

of Mount Moran, came upon the scene and made Miss Grove fairly comfortable with a sleeping bag and plenty of warm clothing.

News of the accident was received at Jenny Lake Ranger Station by 4:00 p.m. Within four hours two members of the Park rescue team, Pete Sinclair, and Dave Dornan, were at the scene with additional sleeping bags, food, and first-aid equipment. By 10:30 p.m. an additional eight men had arrived.

Because of the ruggedness of the terrain, the route finding problem involved, and the concern for the safety of the entire party, it was decided not to begin carry-out until daylight.

The descent was underway by 6:00 a.m. the next morning. A relief team of six men, led by Seasonal Ranger Ron Trussell, joined the first team early in the descent and the carry-out was completed in a routine fashion at 11:00 a.m. Miss Grove, despite two broken legs, a cracked rib cartilage, and numerous cuts and bruises, remained rather congenial throughout the entire ordeal.

*Source:* James M. Langford, Park Ranger, and H. L. Bill, Superintendent, G.T.N.P.

*Analysis:* This was an unregistered climb. The girls were perfectly aware of the Park regulation governing climbing in the Park. They were undoubtedly strong hikers and were probably well within their abilities on the terrain they had covered previous to the accident. However, the injured girl did not express sound judgment in choosing to venture out onto the rockface above the talus alone. Although her desire to "get in some rock-climbing" may have been commendable, the circumstances at the time were not such that she should have fulfilled that desire, especially against the advice of her companions.

The fall she suffered was truly a classic one, and it is unbelievable that her injuries were not more severe. The fact that she managed to maintain a complete state of relaxation during the fall undoubtedly saved her life. Once she realized she was going to fall, she committed herself freely to "what was going to be a long trip down."

*Wyoming, Grand Teton National Park, Disappointment Peak*—Arthur N. Plaxton (20), and Richard O. Parmelee (20), an employee at Jackson Lake Lodge, left a note at the Jenny Lake Ranger Station at 7:30 a.m. on September 3. It stated that they were going to climb Disappointment Peak and would return that same evening.

At 4:30 p.m., an exhausted girl, identifying herself as Brenda Clayson, hurriedly entered the same ranger station with the startling report that she and her companion, John Fisher, had witnessed a climbing accident while hiking near Amphitheater Lake. This had happened at approximately 3:15 p.m.

The information she imparted was vague and the Park rescue team, consisting of six men, took off from Lupine Meadow at 6:00 p.m., knowing only that an injured climber lay somewhere in the vicinity of the head-wall just above Amphitheater Lake with possibly two men attending him.

Two members of the rescue team, Dave Dornan and Ron Trussell, traveling light, were sent on ahead to try and locate the scene of the

accident before dark. They arrived at Amphitheater Lake shortly after 7:30 p.m. The remainder of the team, pushing the trail wheel, reached the scene at 9:15 p.m. The injured climber had been identified as Richard O. Parmelee.

Arthur Plaxton and Parmelee had completed the ascent of Disappointment Peak by the Lake Ledge Route, reaching the summit at 12:30 p.m. The descent was begun at 1:15 p.m. The main couloir that bisects the steep area above Amphitheater Lake was missed and they proceeded to descend another much steeper gully farther south. Near the lower end of this gully they came to a steep section that could not be descended, and Parmelee traversed northward along a ledge in an attempt to find a route down. The time was 3:00 p.m. Plaxton trailed a short distance out on the ledge behind Parmelee. Suddenly Parmelee's foot hold gave way. He slid down on the steep rock face on his back for nearly 100 feet where he dropped into the gully below the steep section and tumbled an additional 100 feet before coming to a stop at a point where the gully spills out onto the steep talus above the Lake.

Plaxton was able to attract the attention of some hikers at Amphitheater Lake. One of the hikers (John Fisher) came to the assistance of Parmelee while his companion (Brenda Clayson) dashed off down the trail to report the accident.

