious fears that made the initial conquest difficult. Since my men knew every handhold it was for me a made climb. Only once I missed a hold and swung out for a dizzy second. (I am still wondering whether Giovanni was not really trying to pull me up this pitch instead of letting me climb. I remember remonstrating that the rope was too taut.) Perhaps they had little confidence in my ability but at any rate by 3:30 we had reached the rifugio perched on a shelf which commands a striking view of the Plan Rosa, Breithorn, and Valtournanche. The latter was spread out 6000 ft. below with autumn's gold and green on the valley floor and a patch of brilliant turquoise formed by a catchment basin below the Plan Rosa. We dried our boots and socks in the brisk late afternoon sunshine with the temperature hovering below the freezing point. The rifugio confines one to a narrow strip of rock and its interior, so like our own mountain shelters in equipment and odors. After sundown we had our broth, reheated yeal, tea and wine, then huddled about in the rifugio waiting for time to signal my brother at Breuil-Cervinia by letting a lighted paper fall onto the glacier about a thousand feet below the "porch rail" in front of the shelter. From the register I noted that nost climbs on the mountain were made before the equinox. Incidentally, Whymper's first list of attempted ascents contained no record approaching September 21.

Before dawn the next day we were climbing. By the time the sun touched the Breithorn and Lyskamm, we had negotiated two of the difficult pitches in the half light of dawn. The entire Valtournanche was hidden beneath a sea of clouds while a short time later the Dent d'Hérens was bathed in a roseate golden glow. Mont Viso, beyond the Gran Paradiso, towered above the Plan Rosa 100 miles to the southeast. The mere ribbons of snow seen from the valley turned out to be of considerable extent as we climbed the shoulder of the mountain. Going around the Pix Tyncall we nad no trouble, and by the time we reached the rope ladder below the next to last pitch before the summit, we met a party descending. They had climbed from the Swiss side via the Hornli Ridge. At 10:30 we shook hands on the summit, then gaped. With Monte Rosa close at hand, with Mont Blanc well within ones grasp, and the Dent Blanche a

MATTERHORN (cont.)

stone's throw across the Tiffenmatten Glacier, with the Schonbühlhutte perched on the Holenbielen, one really has ones fill of Alpine scenery. A sparkling cloudless sky at our elevation enhanced our enjoyment. Since the day was a short one, we were too soon disturbed by Giovanni's Avanti, non repose, and began the descent. By three we regained the rifugio, passing several of Whymper's old bivouacs, and by 3:30 we were down-climbing to the col. The traverse around the Teste de Leone we made without dawdling and then two long glissades for a run off the wall south of our tracks of ascent. We struck the deserted pastures and by a network of cowpaths we reached the inn at 7:30 somewhat thighsore but otherwise intact. I was glad to be just there. We then learned that our entire progress on the face of the mountain had afforded pleasure to watchers through the powerful binoculars at a nearby hotel. As a ham actor and ancient mountaineer, I belatedly felt stage fright and vowed I'd never put on such another performance — until the next time a mountain gets in my way and I'm still able to crawl.

UPS AND DOWNS

March 29-30. Range View and Little Stony Lan, Va.

Susie Broome George Kamm Bill Kemper Jane Showacre
Jean Burnstad Walt Kane Gerry Morgan Arnold Wexler
Shirley Jackson Peg Keister Frank Sauber

Except for a slight shower and a brief snow squall on Saturday afternoon, this turned out to be a fine weekend. The chores of packing supplies up to the cabin and gathering a generous supply of wood over, we relaxed — or collapsed — for the rest of Saturday. Cur lethargy might be partially accounted for by the banquet we enjoyed Saturday night, the pièce de résistance being an eleven pound ham cooked to perfection by Susie. A book of Saki stories kept some folks occupied for the evening. Frank's hitherto hidden talent for recitation came forth in Service poems and The Highwayman. His very moving performance was continued later that night when we were all awakened by his piteous cry "Help me, help me," and his own polite reply "I'm sorry, excuse me, I can't help yoù." In the field of nocturnal entertainment, however, Frank had to compete with the mouse which dragged a candy bar across the floor and under Peg's bunk and there made a high-frequency oscillator out of the wrapper; also with Bill's fine Swiss alarm watch, which he carefully hid in the cupboard before going outside to sleep. It went off at some unholy hour with the sound of a rattlesnake.

Bright and early 3unday we all turned over for another nap. Some time later the cooks got the bacon sizzling, and the smell finally enticed even the most reluctant from their sleeping bags. When everything was shipshape and our loads were all packed up, we started for Little Stony Man, arriving in time for lunch. In spite of this unambitious beginning, we did some pretty energetic climbing for the rest of the day. Arnold took the ladies on his special Sunday tour, an "easy" route, somewhat complicated on this occasion by snow on the footholds and belay spots. Walt set out to lead the Little Stony Man Chimney, but having got off on the wrong foot, accepted a rope from above to finish it. Jane led her team of Jean and Bill on a fine climb starting in the next chimney and traversing around some airy corners to finish above the L.S.M. Chimney. Arnold then led the latter, followed by Peg, to show Walt that it was really easy. Walt, with his usual persistence, started all over again and led it successfully this time. When the late afternoon chill crept over us, we left for Warrenton, and our usual excellent supper at the Coffee Shoppe.

