

in front. We got through the night by rappelling onto the regular route about 100 feet above the Undercling. The ferocious heat continued the next day and sapped our strength. We ate almost nothing the whole time we were on the wall and were surprised to find ourselves feeling better on top than we had at the bottom. On this last day we found some artificial climbing of the best sort, that is to say, continuously challenging and varied and requiring a different solution to the problems presented by each move upward. In other words, it was climbing where one could make use of the skill so laboriously acquired through the years.

We reached the top late in the afternoon of July 21. The ascent had its Eiger-like qualities; for three days we received rockfall from hikers tossing granite from the summit. Had we been on the Direct route the chances of our getting killed would have been excellent. As more and more of our less thoughtful brethren venture into the mountains, it becomes more and more necessary to make the obvious explicit. Perhaps a sign enjoining the throwing of rocks at those who cannot throw back would be well placed at the beginning of the cable on the Dome. We returned to the torrid Valley happy with ourselves and confident that Ostin and Sylvester could never have made it. They had. A normal big wall piton selection is adequate. We placed a few bolts, but I cannot remember how many.

ROYAL ROBBINS

In Cold Blood, West Face of Sentinel Rock. The renowned American authority on mountaineering, Curtis W. Casewit, says, "Solo climbing is insanity." And Mr. Casewit, of course, is an honorable man. I love to read such fatuous remarks, coming as they invariably do, from the ignorant. It brings back the good old days when climbers were pariahs, when climbing was not "in", when there was no room in the game for parasites of Mr. Casewit's stamp. But now the enemy is within the gates. I confess to lunacy according to Mr. Casewit's ah . . . "standards". I soloed a new route on the west face of Sentinel last May, a route with some intriguing sections, a bit easier than the Frost-Chouinard line. I started from the Valley early in the morning of May 26 and returned there after dark the next day. The ascent involved two tension traverses, 8 bolts, a few rurps, and the following bongs: 2 2-inch, 2 2½-inch, and a 3-inch. One third of the placements were chocks. These are critical in a couple of sections of shaky rock. It was a surprise to find the upper wall split by a thin crack (Rageous Fortune Crack) which took wired chocks as if it had been made for them. An unprotected jam-crack left me a little shaky but led nicely to a chimney and an easy way out. The route starts up a dihedral 75 feet south of the regular west-face route and needs little description, but go left

at the top of Rageous Fortune Crack. At one point in the middle of the route, some fine rope work is useful in passing over the coarse granite. In October Egon and Johanna Marte and I made the second ascent.

ROYAL ROBBINS

El Capitan, Wall of Morning Light. On October 23 Warren Harding and Dean Caldwell started up the Wall of Morning Light on what may have been the most difficult rock climb yet accomplished. The climb, which lies between the Nose and the North America Wall, was completed 27 days later in a blare of newspaper, magazine and television publicity. The *American Alpine Journal* was promised an article, but as we go to print, it has unfortunately still not materialized. Therefore we can merely give a few details gathered from the press. The pair set off with 300 pounds of food, water and gear, enough for 20 days. They rejected the line farther left, nearer the Nose, used on previous attempts, as not sufficiently direct. This doubtless led to the use of many more bolts (some 300 are reported to have been used), bat hooks and rivets than might otherwise have been the case. For this they have been criticized, but it enabled them to keep a more direct line. It was twelve days before they were as high as the other previous attempts. There they were trapped in the "bat tents" by a four-day rainstorm. The next section was the very smooth "blank dihedral", which was slow work and where they gained only 100 feet a day. On November 11 the National Park Service decided they needed to be rescued but two days later it was called off when Caldwell shouted, "A rescue is unwarranted, unwanted and will not be accepted." They were now two-thirds of the way up the wall. Finally on May 18 they climbed over the edge at the top for a champagne lunch. The editors very much regret that their article did not arrive, for they could best have presented their own case in the controversy which has sprung up about the ethics of the climb. We point out Royal Robbins' defense of their tactics in *Summit* of December. We also present here without comment TM Herbert's remarks.

Wall of the Morning Light, El Capitan. On February 4, 1971, Royal Robbins and I completed the second ascent of the Wall of the Morning Light. Short days, cold nights, and hot tea characterized the six-day ascent. (The Editor calls attention to this most remarkable ascent so modestly summarized by the Assistant Editor for California.)

DON LAURIA