

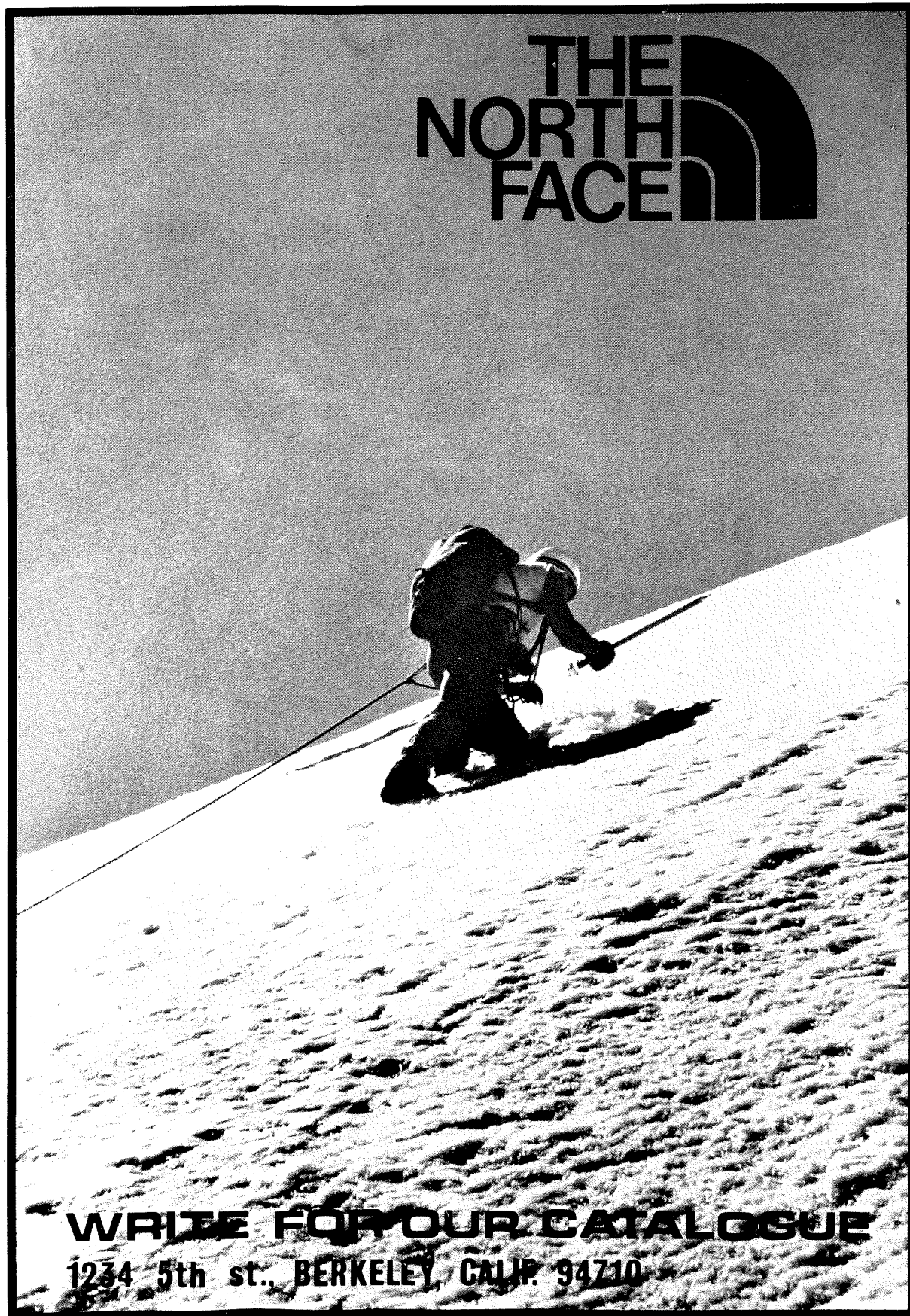
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CLIMBING



THE  
NORTH  
FACE



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## CLIMBING

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contents

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Cover photograph: the North Ridge of White Twin Spire. Photo by Gary Ziegler.  
Photo top of this page: Layton Kor emerges at the top of the Salathé Wall.  
Photo by Galen Rowell.



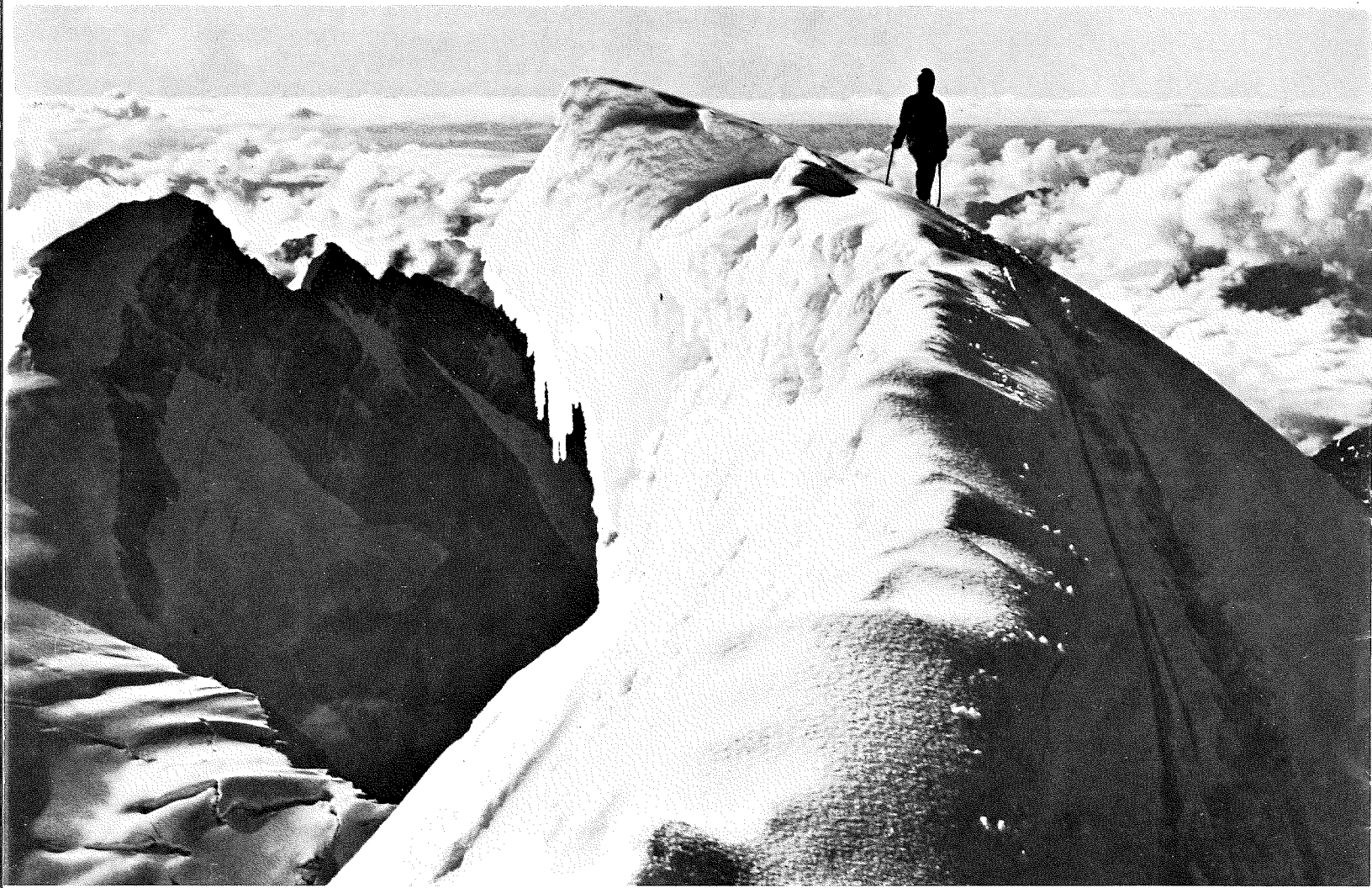


Photo by Ed Cooper.

## EDITORIAL

Yes, we are, if you will, another mountaineering journal. We are a magazine directing itself to the interests of rockclimbers and mountaineers. We undertake this aim only because we believe it is not being done adequately by anyone else and we believe the sport could be enriched by improved communication and dispersion of ideas. CLIMBING will be more than a literary outlet for those who are inclined to write; it will be actively involved in the sport, seeking out the most important and interesting material and passing it on to the readers. CLIMBING wants to become the kind of periodical which climbers need and should have. With your support, we shall succeed.

As indicated on the title page, CLIMBING is a rock-climbing and mountaineering magazine. It is not a hiking magazine, or a conservation magazine, and has no connection with any club. We intend to cover the entire spectrum of so-called "technical" climbing and hope to serve climbers in all parts of the country. The magazine will address itself to the American climber and as such will be somewhat rockclimbing oriented

and emphasize climbs in the United States and Canada. A wide representation of domestic areas is desired. CLIMBING intends to become *the* magazine of and for the rockclimbers and mountaineers of this country.

This first issue is as good as we could make it, but it is well short of our goals. Its purpose is to present the idea of the magazine. If our goals are to be realized, participation of the climbing public is prerequisite, and this first issue must generate some response. Participation is particularly invited in the "Cairn" and "Routes & Rocks" sections and is, of course, welcome elsewhere in the magazine. CLIMBING pays for all material which is used excepting material for "Cairn" and "Basecamp."

The editors of CLIMBING claim no authority for assuming this task other than the fact that we believe that the magazine is needed and we have the desire and the capacity to supply it. Being climbers ourselves, we relish the task and will do our best to serve satisfactorily.

# BASECAMP

## California

Several climbers are attempting new routes on El Capitan. One, "Aquarian Wall" between the Dihedral Wall and the West Buttress has been climbed almost half way by Kim Schmitz and Jim Bridwell. Two others to the right of the North American Wall appear to be shorter but more arduous than existing routes on the face.

Ken Boche and Chuck Pratt have established a new route on the north face of Sentinel Rock. It goes up between the Robbins/Frost 1962 route and the Chouinard/Herbert. They took two days and rated the climb V, 5.7, A4.

Andrew Embick and Robert W. Jensen made the first ascent of the northwest face of the massive spur on the left side of the northwest face of Half Dome in September 1969. This wall defeated Warren Harding in three attempts. The climb rates V, 5.7, A3.

A group of British climbers will be visiting Yosemite this season on a charter flight arranged by the British rockclimbers' magazine *Rocksport*.

Camp 4 is at present still closed, but it appears that the arrest of some campers for drug offenses had nothing to do with the closing. Rumors are to the effect that the camp will re-open sometime in the Spring with the added regimentation of numbered campsites and parking places. Apparently the old Camp 4, open to anyone who could find the space to roll out his sleeping bag, is to become a thing of the past.

