

workouts strengthened arms and fingers (he could execute one-arm pull-ups on each arm). And ski racing developed his cardiovascular system to the efficiency of a professional athlete.

After World War II he returned to high-altitude mountaineering, leading a major expedition almost every year until the early 1960s. Among his best achievements were "north face" routes in the Caucasus; a seven-peak traverse of Pik Lenin, Pik 19, and others in the Pamirs; and the first ascent of Pik Pobedy in the Tien Shan, second highest Soviet summit.

A mechanical engineer by profession, Abalakov developed various kinds of climbing equipment, many of them constructed of lightweight titanium. The bulk of his talent, however, was invested at the Central Scientific Research Institute for Sport, where for twenty years he held the position of laboratory director. Here he specialized in constructing devices to monitor athletic performance in different sports. His work has been credited with improving athletic training methods in the USSR and other socialist countries.

The years brought many awards from the Soviet state: Honored Master of Mountaineering (1934), Honored Master of Sport (1943), Honored Trainer of the USSR (1957), Order of Lenin (1957), Order of the Badge of Honor (1972), Order of Friendship Among Peoples (1982).

Not until recent years did American mountaineers become personally acquainted with the man. In 1974, Abalakov acted as climbing director of the international camp attended by a large contingent of Americans. The tragic events of that summer, which included the loss of American Gary Ullin and a group of Soviet women, were described by Robert Craig in *Storm and Sorrow in the Pamirs*. The following year, the American Alpine Club invited a Soviet team to tour the United States, and Abalakov was sent as a kind of honorary leader; he took little part in the actual climbing. Even at the age of 69 he was remarkably fit and possessed the physique of a man years younger. His character left a lasting impression, too. An unquenchable spirit and patient wisdom shone through his modest demeanor.

A mild stroke finally put an end to active mountaineering, yet Abalakov's last years were anything but inactive. He worked on equipment for the successful Soviet expedition to Everest in 1982 and lectured around the country, encouraging young people to get involved in mountaineering organizations. He also canoed the rivers of northern Russia and enjoyed life as a great-grandfather.

PIETER CROW

JOHN L. J. (JERRY) HART
1904-1986

John Lathrop Jerome (Jerry) Hart, President of the American Alpine Club from 1970 until 1973, died April 27, 1986 at his home in Laguna Niguel, California at the age of 81. He is survived by his wife Jane, his three children,

Dr. Kate Zimmerman, Sally Whiting, and Jack Hart, four grandchildren, his brother Stephen H. Hart, a member of the American Alpine Club, and his sister Margot Hart Tettermer.

Jerry was born in Denver, Colorado on August 15, 1904 of a pioneer Colorado family. He was admitted to Harvard University at the age of 15. After graduation from Harvard he was awarded a Rhodes Scholarship and obtained three graduate degrees at Oxford.

In 1929, Jerry was admitted to the Colorado Bar and practiced law for many years in Denver where he was a senior partner in the firm of Holland and Hart together with his brother Steve. He was active in many clubs and civic organizations and was one of the founders of the University Corporation for Atmospheric Research located in Boulder, Colorado.

Jerry was a pioneer Colorado climber. His interest in mountaineering began before he was ten years old at the family summer home in Buffalo Creek, Colorado. He first taught himself, then his brother Steve, the art of climbing. In September 1922, Jerry planned to make the first ascent of the East Face of Longs Peak but his proposed route was climbed by Professor J.W. Alexander of Princeton a few days before Jerry, Carl Blaurock, Dudley Smith and other friends made it. He also made early ski-mountaineering ascents of various peaks in the Rockies. Jerry was an early member of the Colorado Mountain Club and Editor of its magazine, *Trail and Timberland*. In 1925, at age 20, he wrote the authoritative classic on Colorado's mountains, *Fourteen Thousand Feet, A History of the Names and Early Ascents of the High Colorado Peaks*. He prepared a revised second edition, which was published in 1931 and reprinted in 1972. In fact, Jerry was so synonymous with Colorado mountaineering that the author of a juvenile pot boiler, *Climb to the Top*, called his wise adult counselor "Mr. Hart." One suspects this name was not picked at random from the Denver telephone directory.

