



FOUNDED BY
JAN AND HERB CONN

NEWS OF THE P.A.T.C. MOUNTAINEERING COMMITTEE

1916 Sunderland Place N. W. Washington 6, D. C.

Volume XV Number 11

November 1960

COMING EVENTS

The Mountaineering Committee meets each Sunday morning at Howard Johnson's Restaurant, Western and Wisconsin Avenues, at 8 a.m. Bring lunch, water, and sneakers for climbing. A note is left behind the south east drain pipe so latecomers may know where we have gone. There will usually be a Sunday trip on the out of town weekends. Bring lunch and wear old clothes.

November 11-12-13 SENECA, West Virginia. Camping. Food by individual car. Call Bob Adams at Cherry 8-4523.

20 GREAT FALLS, Maryland

26-27 OLD RAG Virginia. Food by individual car. Call Betty Johnson at Em. 2-4789.

December 4 CARDEROCK. Belay practice with Oscar if weather is good.

FIRST AID

A First Aid course for rock climbers will be given in January 1961. The classes will meet in the PATC headquarters, 1916 Sunderland Place, NW. The time is 4 p.m. Sunday on January 8, 15, 22, 29 and February 5. The period of instruction will be about three hours each afternoon. Course material will emphasize treatment of injuries sustained in climbing. A volunteer Red Cross instructor will conduct the course. Participants should attend all five classes as there will be no time to review missed lessons. All persons interested should register with Bob Adams, CH 8-4523, before Christmas.

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Hardy Hargreaves is the new Business Manager for UP ROPE. Please send checks payable to him to:

UP ROPE
1916 Sunderland Place
Washington 6, DC

THE FIRST ANNUAL PATC-MC EXPEDITION

This little account of a climbing trip to Colorado is given an imposing title, not because the author has delusions of grandeur, but because he sincerely hopes the Club will organize expeditions to the great Mountain areas in 1961 and succeeding years. These can be a source of pride and satisfaction to all of us, and may serve to introduce some of us to the mountains who otherwise might never see a base camp much higher than Tuhoeys*.

Although we tried desperately to sell the idea of a 1960 expedition, there was no detectable enthusiasm until some two weeks before departure, when Alan Talbert, Jim Shipley and Phil Sidel agreed to join us at Wally Adams' house in Durango for a personally conducted Jeep tour of the Colorado mountains. We were joined for one phase of the trip by Walt Kuckes, now a student at the University of Colorado, so that, in all, six UP ROPE subscribers were represented.

Wally, Jim, Alan and I left Durango at 1:30 PM on Tuesday August 9 in delightful sunny weather for Shiprock, passing Farmington, Shiprock, Rattlesnake, and a lone Navajo dwelling in the shadow of the great sailing ship. The sun was low as we shouldered packs, variously estimated at 70 to 150 pounds, and started up the scree slope for the Cave at the base of the black Bowl, which dominates the Western Approach. In addition to the usual duffel, food and climbing gear we had a 5-gallon Jerry can of water and an insulated bucket containing 35 or 40 pounds of ice. I had to be the one to dump the ice out on the ground after it had been hauled all the way up to the Cave. (These pack boards are a little tricky to unload!) Actually, it wasn't so much that we lost the ice as that we gained some dirt. In time that gritty ice water acquired a perfectly delightful taste.

While getting set for the night we noticed that it would take a couple of stirrups to get off the ground in the morning. Jim took care of this at once so that no time would be lost. As a result we were well up into the Bowl by the time it was light enough to take pictures, even with a Leica.

The (one and only) route on Shiprock was described by Huntley Ingalls in an evening meeting about two years ago, and again by Donald Liska in the May 1960 issue of Summit. Everyone says it takes a very long day, at least, to get up and down. We realized that we might have to bivouac but decided against carrying extra food or clothing on what we knew would be a difficult rock climb. However each of us carried 3 or 4 quarts of water.