## Northwest

In January of this year, Ron Burgener, Mark Wiegelt, and Mead Hargis completed the first winter ascent of Outer Space on Snow Creek Wall. The ascent, which can normally be accomplished in half a day, in summer, took the party 2½ days to complete.

The Squamish Chief succumbed to the first solo ascent of a grade V when Dan Reid took 2½ days to climb University Wall last October. Earlier, Dave Daley rappelled off the fourth pitch of Grand Wall, also a grade V, after falling forty feet on his solo attempt.

Mead Hargis and Al Givler took four days to complete a new route on the Squamish Chief in February. Pursuing a truly direct line, they followed a basalt dike ten pitches to Bellygood Ledge, surmounting three large ceilings enroute. Graded VI, 5.8, A4, this route will probably become the Northwest's most difficult problem in direct aid.

Taking advantage of the annual February good weather, Alex Bertulis and Jim Wickwire made a successful ascent of a new line left of Liberty Ridge on Mt. Rainer's Willis Wall. Under relaxed park regulations, the two man party scaled the narrow ridge in 1½ days, returning via Liberty Ridge to complete their five day expedition.

## Desert Climbing

Important climbs are being done with increasing frequency in the great American desert country.

Last year Layton Kor, Joy Kor, and Kordell Kor made a fine first ascent of a 300 foot pinnacle north of Moab, Utah which they named "Dolomite Spire." Chuck Pratt and Doug Robinson found it hard enough to add another bolt to the established protection on the second ascent the next day. Pratt and Robinson also climbed the Dark Angle, Rearick Route, a third ascent, and made a new variation and second ascent on Utah Pinnacle in Arches National Monument. Kor's party also accomplished the second ascent of King's Throne in Monument Valley by a new variation route connecting with Fred Beckey's original route at the summit spire.

Bill Forrest of Denver has been very active in the fantastic Fisher Towers area of eastern Utah, scoring major successes on the Doric Column with George Hurley, and the Citadel with Don Brigg. Both of these sandstone towers required extremely difficult aid climbing.

There were three ascents of the Titan, tallest of the Fishers, last year. One, by H. T. Carter and Tim Jennings added 400 feet of new climbing on a direct start to Kor's Finger of Fate route.

One of the biggest desert faces, the east face of Shiprock, fell to Harvey T. Carter and Bill Forrest in September. Forrest describes the climb in this issue. This is the fifth route to be made on the big rock. They rate the climb VI, 5.8, A3.

## The Alps—1969

Italian alpinists Allesandro Gogna and Leo Ceruti made a third route on the north face of the Matterhorn. It ascends a steep nose of rock on the right side of the face.

A team of six Japanese climbers, including one woman, climbed a new route on the right side of the North Face of the Eiger, spending nearly a month in the effort. This climb was said to be intended as training for a giant rockclimb they will attempt in the Karakorum.

## Expeditions

Three of the most ambitious expeditions in mountaineering history are planned for 1970 in response to the re-opening of Nepal for climbing. These are the British expedition to the south face of Annapurna, which includes Tom Frost, a Japanese expedition to attempt the southwest face of Everest, and an Austro-German expedition to attempt the Rupal Flank of Nanga Parbat. Chris Bonnington, leader of the Annapurna expedition, will report monthly on the progress of the venture in *True* magazine beginning with the March issue.





Wapama Rock. The route goes up the middle of the face. This photo, taken in the dry season, does not show Tueelala Fall which drops over the cliff in the area of the black streak.

# Hetch Hetchy: First Impressions

text and photos by Galen Rowell

*"The correspondence between Hetch Hetchy walls . . . and those of Yosemite . . . has excited every observer . . . there is a counterpart of El Capitan that rises sheer and plain to a height of eighteen hundred feet."*

—John Muir

For sixty million years the histories of Yosemite and Hetch Hetchy were as one. Both valleys were carved by glaciers at the same time in parallel river canyons. Both were discovered in the mid-nineteenth century by white men and were subsequently included in Yosemite National Park. For the last ten-thousandth of one percent of the time involved in their creation, their history has diverged,—not by the hand of God, but rather by human destiny. Hetch Hetchy was damned and flooded. Almost sixty years have passed since the thirsty mouths of San Francisco became the executioners of its valley floor. It died quickly,—a sudden if not merciful death by drowning. Yosemite's valley floor was saved for posterity, but is now dying a slow death by trampling and polluting. The only merciful death involved was that of John Muir, who gave his all to try to save Hetch Hetchy. He died in the same year that construction was begun on the dam. He never had to review his results.

At present Hetch Hetchy is just a reservoir. There are no campgrounds, no businesses, no boating, and the only access is by a winding dead end road. The few visitors to the area usually drive to the end of the road and possibly walk across the dam to gaze at the flooded valley before turning around to go back to the city, or to sardine themselves into Yosemite Valley forty miles away.

While climbers made over four hundred routes in Yosemite, no technical climbs were made in Hetch Hetchy. Climbers had told each other legends of half submerged walls rising out of water and accessible only by boat. Boats are not allowed on the reservoir and

swimming becomes rather more difficult when carrying many pounds of hardware.

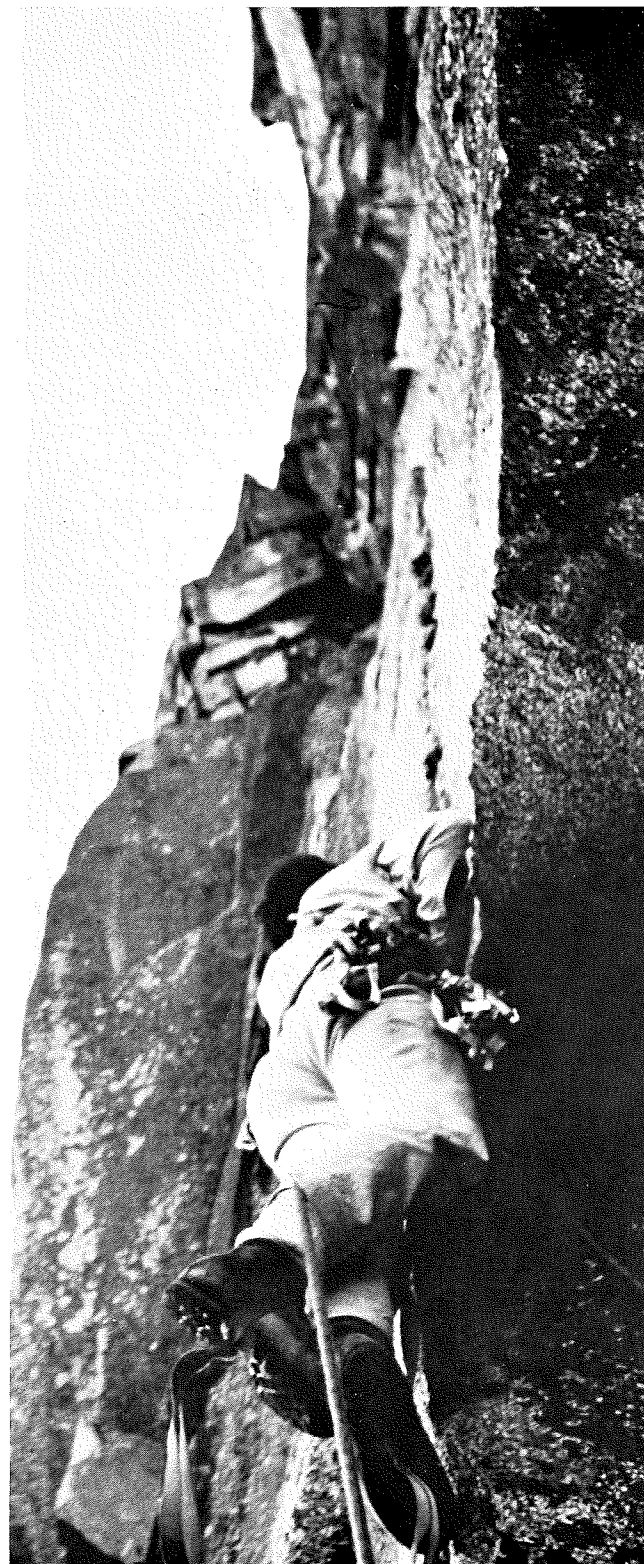
With this quite dismal knowledge of Hetch Hetchy, Joe Faint and I sought to investigate Hetch Hetchy for ourselves. What we found exceeded our expectations. On the south side of the valley, true to legend, Kolana Rock rose directly out of the murky depths of the reservoir. On the north side was Muir's El Capitan counterpart, known locally as Wapama Rock and flanked by two beautiful waterfalls of Yosemite magnitude. Tueelala Falls pours over the brow of the cliff and sifts through a thousand feet of air before gathering itself together again to cascade toward the reservoir. Wapama Falls consist of two separate falls in a deep and narrow chasm to the east of Wapama Rock. Their total drop is close to fifteen hundred feet and in volume they are a close second to Vernal and Nevada falls in Yosemite. The face of Wapama Rock was of very special interest to us. Instead of disappearing into the water, it rose from a level rock bench about a hundred yards wide which continued from the base of the cliff almost all the way to the dam.

In the first days of Spring in 1969 we walked through a heavy thundershower to the base of the wall. We shot several photographs to help in route finding and beat a hasty retreat back to the dam. It had taken us less than two hours, and even in the gray pallor, we had been impressed by the great beauty of old Hetch Hetchy. John Muir was certainly not exaggerating when he wrote of it rivaling Yosemite.

We had spotted a potential route up the middle of the south face of Wapama Rock in the same relative position as the Salathé Wall on its Yosemite counterpart. The route would follow the right side of a slab system leading to a ledge about two-thirds of the way up the thirteen hundred foot face. Above the ledge the cracks were questionable and the angle very steep. In the middle of the thundershower a large part of the upper face was obviously quite dry.



In early April Joe and I drove to Hetch Hetchy, laden with equipment and prepared to spend two bivouacs if necessary. In the first light of dawn we shouldered packs and headed across the dam. Soon we



were walking on the level bench, hewn by glaciers out of massive granite and still showing the striated sheen of the ancient polish as the morning sun glanced obliquely from its surface. Frequent cascades poured from the cliffs above, surging through the meadows and wildflowers which carpeted the bench like haphazard throw rugs. The only sign of man's presence on the scene was the thin line of a trail worming its way through the meadow, under the streams and over the undulating granite slabs. The shoreline was not visible unless one walked to the edge and looked purposely downward.

Soon we were hauling bags up a fourth class section at the base of the wall. I climbed an uneventful pitch which was mostly direct aid and sat on a ledge contemplating the wall above against our provisions as Joe cleaned the pitch on Jumars. As I looked at the bulging upper headwall I had a sudden urge to recount the bolt supplies. Not finding them in the hauling bag, I yelled to Joe, "Where's the bolt kit? In the pack or in the hauling bag?"