Jerry's mountaineering interests went far beyond the borders of his native state. He did winter climbs in Huntington and Tuckerman Ravines on Mount Washington, rock climbs in Wales, and various climbs in the Alps including a traverse of the Grand and Petit Dru with Sir Douglas Busk, guided by two of the most famous alpine guides of all time, Armand and Georges Charlet.

Besides being an active climber, Jerry was a student of mountaineering literature and a collector of mountaineering books. He amassed a significant mountaineering library which he donated to the University of Colorado Library where they form the foundation of that institution's mountaineering collection.

He was a charter member of the Harvard Mountaineering Club and the "Honorary Secretary" of the Oxford Mountaineering Club. He also belonged to The Alpine Club and the French and Swiss Alpine Clubs as well as the Groupe de Haute Montagne. He joined the American Alpine Club in 1925, dropped out in 1938, but rejoined the Club in 1949.

Jerry had the misfortune to preside over the affairs of the American Alpine Club in an era in which such matters were conducted at an unprecedentedly high decibel level. He did a remarkable job as president while constantly being crit-

icized by those who did not understand what he was doing, as well as by those who did understand what he was doing. But he always retained his sense of humor. I still have memories of leaving yet another board meeting in which the air had been filled with everything except chairs, and after the inevitable discussion of what had just hit us, Jerry would begin to regale me with another one of his amusing stories from a seemingly inexhaustible store. For it was a tribute to his great decency and integrity that even his most vociferous critics were very fond of him. The most recent tangible expression of this affection was at the last Club dinner in Denver at which Jerry was awarded the Angelo Heilprin citation for service to the Club and American mountaineering. It was the first time the award had been made posthumously.

Jerry made many contributions to American and international mountaineering, but his greatest contribution was the establishment of the exchange program between Soviet and American mountaineers and obtaining permission for American mountaineers to climb anywhere in the Soviet Union. It took Jerry and his wife, Jane, years of unremitting effort and numerous trips to the Soviet Union to accomplish this, but Jerry's ingenuity, perseverance, and diplomacy did it; the first U.S. delegation of climbers went to the Pamirs in 1974. Undoubtedly, it was this experience that led to his interest in promoting world peace which he pursued so avidly in recent years.

During many years of close association with Jerry, the most indelible incident I experienced with him which best showed his character, enthusiasm, and zest for life, took place not in the mountains, nor in the boardrooms of alpine clubs, but in the Los Angeles Coliseum. It turned out that this Rhodes scholar, prominent lawyer, distinguished citizen, and staid elder statesman of the mountaineering world, was a track-and-field nut. In 1968, he flew out from Denver to Los Angeles to watch the final tryouts for the United States track-and-field team which was going to compete in the Mexico City Olympics. Jerry insisted that my wife and I join him, so the three of us sat in the large crowd in that vast stadium watching the confusing spectacle on the field while Jerry tried to explain some of the finer points to us. Suddenly a crimson sweatshirt could be spotted in the swarming array of athletes below us. Without warning, a "Yea, Harvard" blasted past my ear, rolled across the field, seemingly bounced off the opposite side, and came back at us. While I struggled to regain my composure, a thousand faces turned towards us and began to grin as the solitary Harvard contestant stopped dead in his tracks, looked up, and smiled. The mood in the crowd seemed a lot lighter after that. So perhaps the best way one can sum up such a remarkable person as John L. J. Hart is in a variation of that simple cheer—Yea, Jerry.

NICHOLAS B. CLINCH

LILLIAN GEST
1898-1986

Lillian Gest, last surviving member of a prominent Philadelphia family, died in January, 1986, at age eighty-eight. Many years before, on her graduation