Climbing in the Bowl is easy except for the hazard of loose rock. There were a number of near misses, and we were glad to have hard hats. The traverse from the top rim of the Bowl into the North Notch is a little tricky, but fortunately does not have to be climbed down on the return. We left two fixed ropes on the East Face Chute and continued with one rope for each party. The Friction Traverse

* For those who don't know -- the local "Pub"

to the Double Overhang is reminiscent of the Angels' Roost in Schoolhouse Cave, but much more difficult, perhaps because you can see down. On our return we used a fixed rope for the second and third man, but going up each of us went across with very little protection. There are a few bolts here and there, but all are of the older type that require a nut to hold the hanger, rather than an Allen screw. Having none of these nuts, we were forced to convert our bolt sleeves into nuts by breaking off the driving end.

Jim led the Double Overhang as well as the other sixth class pitches, and it must have taken 2 hours to get all of us onto the ramp above. This is a strenuous piece of climbing, but the Horn, which blocks the final approach to the Summit, is more terrifying. Here is a face not much different from Herbie's Horror, with six feet to go above the last bolt, and 1600 feet to drop if you come off. There is one more little sixth-class crack above this, and you are on top. The view is magnificent in every direction, for the drop to the desert is precipitous on all sides. We took pictures and read the register from 3 to 3:30 and then began to push downward, racing the sun.

As we re-crossed the Friction Traverse we were hit by a rain shower, but the water soaked into the rock as it fell, giving no trouble. Jim prusiked up the East Face Chute and belayed us as we walked up, using the fixed ropes as handlines. This proved to be fairly strenuous, as the Chute is smooth and slightly overhanging in the upper part. We reached the North Notch as a sandstorm came sweeping in from the East, and rappeled back into the Black Bowl as quickly as we could. But it was 8:30 and pitch dark as Alan and I pulled down the ropes. We joined Wally and Jim on a small promontory by flashlight to find them preparing for a bivouac, though we were only three rappels above the Cave. This turned out to be a wise decision, because falling rock is a serious hazard even by daylight. As the Durango Herald reported two days later, we shared a quart of lemonade for supper and a quart of water for breakfast. The night was fairly comfortable for the first half hour; then it rained just enough to chill us, and the West wind picked up. I can recall huddling under a coil of rope, wondering if it would be better to put it under my shirt.

About 3:30 the moon came over the rim of the Bowl, and by way of making conversation I announced that it was time to get moving. Alan, who must have been dozing at the time, jumped right up, put on his shoes, hardware and pack, and was about to start down the mountain when he finally realized the rest of us were still trying to sleep. It was 5 o'clock before we could see to rig the rappel.

We were sobered as we neared the Cave by a plaque commemorating a climber who had lost his life in that same rappel. Then we were back in camp, fixing breakfast and drinking that delicious ice water.

We took it easy the rest of the day and that night watched the Indian ceremonial dances in the Durango Camp Ground, taking care to arrive just after the collection had been taken.

The next night found us camped near timberline on the northern approach to Mt. Sneffels, a few miles North and West of Ouray. We

had driven all the way over passable road, though the heavily loaded Studebaker found the going pretty tough on some pitches. In the morning seven of us, Wally, Jim, Alan, Phil, Kate, Bobby and I set off at 6 to climb the North Face. We crossed a beautiful mountain meadow, an endless scree slope, and a steep snow slope to reach the rock at about 11 a.m. The ridge on which we landed was as loose and treacherous as we had ever seen. As the seven of us scrambled up toward the wall ahead, rocks of all sizes came whizzing past. Finally Bobby caught a large one on his arm. This was enough to convince me that the party was too large, and three of us tied into a piton beneath a protecting overhang to await developments. The others went ahead one or two rope lengths, and finding the rock equally loose, rappelled back to our position. Then we all retraced our steps, reaching camp at dusk. Our conclusion was that if Sneffels is to be climbed safely and in one day, it will require a small fast party and a very early start. Since the route has been climbed, it must be assumed that rock conditions improve higher on the mountain.