"I didn't pack it. I thought you did!" came the reply.

And so ethics are born. We didn't have the time to seige climb the wall and we were too lazy to go back for the bolts. Climbing in good style was no longer a matter of restraint or aesthetics. It was the only method of continuing. Joe was soon profiled above me in the morning sun as he ably led a jam crack and continued upward using aid. I cleaned the pitch and ended face to face with him on a small ledge. Not one unnecessary word, he beamed me a smile of negative pleasure, i.e., a feeling of relief and complacency generated by knowing someone else will be faced with a problem which very well might have been yours. A long steep jam crack rose above us. Luckily an inobvious crack afforded more adequate protection than Joe had first surmised, and the crack was climbed free with only a minimum of whimpering and thrutching.

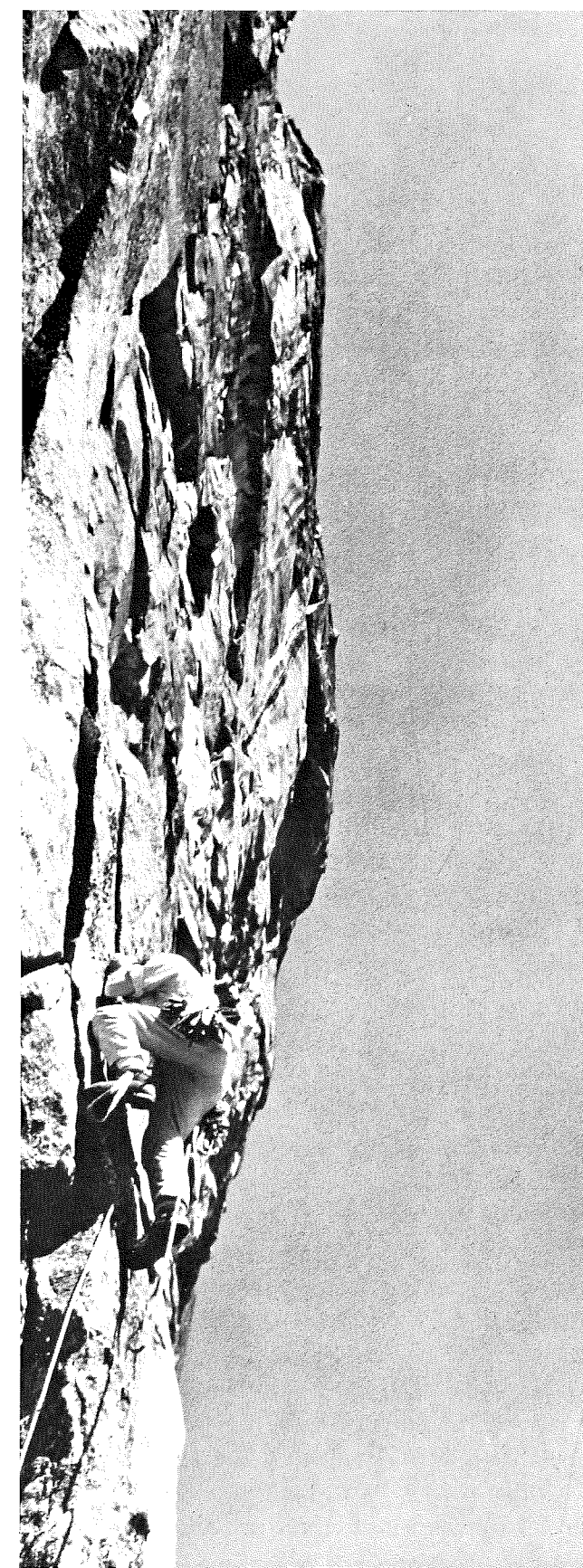
Later in the day I watched Joe nail around a small overhang and head for a large alcove which appeared to be the only bivouac spot we could reach before dark. The big ledge was still many hundred feet above and the sun departs early in the beginning of April. As the sun disappeared, Joe yelled, "Off Belay!"

I asked him if he was on the ledge and he replied, "There is no ledge; just a steep ramp."

I was beginning to become pessimistic. We had no bolts, hammocks or ledges and the night would be long and cold. Cleaning the pitch as fast as I could, I began to lead above Joe to look for a ledge. I saw one on the face far to my right but it was off route and would require climbing an improbable jam crack and pendulum to reach. Time was the essence as minute by minute the light dwindled. Nailing higher and higher, I was getting nowhere quickly when I decided to take a chance and pendulum out of the large dihedral to which we were confined. Tension traversing thirty feet to the left, I peered around the corner at the open face and was quite relieved to see a ledge only a few feet above. It was three feet wide and seemed so sharply cut into the otherwise unbroken face that one might have suspected that a stone mason had had part in its construction. After I reached the ledge, Joe prussiked up in the encroaching darkness and sleep came quickly to both of us.

It seemed as if only minutes had passed before the morning light awakened us and Joe went down to recover the iron from the last pitch. I lay alone on the ledge watching the sunrise change the murky shadows across the valley into bold relief. As I looked across at the steep cliffs, I thought to myself that this could just as easily be Yosemite as Hetch Hetchy. Upon looking down, I suddenly realized how different things were. I saw no roads, buildings, or campfire smoke. I heard no motors, shouts or horns honking. I only gazed at a large dark pool of water, rippling quietly in the respective location where thousands of people swarm in Yosemite. I tried to reassure my old beliefs by repeating to myself, "Hetch Hetchy was ruined; Yosemite Valley was saved. Hetch Hetchy was ruined; Yosemite Valley. . . ."

Somehow I just couldn't convince myself as I watched the yellow glow of the morning light creep down the walls and form rainbows in the spray of Wapama Falls. I remember thinking at the time how few areas as accessible as this had escaped the human flood. Reservoirs all over the nation echo with the roars of power boats and people flood the once timbered



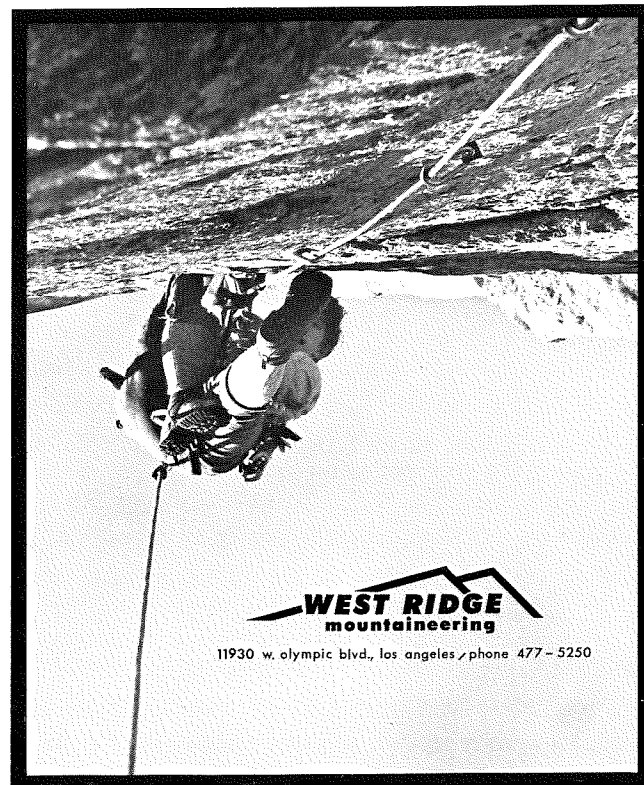


shores where the water can't reach. But Hetch Hetchy has no level shores. It is flanked by granite walls and man has yet to find a way to convert them into board feet, cubic feet, or legal tender.

My attention was soon returned to the wall where a single crack split the firm but slightly overhanging granite above us. We nailed this to a higher and larger ledge, but still we were not on the big ledge. From the ground only the eye of a climber would be able to spot the big ledge, and yet when we reached it, we were surprised to find it several hundred feet long and up to twenty feet wide. We walked to the east end of the ledge and began climbing the steep headwall. This was the bottom part of the section which had remained dry in the thundershower and we could certainly see why. We even worried about being able to rappel in case our lack of bolts forced us to descend. We spent half a day working through this section, often traversing and changing cracks. The crux of the headwall was an incipient crack which headed in just the proper direction to connect with a crack system leading to the summit. After thirty feet of progress, mostly of tied off pins, I fell and was held by a piton which looked worse than the one which came out. I decided that it was time for a pendulum and after several tries I reached a crack far to my left. From there an overhanging corner finally led into the cracks leading to the summit. Those were climbed free and included several classic jams and lay-backs.

Once again the sun was setting but now we were on the summit to enjoy instead of fear the ending of the day. The urgency of the climb was gone, and the view was to be savoured and indelibly imprinted in our memories. We walked over the top of the rock to where the stream flowing over Tueculala Fall crosses the granite slabs. We washed. We savored. The wildness of the area was our reward. Nowhere was the hand of man visible. The day is long gone when only nature's grandest sights thrill the heart of man. Wilderness is such a rare commodity that any really untouched place is per se beautiful. Leaving Hetch Hetchy we were thankful for the experience just finished and for the discovery that Hetch Hetchy is not a total ruin after all. The dam which had ruined it in comparison with other wilderness areas fifty years ago, has saved it from being over

used. We were saddened by the realization that the anti-thesis is also true: the ruins of fifty years ago look good today because many remaining areas are being sadly trampled into high altitude slums. How wonderful it must have been to see the snowy Sierra from the coast and to walk through endless wildflowers across the central valley . . . and to see Hetch Hetchy as John Muir saw it . . . "standing waist deep in grass and flowers while the great pines sway dreamily with scarcely perceptible motion. Looking northward across the valley you see a plain, gray cliff rising abruptly out of the gardens and groves to a height of 1800 feet, and in front of it Tueelala's silvery scarf burning with irised sunfire. . . ."



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Photo by David Hiser

# CLIMBING

American Rockclimbing and Mountaineering Magazine  
published every month

CLIMBING is being introduced to meet what we feel is an obvious need for communication between climbers in all parts of the country. The evolution of American climbing demands a new magazine which will reflect the scope and quality of the sport as it is now practiced. CLIMBING dedicates itself to meeting these demands.

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# Climbing in the Black Canyon of the Gunnison

by Layton Kor

The Black Canyon is a spectacular gorge of the Gunnison River notable for its narrowness, depth, ruggedness, and great expanses of sheer, dark colored walls. The deepest and most spectacular section of this formidable canyon is located 17 miles from Montrose, Colorado. The rims of the gorge are only 1300 feet apart at their nearest approach, yet the gorge ranges from 1730 to 2725 feet in depth. Except at midday, the bottom of this incredible canyon is shrouded in gloomy twilight, making the name Black Canyon particularly appropriate.