NOTE: Chris tells us he has located a source of nylon climbing rope. Since he buys it by the coil, wholesale, he would probably like a number of prospects before ordering. If you are interested, see Chris.

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March 29. Bull Run Mountain, Va. Andy and Betty Kauffman, Pim Karcher, Jonathan Wittenberg and Tippy.

Excellent weather. First everyone climbed the face below the lunch spot. Then Andy wiggled up one of the overhanging cracks, and the rest followed suit. Andy then climbed another one of the cracks. After lunch all went to Peak Gambs where several attempts were made on the steep face. Andy, Betty and Jonathan roped together up the main cliff. Fim "held Tippy's hand" while he crossed slopes, ledges, etc., and gently lifted him across a gap. He was a tired dog on the way home.

-B.K.*

Also March 29. Herzog Island, Md.

Chris Scoredos - Jim Bullard - Pat Shaw - (Joel and Phyllis Gross? They started.)

This trip had two many points of interest, according to Chris. First, Jimmy climbed the Chairman's Chimney with great elegance. Second, the party crossed in an aluminum cance, which so fascinated Chris that we almost lost a climber to white water boating.

April 6. Carderock, Md.

Joan Ascher Skip Crosby George Kamm Pat Moore Eric Scoredos Joel Gross Andy Kauffman Anne Branscomb Ray Moore Helen Scoredos Lewis Branscomb Phyllis Gross Betty Kauffman Gerry Morgan Johnny Scoredos Peg Keister Marion Harvey John Brehm Johnnie Reed Jane Showacre Cecilia Hlebanja Margaret Lewis Jim Bullard . Pete Robinson Bob Stevens Jerry Jankowitz Mike Moore Chris Scoredos Arnold Wexler

Yup, spring is here! Thirty people on the rocks. We were happy to welcome Skip and Pete of the Dartmouth Mountain Club, and to have Duncan with us again. A record of the climbs attempted and made on this day reads like a complete catalog of Carderock climbs. Except for the Jambox, just about every climb got its share of trials. To try to hit the high spots, just for the record: Chris exDon - Joel, Jerry, John Brehm and Ray; Golden Stairs - George, Johnnie, Peg; Friction Layback - Duncan, Skip, Pete; Jackknife - ditto; Crossover - Johnnie and Jane (between them); Nubble Face - Joan; AAA - Arnold; Spiderwalk - Arnold; Herbie's Horror - Jim (it's getting to be a habit); Jan's Face - innumerable; Elsie's Edge Face - Arnold, Johnnie, Peg; Sterling's Crack - Duncan; "Retable" - Arnold, Helen; Meenehan's Staircase (legally or otherwise) - Marion, Arnold, Jerry, John and probably others. Yeah, we know we've missed a lot, but in spite of our noble attempt, we couldn't be everywhere and watch everyone at once. We think this was a record day, in spite of a rather chilly atmosphere which kept a few people hovering around a fine big fire.

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Special Announcement of OLD RAG Trip

On April 26 and 27 the Mountaineering Committee will be guests of Old Ragged Mountain and Paul Bradt. Old Rag is well-known as the most mountainous mountain between Katahdin, Maine, and Grandfather, N.C., and we are lucky to live within 200 miles of it. Some of our classiest climbs are on Old Rag, and at this time of the year its Ridge Trail should be adorned with trillium and other spring flowers.

On the mountain there are numerous places where a mountaineer can spend a comfortable night. Perhaps the most popular is on the extensive semi-lat rock just south of the mountain-top spring. Here one can lie and watch the airplane beacons blinking back and forth across piedmont Virginia.

Another spot is the somewhat gloomy "cave" (as the park service sign calls this combination shelter and aqueduct). This one is ideal for those who relish the feel and sound of strong west winds. Located at the south margin of the rock formation on which the fire tower stands, it is readily accessible from the Saddle Trail below the fire tower path.

More luxurious, but usually already filled to capacity with flatlanders, is the Old Rag Leanto. This six-person log shelter with fire place is near the Saddle Trail a little way above the saddle between Old Rag Mt. and the Blue Ridge. Since the auto road in to this saddle from Nethers or Syria is closed, there is a possibility that the leanto won't be filled.

However, it is felt that the official camping spot for a scheduled April trip should offer dry sleeping quarters for as rany as thirty participants. Such shelter is available in the Reflecting Oven area at the foot of the cliff just east of the mountaintop spring. The Reflecting Oven is so called because it is a high cirque-like valley that opens toward the southeast and catches more sun than wind. The shelter is beneath rocks that have come off the cliff. The minor host recently checked up on the possibilities and will be up there on the 18th to 20th leveling up the bunks. This spot is most easily reached by the Saddle Trail. The rocky part of this trail climbs southwestward then comes out on open rock and turns to the north west (right) for a hundred yards of level rocky path before climbing again. The Reflecting Oven is reached by turning left at the end of this level hundred yards and descending a talus slope into the small cirque. On April 26 a string will be strung along the trees to the shelter.

It is the civilized thing in these days of world wars and atom bombs to be able to become a happy refugee and make onesself at home away from home. This trip offers such a civilizing experience. Bring your own food, bedding, canteen, flashlight and gasoline stove (or equivalent). For car arrangements or details call Paul at GE 3917 before Friday, April 25.