The next night we had a civilized dinner in Durango, then camped at midnight at Wolf Creek Pass on our way to Westcliffe and the Crestones. The road to South Colony Lake, base camp for the Crestone Peak and Needle, is the steepest and rockiest I have ever seen. Our Studebaker and Phil's Rambler sighed and died on the approaches to this road, but Wally's four-wheel-drive Jeep station wagon carried up the entire party in two tremendous loads without even straining. We camped at 11,500 feet near the entrance to an old mine, rather than at the Lake. The air was cool and invigorating, and the view of nearby peaks and ridges was magnificent.

Early in the morning Wally, Jim, Phil, and the four Adamses set out to do the Crestone Needle-to-Peak traverse. We fell a little short of this goal, but all agreed that it was a full day of climbing. Steady walking and scrambling brought us to the summit of the Needle at 14,191 feet by 10 a.m. The rock was solid and the holds numerous. But on the other side we found it necessary to rig a 100-foot rappel and were then unable to find a route onto the ridge leading to Crestone Peak. We were also uncertain about descending the couloir on the North side of the Peak without ice axes. After due consideration we agreed to return to camp by circling the Needle to the South. This involved two more rappels and a considerable loss of altitude that had to be regained late in the day. We were all spent as we reached camp; Phil set a record by going to bed without supper and sleeping till 9 in the morning.

From the Crestones we drove to the Long's Peak Camp Ground, where a cold snap and high winds had driven almost everyone from the mountain. This gave us a day to rest. Shortly after noon on the 18th Jim, Wally and I started up the trail to the Chasm Lake Shelter after leaving word for Alan to join us. He arrived just at dark, and that made 9 of us who slept in the 9 by 12-foot cabin, two on bunks and seven on the floor, without an inch to spare. The other five were Chicago Mountaineers Jim Hagan, Paul and Grover Hartsuch, "Chuck" and "Ernie", who were to climb Alexander's Chimney. We were signed out for Stetner's Ledges.

All went well until 3 a.m., when an electric headlamp appeared at the window. Its owner announced in loud and dolorous tones that

he was on a rescue mission, looking for Ranger Willie Colony, and that he was starting up the East Face immediately. He needed a volunteer to accompany him; Ernie got up, and that made a little more room for the rest of us. (It later developed that Willie was safely on the other side of the mountain, but had been unable to reach a telephone.) With the very first light we were all cooking breakfast. I can remember feeling grateful to Jim as the only one who would eat the delicious cereal I cooked over the Primus.

We had decided to climb in two teams; Jim and Alan, Wally and I. After we had kicked steps across the snow and thrown down our one ice axe, Jim and Alan started up and were soon tackling a smooth wall that must have looked challenging to them. It looked like a dead end to me as I waited behind Alan. Presently Jim's piton hammer came untied and went clattering down the mountain and half-way across the snow. We could see it down there, but it would take an hour to go back for it. On the other hand it was impossible to go on without it. At this point Wally and Alan volunteered to abandon the climb and proceed to the Summit via the Fisherman's Folly route. Jim and I then made a fresh start on Stetner's Ledges. The route is steep, very exposed, and of moderate to considerable difficulty. Jim led rapidly, and we made very good time except for Hornsby's Direct Finish, where, on a smooth, wet inside corner Jim was seen to dangle from pitons while driving them in. We were on Broadway at noon, just $3\frac{1}{2}$ hours after leaving Wally and Alan. After lunch we climbed one of the moderate but exposed chimneys just beyond Couloir Notch, continuing to belay for several rope lengths. Then the route eased off into a seemingly endless scramble over ledges and blocks. The Summit was reached at 2:30 in perfect weather. We came upon a rocky plain larger than a football field, equipped with garbage cans and more sign posts than Dupont Circle. After waiting for the Chicago Mountaineers to join us, we hurried down the Cables, through Fisherman's Folly, around Chasm Lake, and back to the shelter. It was 5 o'clock then, and 7:30 when we came dragging into camp. Wally and Alan had already departed for a riotous night in Denver.