I first became acquainted with the Black Canyon through a climbing friend from Boulder, Colorado, Robert Lagrange. Bob had just returned from a sight-seeing trip to the canyon when he approached me. He was bubbling over with enthusiasm and had many color slides of the area. A careful study of the photos followed and revealed giant granite cliffs larger than either of us had ever climbed on; in fact, this was exactly the sort of place both of us had been looking for. It wasn't many days later when we loaded the car with a large assortment of technical gear and tore off on the seven hour trip to the south rim. One and a half days later, with the use of forty pitons, one expansion bolt and a bivouac, we completed the first ascent of a 1700 ft. route which began at the Gunnison River and finished on the south rim. Since that trip in 1960 I have returned to the Canyon again and again. Through the years I've enjoyed many interesting climbs there and I'm thankful to Bob for showing the way.

The length of the climbs now existing varies from short 150 foot pinnacles near the rims, to the largest cliffs which are from 1500 to 2000 ft. high. The difficulty of the routes ranges from moderate, to very difficult bivouac climbs.

A noticeable problem to those first entering the area is that of getting down into the canyon. Not all gullies that lead into the canyon are reasonable—they vary, just like the climbs, from easy scree and boulder descents to slippery, grassy troughs that break off into sheer cliffs where many rappel pitons would have to be abandoned in order to arrive safely at the bottom. The easiest descent into the canyon is that by the large, prominent gully on the north rim about one-fourth mile

north of the tourists' campground. This gully runs from east to west and is the main descent of the fishermen. Crossing the Gunnison River varies, of course, according to the amount of water present. Should a crossing be necessary, the best spot is usually among the large boulders directly below the Chasm View cliffs where the canyon walls come closest together. Since the shortest driving distance between the rims is about sixty miles, we nearly always descended and climbed on the same side of the canyon.

There is a fair amount of loose rock on most of the routes in the canyon, varying from occasional loose flakes, to some cliffs which are dangerously rotten throughout. The best rock, the good black granite, seems somewhat like limestone with an abundance of firm, sharp holds. Those climbers who demand iron-hard, compact granite would do well to avoid the area.

To date about 25 to 30 climbs have been completed. These routes are all located in the eight to ten mile section of the canyon from below the ranger station on the north rim to the well known Painted Wall on down the canyon. As the Black Canyon is isolated by great distances from other major climbing areas such as Yosemite, the Tetons, etc., most of the climbing visitors have been Coloradoans. Here listed are a few of the climbers responsible for most of the routes: Robert Lagrange, Bob Culp, Larry Dalke, Wayne Goss, Pat Ament, Jim Disney, Tex Bossier.

Anyone desiring to climb in the Black Canyon should check with the rangers on the north or south rims. They are sympathetic toward climbers and can be of great help in providing information about descents, what has been climbed in the canyon, and some route descriptions.

A pitch by pitch description of the South Face of the Chasm View now follows. This is one of the more difficult climbs in the area, comparable with the north face of Sentinel Rock via the Salathé-Steck route. The ascent of the Chasm View was done on June 6th and 7th, 1964, by Larry Dalke and Layton Kor. The route begins about 200 feet east and up the gully from the southwest corner; climbing begins directly below a dark open book.

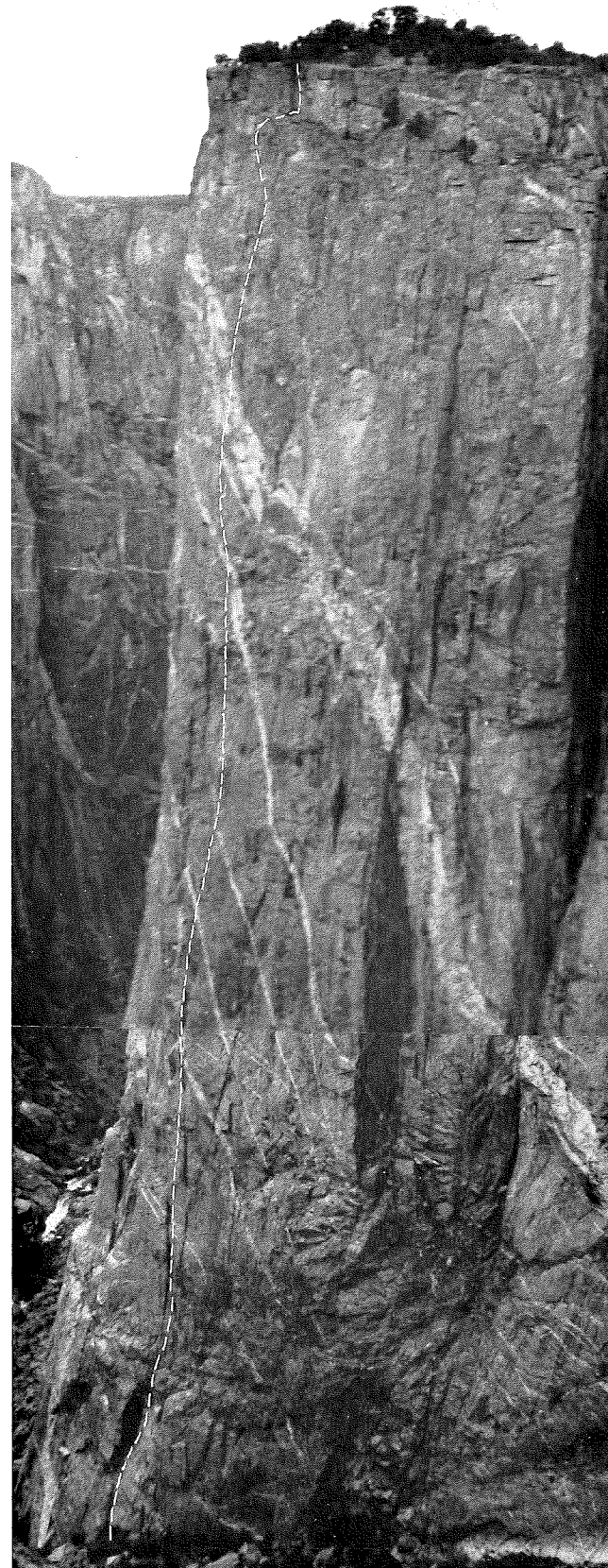


*Black Canyon has a wealth of rock remaining to be explored. No routes have been made as yet in the part of the canyon shown in this photograph. Photo by Ed Cooper.*

(1) Climb a steep slab into the inside corner which ends in a sling belay 100 feet up. (2) Continue up the groove above for 60 feet, climb the overhang, and belay on a broken area. (3) Continue up the broken rock for fifty feet unroped. (4) Climb the flakes and cracks above for 100 feet; belay under the overhang. (5) Ascend the jam crack which turns into a narrow chimney; belay from an expansion bolt on the left hand wall. (6) Climb the long strenuous jam crack above (crux-pitch)—one bolt and one bong-bong for direct aid; belay on a small ledge below a red wall. (7) Nail the

wall above for 80 feet, then climb free (bolt for protection) up a steep brittle band to a good ledge (bolt for anchor). (8) Traverse right 35 feet and nail up a red slab on shaky pitons for fifty feet, then climb 20 feet to a small ledge. (9) Nail the crack above for 45 feet, then left, then free climb straight up to a large flat ledge. (Bivouac). (10) The next lead ascends the double crack system to a small broken area. (11) Climb right ten feet and nail a roof, traverse 25 feet, then free 30 feet to a sling belay (bolt). High point on the day— (12) Nail a difficult crack for 35 feet, (bolt), then right





under the overhang on bad rock. Continue right (free) 20 feet, then nail the overhang (bad rock) and belay at a bolt. (13) Traverse right for 45 feet, then up and left to a long ledge; follow this ledge to the left and belay under an overhang. (14) Climb the overhang and up into an open book to a broken ledge; traverse left for 45 feet, then straight up for 30 feet to a belay in a corner (loose rock). (15) Climb artificially for 20 feet up the bushy crack, then free to an overhang; left for 12 feet, then vertically for 45 feet. Belay on a sharp flake. (16) Climb right around a large flake, then vertically up to 40 feet. Next up the left side of a thirty foot pillar, traverse right ten feet, and climb a thin crack to a huge terrace. Climb unroped to the right for 100 feet. (17) Ascend flakes in the corner above for forty feet to the rim.

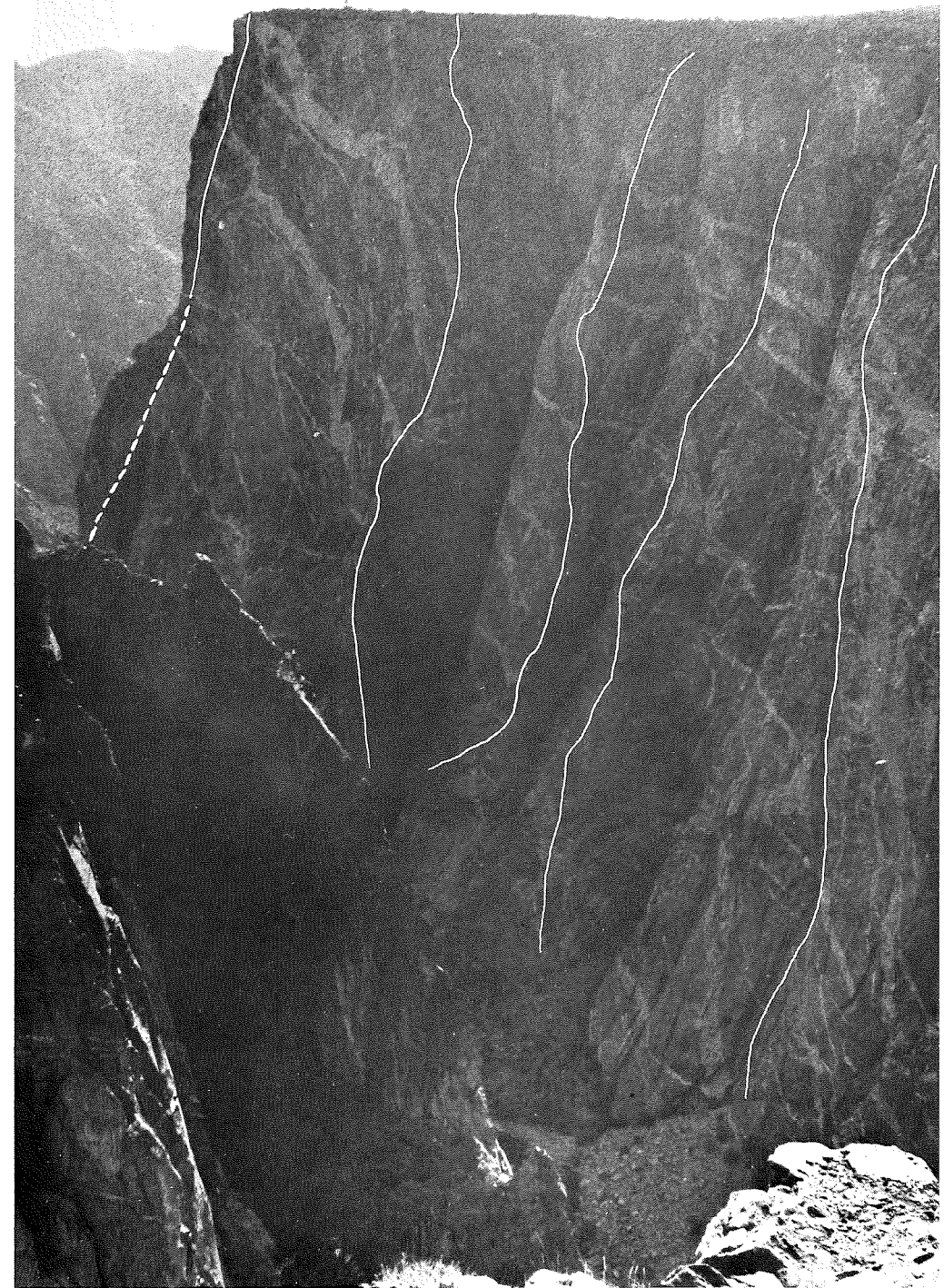
The ascent required parts of two days. Seven expansion bolts plus many pitons up to six inches in width were used on the 1700 foot route. This climb would rate NCCS V, F9, A4.