Plaxton remained stranded on the ledge for some time before a group of climbers, returning from a climb on Mount Owen, assisted him down to Amphitheater Lake. Another party of climbers, planning an ascent of Mount Owen, arrived on the scene around 6:30 p.m. They rendered what aid they could to Parmelee, who was unconscious and suffering from severe head injuries, while the former climbing party accompanied Plaxton and Fisher on down the mountain.

When the main body of the rescue team reached Parmelee, he was lying on his back with head uphill. He had previously been placed in a down mummy bag (probably by the second climbing party to arrive at the scene) and numerous compresses had been applied to his head. A cursory examination of Parmelee was sufficient to reveal the urgency of a quick evacuation. Since he had already been moved once in placing him awkwardly in the mummy bag, it was thought best not to disturb him anymore, and further first-aid procedures were curtailed.

The evacuation, which included a short hand-carry over talus to the Lake and a seven mile jaunt down the steep Glacier Trail using the litter wheel, was underway by 10:00 p.m. and completed by 1:30 a.m., September 4. Parmelee never regained consciousness but died at 10:00 a.m. in St. John's Hospital, Jackson, the morning after his fall. Death was attributed chiefly to a severe skull fracture directly over the left eye. In addition, he suffered from broken ribs, punctured lungs, and a broken arm.

*Source:* F. Douglas McLaren, Supervisory Park Ranger, and James M. Langford, Park Ranger, and H. L. Bill, Superintendent, G.T.N.P.

*Analysis:* Had this party registered their climb in the proper manner as required by the National Park Service, they would not have been permitted to make this ascent without having received additional knowledge

of the route they were attempting and having been assured of what climbing equipment was necessary. With a rope and the proper knowledge of its use they would have been able to come down without difficulty once they realized they were off route.

*Colorado, Crestone Needle*—With the intention of doing winter mountaineering in the Crestones, Lief Patterson (25), Eliot Goss (24), and David Isles (24) met Stuart Krebs (25) at Westcliffe, Colorado on Saturday evening, January 30. Sunday they packed in and made camp by the South Colony Lakes. Monday, February 1, was clear with a slight wind and a temperature which averaged around 20° F. The Crestone Needle was climbed by the regular route; the rock was free of snow and no rope was needed. The summit was reached at 1:00 p.m. It became clear that altitude was telling on some members of the group and that the projected Needle to Peak, traverse would be impossible. On the basis of the following passage from Orme's "Guide to the Colorado Mountains" page 116 (3rd Edition, 1955) they decided not to retrace their steps: "It (the ridge traverse) starts with a steep descent to the first col, for which parties usually break out rope, and continues along cliffs on left or S side of ridge, dropping about 400 feet and then climbing to high col between two summits and thence to left (SW) summit. Descent returns to high col and goes down steep red couloir running NWW." Their decision was motivated by a desire to avoid the extensive rock they had met coming up.

They learned later that "high col" referred to lay between the two summit cones of the Crestone Peak and not on the ridge between the two peaks of the Crestone Needle and Crestone Peak. Once one knows this, the passage is clear, however, it was their opinion afterwards that the wording was somewhat ambiguous. Apparently, this ambiguity doesn't occur in the earlier editions. At 3:00 p.m. they reached the most prominent gully leading down from the ridge that was immediately to the left of the India Route on the photo (page 187, Ormes). They started down the steep snow. Rope and belays were necessary. The weather deteriorated and snow was soon blowing up the gully. An abseil brought them to a lower slope where at about 6:30 p.m. with zero visibility and a second drop off, they were forced to bivouac. They dug a snow cave and spent a comfortable night. The next morning, Tuesday, it was still snowing and small avalanches came down from above. Two more long abseils brought them to the snow fields at the base and around 4:30 p.m. they were once more at camp.

Isles had had one hand slightly frostbitten while descending and, being extremely weak, was rushed into his sleeping bags. Next morning, he discovered that both feet were badly frostbitten, all the toes and part of the soles being blue. He dressed himself warmly, put on down socks and mukluks and with the others who broke camp and carried his gear they reached the autos without incident. Eliot Goss drove him to a hospital in Canon City. Since then he has been hospitalized intermittently. Damage was confined to the right foot with the loss of the first joint of first and second toes and a graft on the heel.