There remained the Maiden adventure in Boulder and, inevitably, Devil's Tower. Arriving in Boulder, Jim, Alan and the four Adamases sat looking up at the Flatirons from the parking place for about two hours, decided hopefully it might rain (which it did not), and resolved to see whether Gerry's and Holubar's were open (which they were). In the course of a long conversation with the personable young men in Holubar's basement we gained a valuable piece of information: the best way to reach the Maiden is to park at the Blue Bell Cabin, just above the Chataqua, and take a pleasant 45-minute hike down the Mesa Trail. Accompanied by Walt Kuckes we started down the trail at a few minutes past 8 on a Sunday morning, carrying no lunch and a minimum of water, as we expected to be back by noon. After two hours the Mesa Trail disappeared, leaving us to steer by the sun, up hill and down over very rough country. At 1 p.m. when hope and water were nearly gone, we sighted what was undeniably the Maiden. It still took a 120 foot rappel and a steep scramble to reach the starting place. By this time thirst, heat, and mountain madness had reduced us to two climbing teams: Jim and Walt, Alan and me.

The climb up is not trivial; it starts with an unprotected lead quite similar to Jan's Face, and is followed a little later

by a very awkward overhang. But the trip down makes everything worthwhile. A few seconds after letting yourself over the side you are suspended in space as from a parachute. The landing spot is a narrow rock rib 90 feet below. Most of us were content to hold on with both hands and descend expeditiously, watching the scenery with one eye. But Jim held the rope with his feet and asked to be twirled around so that he could take dizzying movies all the way down. After that we drank the few remaining swallows of water and stumbled down the hill toward Eldorado Springs. This resort town is now closed to all but club members, but we marched right in and bought root beer with our last dollar. Then Walt called his roommate, who appeared miraculously to take us to Walt's house. There we were treated to hot showers and a cold watermelon. This was undoubtedly the high point of the trip.

After a leisurely drive and a detour to Wind Cave we arrived at Devil's Tower early in the afternoon of August 23. Kate and I checking in with Superintendent James Hartzell, who had kindly given his permission for the climb, when a well-known Porsche pulled along side. In a few minutes we had ropes, pitons and slings spread all over the driveway. Mr. Hartzell indicated that several visitors would be on hand the next day to watch us climb. In fact our plans were announced at the campfire meeting that night. So it was no surprise to see dozens of upturned faces the next morning when we drew a long breath at the top of the vertical column. Then Jim and Alan showed up, having eaten breakfast in the restaurant, and took most of the gallery around the corner to the Soler Route. We are told that it is all one lead of 220 feet. The only problem is getting the knot up through the carabiners. Alan came up most of the way on prusik loops of one-inch nylon webbing, a little anxious that they might start to slip and melt the rope. He avoided any such tendency by using six turns in the knot. Kate and I reached the summit at 11:30 and were down at 2:30. Jim And Alan joined us an hour later.

That evening we drove to the Concave to find that Herb and Jan had just left for Washington. Feeling that the Needles wouldn't be the same without them, we set out for home early the next morning. Jim and Alan, afraid of being late at Howard Johnson's, got away a few minutes ahead of the Adamses and were never seen again. But what can you expect if you're a slow driver?

Robert J. Adams

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Don't forget the meeting Sunday November 6 and Bob will show pictures of all that happened in the above article. PATC Headquarters, 7:30 p.m.

EDITOR: Betty Johnson 4404 Jenifer St. #2, Wash. 15 DC Em.2-4789
BUSINESS MANAGER; Hardy Hargreaves. Send check to him at the clubhouse, 1916 Sunderland Place Wash. 6 DC for twelve issues of UP ROPE.