The National Park Service superintendent in charge of Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Monument has made the following request:

*"We would like to be contacted before any attempts are made by a party so we will know their qualifications and itinerary. We would also appreciate each group giving us a list of people who could serve as a back-up team if necessary. Technical climbers in the service are widely scattered and it would take time to organize a team and get them to the scene in the event a rescue is necessary."*



The south face of the Chasm View, Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Monument. The route done by Kor and Dalke is marked. Composite photo by Layton Kor.



The Painted Wall and environs. The routes marked are: (1) Southern arete of the Painted Wall; first ascent by Layton Kor, Larry Dalke, Wayne Goss, and Jim Logan. IV, 5.8, A4. (2) Northern arete of the Painted Wall; first ascent by Layton Kor and Jim Disney in 1962. IV, 5.7, A2. (3) Porcelain arete; first ascent by Layton Kor and John Kerr in 1964. IV, 5.8, A2. (4) First ascent by Layton Kor and Dick Schori in 1967. III, 5.6. (5) Diagonal Wall; first ascent by Layton Kor and Wayne Goss in 1967. V, 5.7, A4. The main Painted Wall has defeated several determined attempts. Photo by Layton Kor.



# THE GARDEN

Photos by Gary Ziegler and Anne Ketchin

text by Robert Grow

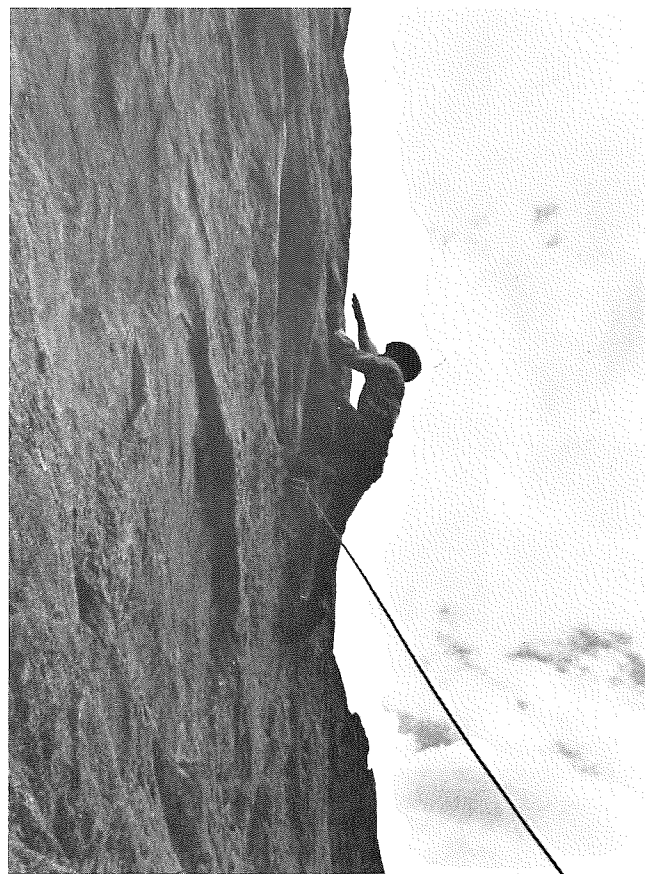
For an unusual experience in rockclimbing there is the Garden of the Gods near Colorado Springs. The rock is a soft desert sandstone, but the formations are beautiful and as accessible as the nearest "Golden Arches." On nearly any day of tolerable weather climbers may be observed disporting themselves on the popular short routes and boulder climbs of the Gateway area. Weekends bring a regular crowd of college and high school students from Colorado Springs who escape the academic grind on the sun-warmed faces and pinnacles. Few Garden routes are really good measured by the standards of areas where the rock is better, but the Garden offers special amenities which other areas cannot match.

On a fine Sunday in Spring or Fall, the unique qualities of the Garden are most readily appreciated. Tourists from many states meander about taking pictures and trying to keep their children in sight. Short-haired soldiers from Fort Carson ride the trails on rented horses shouting and talking to each other in the Army vernacular. On the paved road through the Gateway, a continuous flow of cars moves along; the windows filled with faces straining for a view of the cliff-tops on either side. Motorcycle gangs seem to enjoy roaring through periodically. The Garden offers a variety of amusements: sun for the sunbathers, horses for the equestrians, trails for walkers, scenery for the photographers and sightseers, a road for Sunday drivers, and best of all, rocks for climbers. On a good day a fair number from each of these groups are doing their things and generally grooving on the fineness of their surroundings.

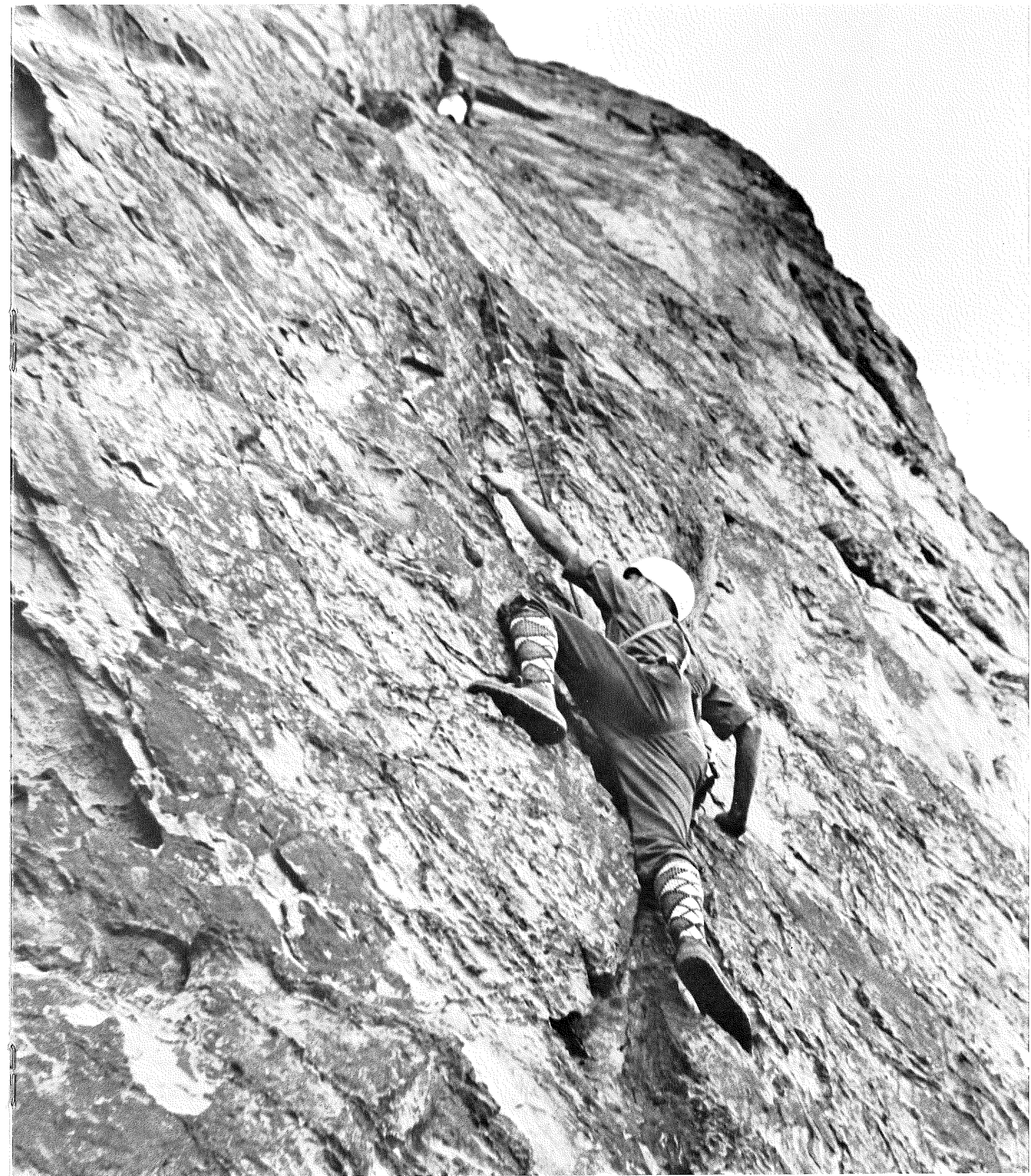
The climber contingent may usually be found sitting around the base of White Twin Spire. This group, distinguished by the wearing of kletterschues, consists of two categories: those who have come to enjoy sunshine, conversation, and maybe a little bouldering, and those who actually contemplate trying a climb. Quite often, someone does get up on one of the routes. Tourists are best pleased by technical spectaculars such as the tyrolean between South Gateway Rock and Red Twin Spire, but ordinary routes like North Ridge of "White" and "Tidricks" will usually generate a small crowd of spectators and many shutter snappings.

Garden routes go up to about 300 feet in height and tend to be fairly exciting. The soft sandstone is not suitable for the normal use of pitons. Protection for most leads is by means of pitons drilled into the rock by the first ascent party and there seems to have been a marked reluctance on the part of the pioneers to drill any more than the minimum. Garden regulars are well steeped in the local traditions and eagerly pounce on the new pitons which occasionally appear. Most of the routes are predominantly face climbing on small holds, but there are a few good and popular crack climbs also.

