

each piton was used first as a handhold, then as a foothold, without a rope sling, was a beautiful example of balance climbing. The 23rd piton, placed in a horizontal side crack in the left-hand overhanging column, permitted a short traverse and retablissement to its sloping, splintered top—the first belay point on the climb. After the other climbers had “prusiked” up to this platform, three more pitons were used before the party reached the big ledge at the N. end, from which an easy scramble led to the summit. During the 9½-hour climb, 26 pitons (24 of them angle pitons) had been used. The first pitch of what is now officially known as the Soler Route was *belayed through pitons from the bottom* during a 240-ft. lead!

A. C. LEMBECK

*The Chisos Mountains of Texas.* Probably of most interest to the mountaineer in Texas are the Chisos Mountains. The rugged volcanic range rises sharply from the desert floor in a spectacular maze of jagged peaks, deep canyons, spires and volcanic necks. Located within the Big Bend National Park, the primitive region is pierced by one good road.

Most of the major peaks have been ascended by the simpler routes. There are numerous very difficult routes up the various faces of practically every one of them. Of particular interest to the climber are the countless unclimbed spires flanking the mountainsides and, in the southern part of the range, some isolated volcanic necks. The nature and complexity of the volcanic mass makes for a variety of types of rock. Characteristic of the larger peaks are sound rhyolites, jointed and fractured in such a manner as to afford safe climbing on very steep pitches. In contrast, there are peaks of relatively rotten rock, exemplified by the volcanic necks. The loftiest parts of the range rise some 4800 ft. above the desert floor, with the maximum elevation 7835 ft. above sea level.

It is well to be aware of the scarcity of water in this region, and also of the effects of sudden torrential downpours upon unpaved roads and in canyons.

A. E. OWEN

#### UNITED STATES: ACTIVITIES OF THE CLUBS

*A.A.C.: Wind River Camp, 1951.* California members of the A.A.C. have long wanted to become acquainted with members from

other parts of the country. This desire has been shared, one feels sure, by members elsewhere. One often hears that the best mountaineering team is composed of climbers who have made many ascents together. If our members occasionally had opportunities to climb together, certainly the Club as a whole would enjoy greater understanding and unity of purpose. At one of the meetings of the Sierra Nevada Section, it was decided to move toward this goal by offering to organize a summer camp for the entire Club. For geographical reasons, we wanted an easily accessible, centrally located mountain area in the United States, where climbers and their families could pursue their various favorite out-of-door activities. By keeping the organization in the hands of our local group, we would be able to act more effectively.

The suggested site at Island Lake in the Wind River Range of Wyoming proved to be admirably suited to our purpose. Camp was reached in a day's moderate hike from the end of the road at Elk Heart Park. Threatening clouds discharged their burden before our pack train arrived at the lake. We were able to set up camp and have our first meal without rain. We were most fortunate in having as cooks Alma and Harry Hertenstein, of the California Alpine Club. Their experience of perhaps 25 years in this sort of camp catering enabled them to turn out an unsurpassed menu with a minimum of equipment. They well deserved the unanimous comment, repeated over and over again: "This is the best camp grub I have ever tasted!" During the two-week period (7-17 August 1951), the various chores were equally distributed among the 31 participants, in rotation. The menial tasks were handled with cheerful willingness and dispatch that seemed surely to be direct results of mountaineering backgrounds. The Hertensteins declared that this was the best group of helpers they had ever camped with.

During our stay Fremont Peak was climbed by 19 of the party. Mt. Lester, close to the camp, was equally popular. Two parties traversed all three summits of Lester from W. to E., including the much lower middle summit, which (as the heavily scarred summit rocks show) is the lightning rod of the area. Seventeen visited Bradley Gilman's summit monument on Cairn Peak, with Brad himself leading one party up through the tight easternmost chimney on the S. side. Seven climbed Mt. Jackson (formerly Glacier Crest),

and six did F-3. A bivouac camp established near the shore at the upper end of the higher Titcomb Lake served as base for climbs on Mts. Woodrow Wilson, Helen and Sacajawea.

All in all, these were two very enjoyable weeks. Remarkably clear weather was varied by some excitement in the form of threatening thunderstorms, hail, rain and a two-inch snowstorm which knocked down the storage tent. But everyone happily achieved the purpose of the outing. A full moon rising over Mt. Lester added cheer to the stories and songs around the evening fire. It is to be hoped that similar camps will be held from time to time in the future, with various sections or groups within the A.A.C. taking turns as host.

OSCAR A. COOK

Some of us went to the Wind River Camp with misgivings, thinking that such a large group effort might curtail the informal joys of a smaller outing in the mountains. All came away delighted with this larger outing for its very informality and unrestricted opportunities for climbing, as well as its ample chances for the non-climbers to fish, botanize and explore. The self-sacrificing California committee, ably headed by Oscar Cook, deserve great credit for their most effective yet unobtrusive organization, which provided everything in the way of comfort and pleasure.

W. S. CHILD

*A.A.C.: Sierra Nevada Section.* New officers were elected at the final meeting in December 1951: Oscar A. Cook, chairman; Robin Hansen, vice-chairman; Richard C. Houston, secretary-treasurer; Lawrence G. Coveney and David R. Brower, additional members of the executive committee.

The Section followed through on its proposal to act as host at a summer outing for the Club. The committee responsible for planning and operating the camp was composed of Oscar A. Cook, camp manager; Richard C. Houston, assistant manager; Will Siri, Philip C. Bettler, David R. Brower and Richard M. Leonard. Prime values were the foundation of new personal friendships cementing our national ties, and the indoctrination of youngsters in mountain lore and safe climbing practices.