

the slope. Had the party been roped, and had belays been well taken, this loss of life would never have occurred.

*Colorado: Colorado National Monument.* On 29 May 1949 Otto Schied, a German exchange student and high school senior, plunged 300 feet to his death. A companion, Kenneth Hesler, grabbed at Schied's tumbling body and fell 30 feet himself, but escaped serious injury because he landed on a ledge. Details of this accident are lacking, but it appears that the youths were scaling a sheer cliff to reach a vantage point to take pictures.

*Source of information:* newspaper accounts.

*Analysis.* All that needs to be stated here is again that there was apparently no experience and no rope. It seems that Schied put his weight on a rock that loosened.

*Colorado: Snowmass Peak (14,077 ft.).* On 26 August 1949 Arthur Gallager (21), a Yale student from Colorado Springs, slid to his death in a rock slide. Eye-witnesses said that he slipped from a ledge while he was descending from a summit of the peak and fell 30 feet onto a steep area of loose boulders, etc., where his weight precipitated a rock slide. This in turn carried him 150 feet down the mountain. He was engulfed by the rolling, sliding blocks of rock and evidently crushed to death. A ten-man rescue party brought the body down two days later.

*Source of information:* newspaper reports and Colorado Mountain Club correspondence.

*Analysis.* Because details are inadequate, no full attempt at an analysis of this accident is made. We point out only that a loose rock avalanche can be even more dangerous than one of snow, because of the tremendous weight and the sharp edges of the large individual blocks.

*New Hampshire: Mount Washington.* On 1 May 1949 Dr. Paul Schiller, a Harvard research associate and Hungarian scientist, plunged into a water-filled bergschrund on the top of the headwall of Tuckerman's Ravine. A crew of eight found the lifeless form on a rocky ledge about 50 feet down from the "lip" of the crevasse. The accident occurred in the early afternoon, and there were many eye-witnesses to the tragedy. Schiller apparently had

not seen notices posted that morning in a near-by Forest Service shelter. These stated that avalanche conditions probably existed on the lip of the headwall. He was skiing above the headwall and, while traversing to the left above it, fell and began slowly sliding down. Persons who saw him fall say that he could have stopped himself, but he must have failed to realize the danger. He slid slowly over the top of the headwall and through a sizable waterfall, and disappeared into a bergschrund which the waterfall had opened between the rock wall and the snow slope. A number of persons immediately converged on the scene, and several tunnels were dug through the snow some 18 feet below the top, but Schiller could not be found. Late in the afternoon, rescue attempts were abandoned, it being thought that he could not have survived the combination of the fall and the exposure to the ice water. A long line of men had been formed to the headwall, up which they passed blankets, Stokes stretchers, shovels, ice-axes and ropes. The body was found the next day. A coroner reported the death was caused by a "basal skull fracture."

*Source of information:* newspaper accounts, and members of the rescue crew.

*Analysis.* This accident, although it happened to a man on skis, is included in this report because it is the sort of thing which could easily happen to a careless mountaineer climbing or ski-mountaineering on slopes above a bergschrund or waterfall. The accident suggests that on such slopes one must be doubly careful, whether on skis or on foot, and that the inexpert should avoid climbing or skiing there at all. Also, as in the case of the Welk accident on Mount Hood, it is only too clear that one must regain control of oneself as soon as possible after slipping on a slope before one has slid too far.

*Colorado: Estes Park, Rocky Mountain National Park.* On 10 October 1949 another unsolved mystery of the mountains developed when two young hikers from the Colorado A. and M. Hikers' Club disappeared on the top of 12,300-foot Flat Top Mountain. David Devitt (20) and Bruce Gerling (21) became separated from nine other students with whom they were hiking from Grand Lake to Bear Lake. Their absence was not observed until the party returned to the college the following morning. Both men