After an exciting climb, puzzled and marveled at by tourists, the party will trudge triumphantly up to Hidden Inn to sip cokes on the terrace and talk about it.

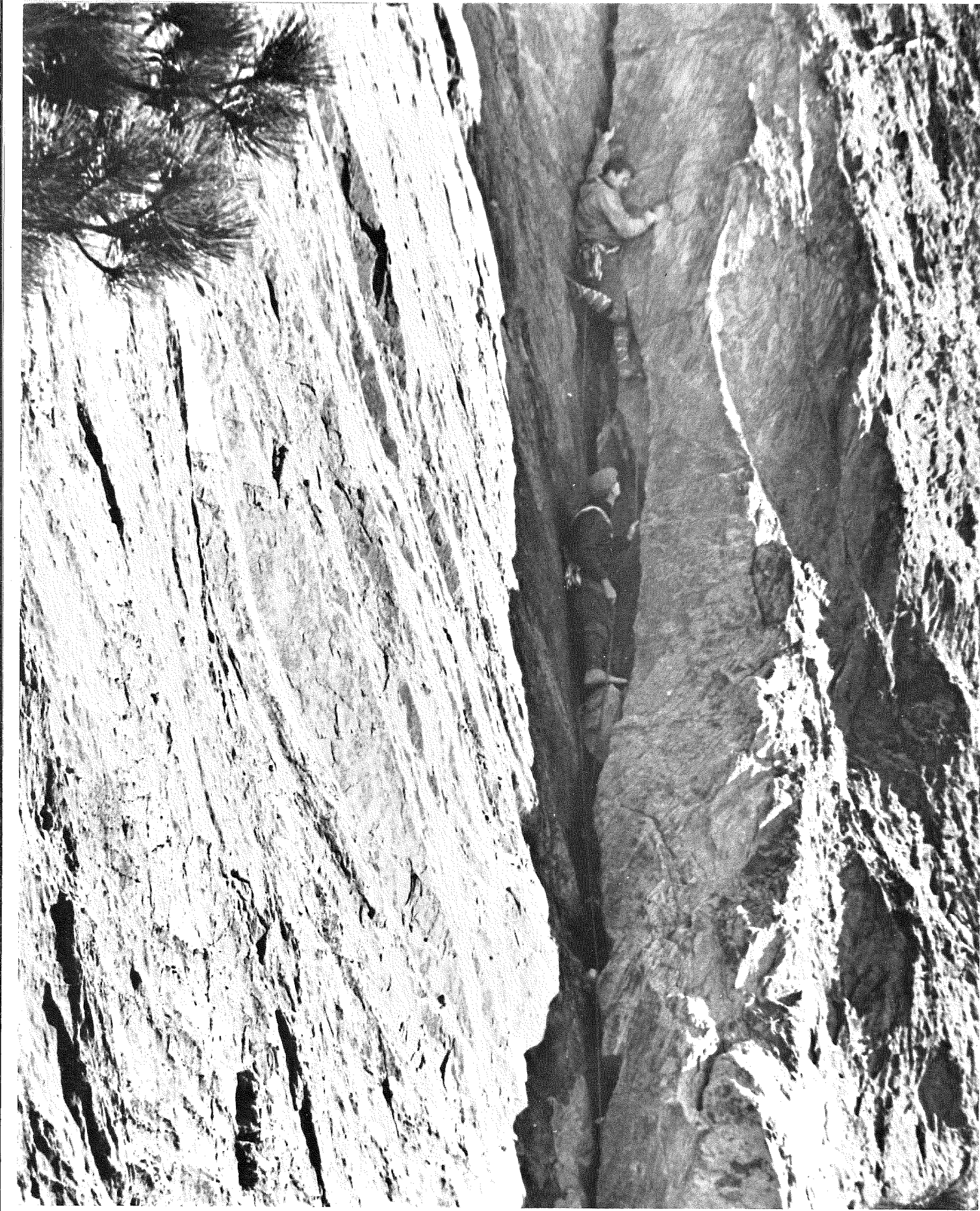


*The direct west face on White Twin Spire.*



*New Era, a classic three pitch route on Gray Rock.*



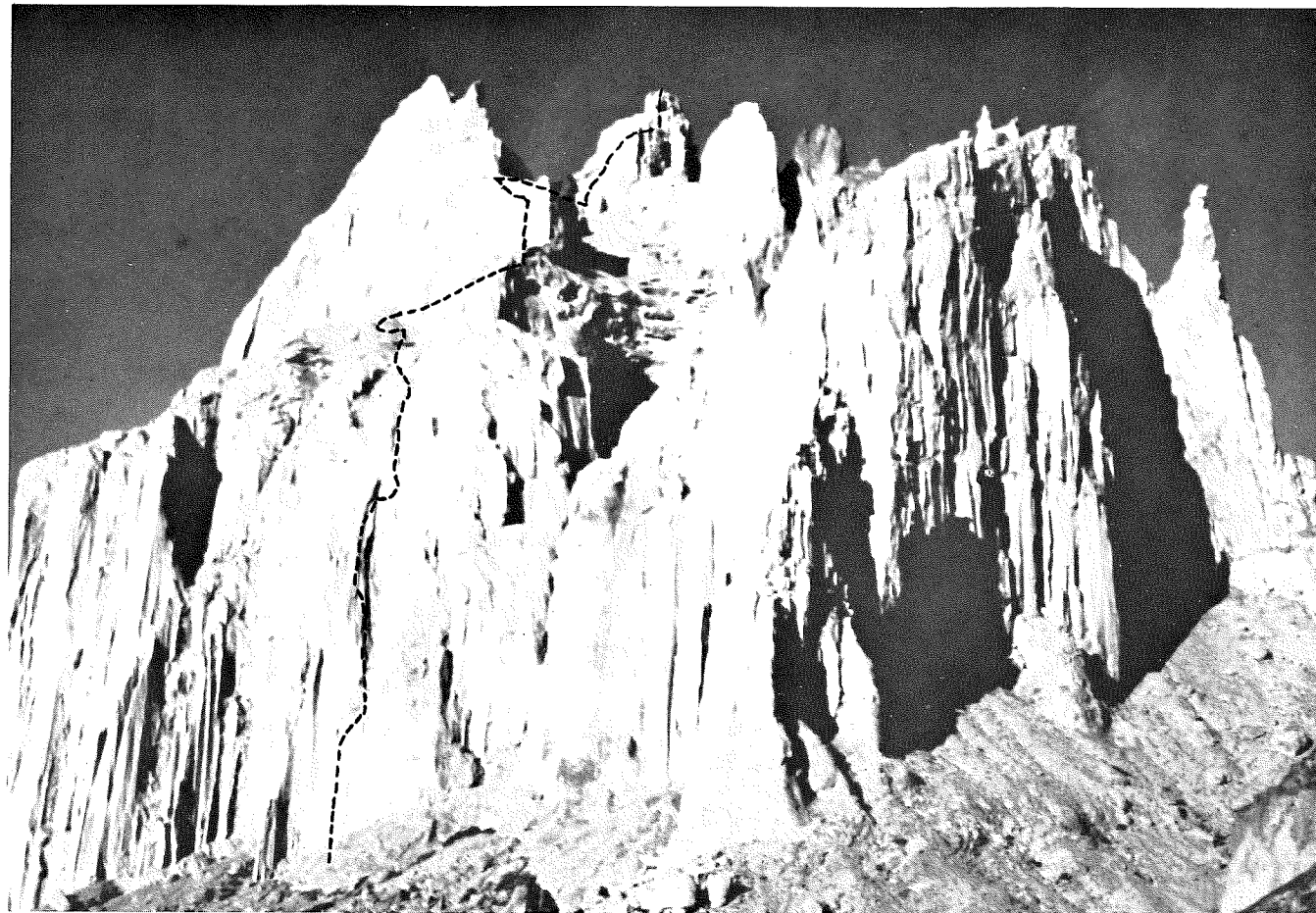


*A difficult crack climb on Gray Rock.*



*At the crux on Borghoff's Blunder.*





Photos by Harvey Carter

## THE SECRET PASSAGE ROUTE: First Ascent of the East Face Shiprock

by Bill Forrest

"We're going to try the east face of Shiprock this weekend; would you like to join us?" It was early September, 1969 when Harvey Carter extended that invitation. I'd been climbing most of August and was behind on my work, but Harvey and Gary Ziegler were going to attempt that route, and I wanted to be in on it. There was no decision for me to make—I wouldn't miss a chance to do a route on the virgin east face of Shiprock. I had seen the face when I climbed the normal route in 1963, and I secretly felt that a route up that giant wall of vertical ribs and flutes would go. I thankfully accepted Harvey's invitation, and agreed to meet him and Gary in Aspen later in the week.

I arrived in Aspen at the appointed hour to find that Ziegler had canceled out. We decided we'd still give the east face a try. Harvey was an expert on desert rock,

and I liked the stuff myself; it would be a two man assault.

We piled much gear and water into Harvey's car, he said goodbyes to his wife and kids, and we headed for the grocery store. That is where I really began to know Harvey. He didn't eat much on a climb, I did. We compromised; my usual salami ration was cut and lightweight instant breakfast envelopes were substituted. (Harvey was stumped when he later found that, after the compromise, I had slipped in two packets of dried beef.)

From Aspen to Shiprock we talked climbing—using flakes without destroying them and other desert techniques, bolt ethics, bouldering, and style, routes we had done, routes to be done.

After an evening hamburger in Shiprock City, we drove in darkness to the east face of the huge tower. Next day we would survey the wall and pick a route. We had agreed to avoid routes attempted by others. The Honeycomb Gully and a crack system just left of it had already been attempted, so our route could be anywhere on the east face, south of those lines—lots of wall.

We spent the next morning scurrying along the rolling desert floor—using binoculars to check every suspicious indentation in the wall—every shadow. We strained our eyes and imaginations, piecing together grooves, cracks, and ledges.

Then we moved in close to the wall, working south to north—testing, estimating, guessing. By noon we had narrowed route possibilities to two.

About two hundred feet south of the Honeycomb Gully was a prominent fin. On its south side was an overhanging, leaning bong crack. It led to a similar crack, some blankness, a small ledge, and then overhanging grooves. Just north of the fin a thin intermittent crack led directly up the wall to the ledge. Above the ledge there appeared to be a chimney system which ended in a horribly wide overhanging arch. But just below the arch was a point of sun light—possibly we could avoid the arch by chimneying through a split behind the fin.

I didn't want to nail that awkward, rotten bong crack. I knew it would be bloody knuckles; besides, I don't trust bongs in weathered cracks. But Harvey wasn't sure that there really was a crack on the north side, and he pointed out that if we couldn't bypass the overhanging arch it would probably stop us.

High noon—decision time.

I held out for the route on the north side of the fin. Harvey, not convinced but anxious to start, agreed.

We geared up and had at it.

Twenty feet above the ground and right of the crack was a flake; we threw the rope over it. I tied on and began.

Bad pins—the flake was my only protection.

Above the flake the crack became better. Eighty vertical feet of A1, unreal for Shiprock.

The crack petered out; tied off blades and four bat hooks got me to a dirt spur for the belay.

A traverse up and right along a rotten crack led us to a huge ledge which we christened the "Captain's Quarters."

We rappelled into the dark—totally free in the overhang.

Back at the car we ate the last supper—hot canned stew.

Plans, plans—how much gear, how much water—the stars were bright, sleeping bags too hot.

"We'll be into it tomorrow."

Tomorrow—jumaring and hauling in the bright morning sun. The silent desert watches.

The Captain's quarters. Supplied, we clamber into the unknown—good chimneys—moving fast and free. Some loose blocks, dirty cracks.

We approach the overhanging arch. Harvey leads up a dirt filled chimney.

"This is it baby, either we squeeze through this chimney and avoid the arch or. . . ."

"It goes man, it goes."

The rope runs smoothly up—he belays. I follow through the "Secret Passage." He's happy—the "Desert Fox" is perched comfortably on top of a large chockstone. We see that the chimney continues to the top of the fin—the terrible arch has been passed.

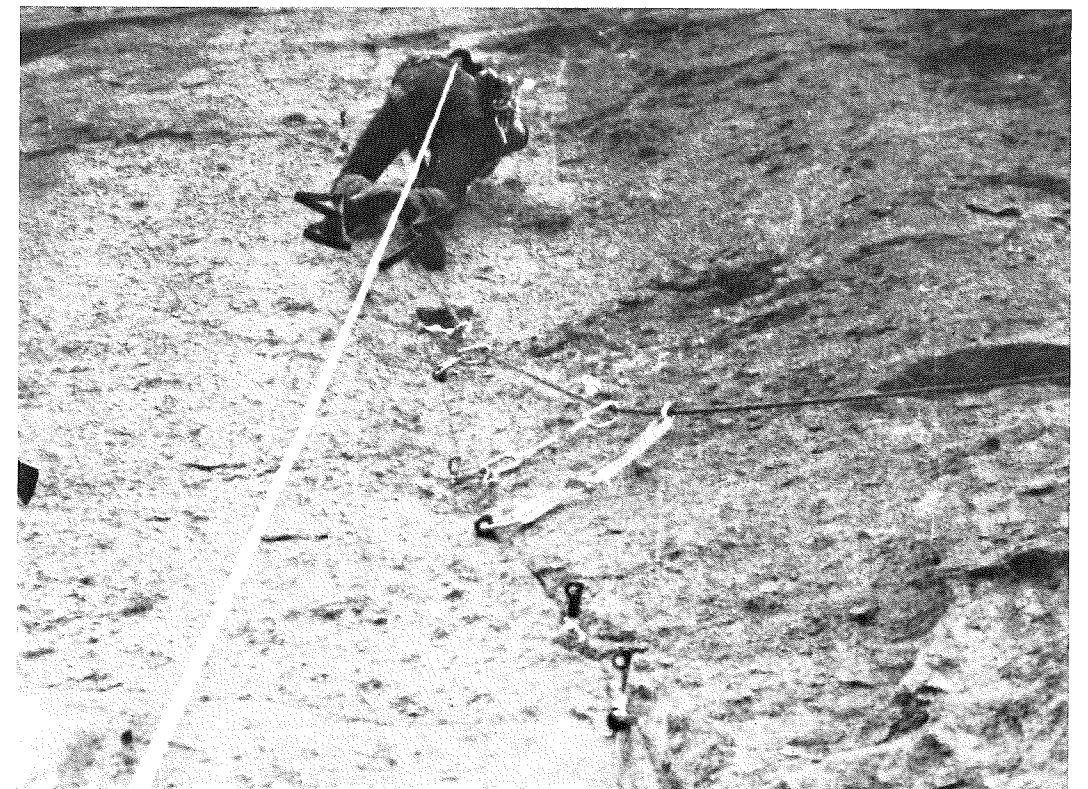
Things are going our way.

I attack the "easy chimney." It fights back; it's narrow—cuts into my knees.

We're on top of the fin and it's evening.

Free rappels in the dark—back to the Captain's Quarters.

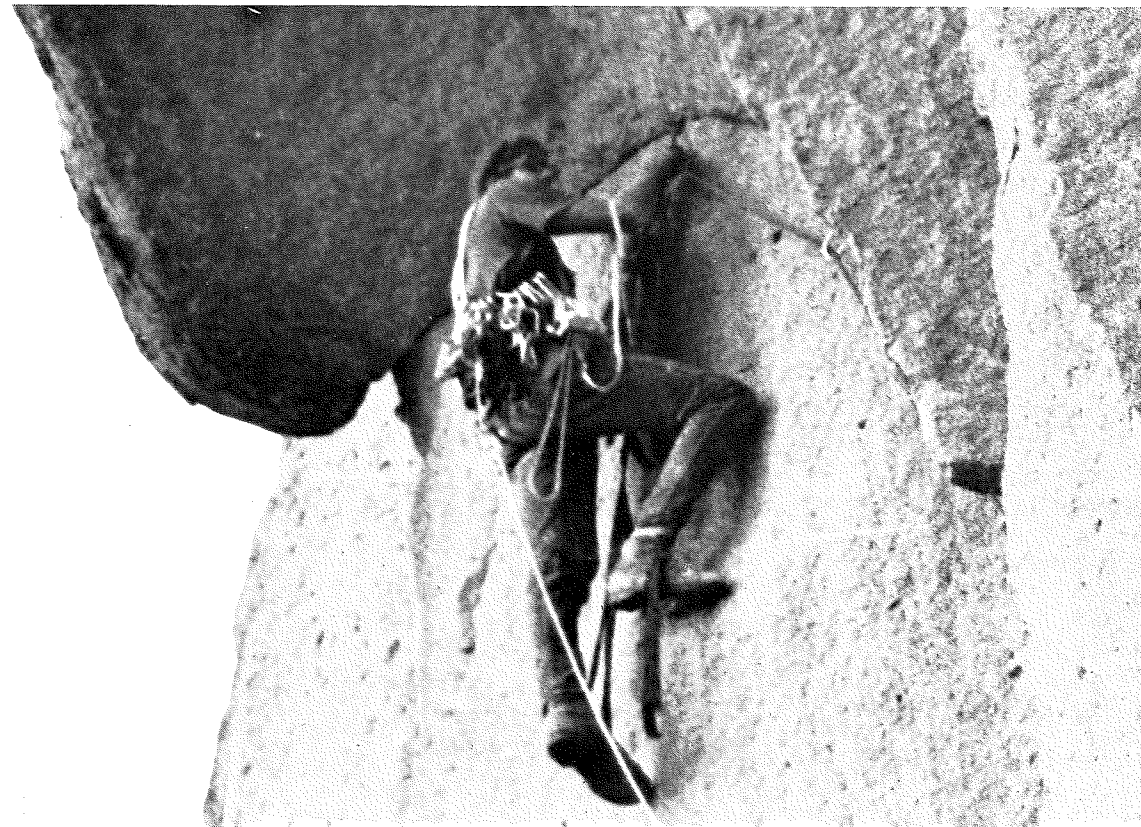
Perfect bivouac—room to stretch out—warm, clear, route is panning out.





"Drink that water man, we've got too much to haul."  
 Sleep comes easy.  
 Until the big-eared mice begin to romp—there must  
 have been a hundred of 'em on our ledge.  
 One got into my sack. I shook him out.  
 They scamper noisily through our gear.  
 "Oh hell, they can't hurt me."  
 Back to sleep.  
 Morning—jumar up those overhangs.  
 Spinning—fantastic view.  
 Strange cloud patterns move on the desert floor.  
 Harvey leads out.

Need a flat spot to sleep.  
 Maybe the summit tomorrow.  
 Tomorrow—sun—beautiful sun. It warms the wall;  
 soon it's hot.  
 Start the overhanging red roof—good crack.  
 Get's awkward.  
 It's rotten—nothing's safe.  
 It's got to go.  
 Getting tired—it's terribly slow.  
 It goes. I hide in three inches of shade.  
 Fagged.  
 Harvey cleans—then zips up a ridge.  
 He moves gear; he moves me.  
 Keeps us moving—won't let me rest.  
 Familiar ground—the summit bowl.  
 Easy chimney to a terrace.



Rotten rock, then a smooth gully.  
 My lead—up the gully.  
 Nice free climbing—mostly friction.  
 A head wall—two bolts, three bat hooks.  
 More friction.  
 Belay, we've reached the "slabs."  
 The sacks won't budge.  
 Pull, pull—heat, sweat, swear.  
 Up the slabs—a bivy cave.  
 Dump the gear and keep going.  
 Work along the slabs to a vertical crack.  
 Back to the bivy cave.

We're going directly up the east face of the summit  
 block.  
 I belay from the shady terrace.  
 Harvey beats the rotten crack into submission.  
 "We won't finish today."  
 Our last bivouac—water's about gone.  
 Summit's in the bag.  
 We rest easy.  
 The moon is an eerie, hot pink.  
 Pyrotechnics up to the north.  
 High winds—but they stop.  
 Again, we rest easy.  
 Plenty of mice, but they don't bother.  
 We stink like hell.  
 We do our own thoughts: Harvey's probably anxious  
 to get home—see his family.

He goes to sleep.  
 It's been a great climb—it's not over.  
 Can't let up—really low on water.  
 Long descent tomorrow.  
 Tomorrow? Probably back on the ground involved in  
 other struggles more dangerous than loose flakes, more  
 demanding than commitment to a desert wall.  
 Dealing with man can be less than beautiful.  
 Climbing is beautiful.  
 Our escape from the everyday of the flat land has  
 been good—real and intense, our struggle with rock and  
 wind among these vertical, silent columns.  
 I need a hot shower.  
 The sun is up.  
 Too thirsty to eat.  
 Need energy—try a candy bar.  
 Up the ropes.  
 Easy scrambling—a beautiful morning.  
 One more hard pitch on the northeast corner—climb-  
 ing free up a good crack.  
 Summon up the stuff (whatever it is—courage?) to  
 make the hard move.  
 Doing it—strenuous and exciting.  
 Hustle through the summit block.  
 The summit—happiness.  
 Carter and Forrest sign the register.  
 "Secret Passage" route, east face.  
 Like Raffi Bedayn (thirty years before on the first  
 ascent of Shiprock) we feel that "the intricacy of our  
 route was unique."



The final exam—1500 feet of rappel down the west  
 face.  
 Hot, dry.  
 Caution, no hang-ups.  
 Keep moving. Check the anchors, toss the rope.  
 Keep the ropes separate—test the pull-down.  
 Don't screw up!  
 "Hey Big Daddy, we're down!"  
 The hand shake means something.  
 "There's a gallon of water in the car."  
 We hike.  
 We drink.

Statistics: Grade VI, 5.8, A3. (Forrest does not use  
 any grading higher than A3 for artificial climbing).  
 14 bolts  
 3 bivouacs  
 20 pitches



## Routes and Rocks

Future issues of CLIMBING will include a section in which readers may participate by sending in accounts of climbs in specified regions of the country. These are not to be guidebook style descriptions, but rather accounts of one's personal experience with the route. We would like to receive accounts from six areas: California, Northwest, Southwest, Colorado, Midwest, and East Coast, and publish one of each of these in every issue. Accounts from areas not included in these six are welcome and published in addition to or in lieu of the regular areas.

We will begin in the July 1970 issue providing that accounts are in the hands of the editors not later than June 1, 1970. It is desired that the climbs described be of recommendable quality and neither difficult nor easy routes will be allowed to predominate. Five hundred to eight hundred words is the optimum length. Photos to supplement the text are welcome. Any good route on snow or rock is suitable subject matter.

CLIMBING pays \$5.00 to the authors of accounts which are used.

The account below is given as an example.

*Sugarloaf Rock, south summit via Harding's Chimney.*

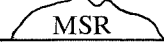
Sugarloaf is on U.S. 50 between Sacramento, Calif. and Lake Tahoe. This route was first done by Warren Harding and John Orenshall in 1954. It rates II, 5.6.

With a borrowed car, we started quite early from Sacramento on a morning in the first week of December. Though it was late in the year, it was a fine day and there had as yet been no snow on any but the highest peaks. Jim and I had just recently become acquainted at the U. of C. at Davis. We had already become good friends and now it seemed we were both wondering how the other would perform on a climb. I had done Harding's Chimney once before and had chosen it as the best possible route on which to introduce Jim to the joys of the granite outcrops along Highway 50.

We arrived rather late at the parking spot below the rock, as in my rush to leave the flatland, I had entirely neglected to glance at the gas gauge. The gas lasted until about three miles past Placerville. About an hour of our precious climbing time was squandered before we got going again.

It was already afternoon when finally we stood at the base of the Harding's Chimney route. I tried to explain to Jim that it gets dark early in December and Harding's route is about six pitches long, but he would not be diverted. Apparently, I had done a very good job of selling him in the previous week.

Jim led off on the first pitch, handling the moderate crack problems with hardly a pause. From his belay

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spot, Harding's Chimney immediately above, presented an appalling prospect. It is a tight fifty foot squeeze chimney beginning with a four foot overhang—the walls bare on both sides and the angle very steep. I don't think Jim was quite convinced that I wasn't a phony until I started to chimney out under that overhang. The chimney looks very impressive but yields rather easily. You can chimney to the lip of the overhang, place a good pin, chimney around the lip, and then duck into the squeeze chimney with only one delicate move. The squeeze chimney is a perfect width—narrow enough for security without pitons, but wide enough for rapid progress.

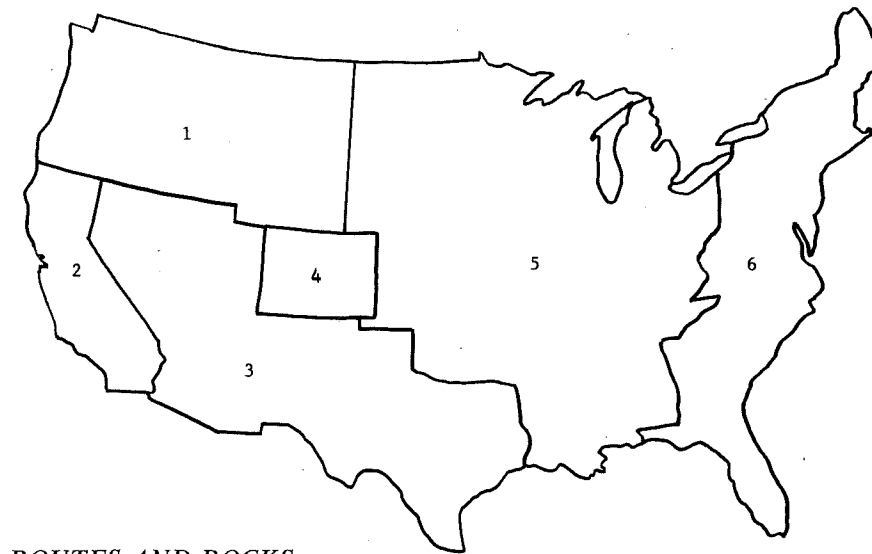
Above the chimney is an easy pitch to a window through which we passed to a nice face climbing pitch on the west face. Then back right to the notch and a bolt ladder to the south summit. At the top of the bolt ladder we happened to glance at the sun and noticed that it was hovering barely above the horizon. The easiest way off the south summit is to climb two more pitches to the main summit and then scramble down the back side.

Jim led off, up a tricky lieback and an easy jam crack to a crawl tunnel. At the other side of the tunnel, one finds himself at the bottom of a hole, looking straight up at a narrow band of sky. We chimneyed for the sky—back and feet against vertical walls that are a few inches too close together to make this technique feel quite secure. After about fifteen feet of this you mantle out at the lip of the hole and emerge ten feet from the airy summit of the rock.

This exit is particularly classic when the summit is occupied by picnickers, etc., who have come up the back side. Suddenly, from out of a black hole, they have company.

Jim and I emerged in dim twilight with just enough time to coil our ropes and scramble down to the forest before darkness. I think Jim must have enjoyed this climb because he has gone back and repeated it three times.

R. G.



### ROUTES AND ROCKS

1. Northwest.
2. California.
3. Southwest.
4. Colorado.
5. Midwest.
6. East Coast.

## CAIRN

This section is intended for the purpose of reporting and recording first ascents. We encourage readers to send in reports of any and all new routes anywhere in North America. If good participation from the public is obtained, "Cairn" will become a valuable record of climbing development in many areas.

We are primarily interested in these major items of information: the location of the route, grading, date, names of the party. Other information should be added as appropriate. Reports of significant repeats such as first free ascent, winter ascent, etc., will also be accepted.

### California

*Stone House Buttress, Lone Pine Peak.* A 1000 ft. granite buttress sitting apart from the wall at the eastern end of the south side of Lone Pine Peak. It is directly across the canyon from an old stone house. First ascent by Joe Faint and Galen Rowell, Jan. 3, 1970. NCCS IV, F8. Mostly in cracks and chimneys. *Bastille Buttress, Lone Pine Peak.* A slab on a northward spur of Lone Pine Peak. First ascent by Fred Beckey, Joe Brown, Charles Haas. It is a grade V (17 pitches).

*Mt. Powell, East Face.* First ascent in summer 1969 by Fred Beckey, Dan McHale, and Galen Rowell. Grade III or IV and F8. This party used a few pitons of aid to pass an ice-filled squeeze chimney which should not be a problem in different conditions.

*'V' Notch, Polemonium Peak, Palisade Group.* This climb ascends a gully 1/4 mile east of the U Notch by 900 ft. of sustained ice climbing. The angle (measured by inclinometer) averages about 50 degrees. First ascent (on the ice) by Doug Robinson and Yvon Chouinard in October 1969.


*The Gothic, Yosemite Valley.* First ascent by Bob Williams and Joe Faint. This route lies on the right side of the lower buttress of the Royal Arches route. It begins in a dihedral and ascends for four pitches to a crack which curves left and puts one on the main ledge of the Royal Arches. NCCS II, F7, A3.

*Half Dome, Northwest Buttress, Yosemite Valley, Sentinel Rock, North Face, Yosemite Valley.* See Basecamp.

*East Tooth, East Face, Sawtooth Ridge.* First ascent in June 1969 by Fred Beckey, Jim Jones, and Galen Rowell. NCCS III, F7.

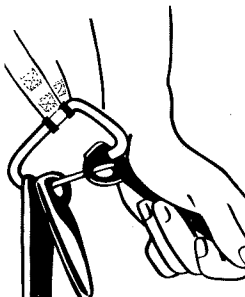


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*Gutenberg Wall, Consumnes River Gorge.* This climb ascends a wall on the south side of the Consumnes River Gorge near the bridge at Somerset. First ascent by Larry Morris, Jim Hicks, and Gene Drake. II, 5.8, A2.  
*Eeyore's Enigma, Lover's Leap.* This route follows a fierce looking bombay chimney just right of Eeyore's Ecstasy. The hardest and most overhanging section was nailed but could conceivably be climbed free if one could stop to put in protection pitons. First ascent by T. M. Herbert, Warren Harding, and Galen Rowell in 1969. III, F8, A3.

**Northwest**

*Snow Creek Wall, "Chimneysweep."* A new route between Orbit and Galaxy. First ascent by Al Givler and Jim Langdon. III, 5.9.  
*M&M Wall, "Second Coming."* M&M Wall is located about one mile north-east of Liberty Bell. First ascent by Jim Langdon and Mead Hargis, summer 1969. IV, 5.8, A3.  
*Index Town Wall.* Three new routes: (1) To the right of Golden Arches with the first pitch in common with that route. First ascent by Jim Langdon and Mark Wiegelt. Grade IV consisting mostly of artificial climbing. (2) On the lower wall to the right of an obvious chimney in quarry. First ascent by Mead Hargis and Jan Ossiander. IV, A4. (3) "Narrow Arrow Direct." III, 5.10. First ascent by Mark Wiegelt and Ron Burgener.

*Inspiration Peak, south face.* First ascent by Mike Heath and Bill Sumner, summer 1969. III, 5.8.  
*Little Mac Spire, south face.* First ascent by Bill Sumner and Mike Heath, summer 1969. III, 5.8.  
*Vesper Peak, north face.* First ascent summer 1969 by Mike and Betty Jean Heath, Bill Sumner, and Tom Oas. A twelve hundred foot face. III, 5.8.  
*"Chalangin Wall."* Also known as Witch Doctor Wall and Squire Creek Wall. First ascent by Dave Wagner, Tom Nephew, and Fred Beckey, in two days. V, 5.8, A4.

**Tetons**

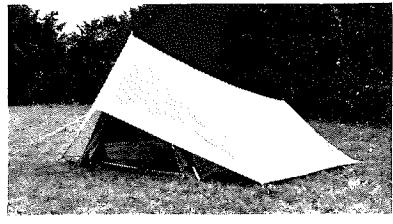
*Yosemite Point, East Face, Chouinard Route.* First free ascent August 1969 by Steve Wunsch and Jim Erickson.



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