

After the group had been on the trail for some time it became apparent that they would not reach the summit shelter until after dark. In addition the weather had grown steadily worse and snow was falling on a rising wind. To complicate matters Jordan was going poorly, having to stop and rest often. About one mile from the shelter he told the boys to go on ahead and get a fire started in the shelter. After reaching the shelter the boys waited some time and then went out and called to Jordan. They heard a reply which they interpreted as a sign he was on his way and would arrive shortly. He never arrived at the hut. The weather developed into a full blizzard and marooned the boys in the summit shelter from that time until their rescue on 11 February.

When the party failed to return on the night of the 10th preparations were made by the Riverside County Sheriff's office to search the area as soon as the weather permitted. In the morning on the 11th a helicopter located the boys outside the summit shelter. Survival packs were dropped to them and they were picked up several hours later in Round Valley. It was only after their rescue that it was known that Jordan was still on the mountain. Rescue teams were called from Riverside, Sierra Madre and Altadena and they initiated a ground search the following day. Jordan's body was located approximately 50 yards from the summit shelter; he was huddled under a rock as if to seek shelter from the weather. The evacuation was carried out by standard mountaineering methods to a point where he could be air-lifted by helicopter to Palm Springs. An autopsy showed Jordan died from freezing.

*Source:* Robert C. Gardner.

*Analysis:* Victim inadequately prepared for adverse weather conditions. Victim inexperienced in winter mountaineering techniques.

*California, Yosemite National Park, Lost Arrow.* On 19 April Glenn Denny and John Weichard, both about 22, were caught on the 3rd pitch of the lost Arrow by a sleet and snow storm. Being lightly dressed both were greatly affected by the cold. A retreat was not practical from their position, so they continued to the summit (100 feet of 6th class climbing) for a more favorable rappel angle, then tied their ropes together to make a single long rappel into the notch (270 feet). An attempt was made to prussik up fixed ropes 270 feet to the Valley Rim, but the ropes were frozen and icy and Weichard was too weak. Denny might have been able to make it, but elected to stay with Weichard and call for help.

*Source:* Ranger David W. Huson.

*Analysis:* The weather had been threatening for two days. This climb should not have been undertaken during questionable weather as the retreat from this climb is one of the most technical in Yosemite. Parkas should be taken on long climbs of grade three in the early season.

*California, Yosemite National Park, Washington Column (1).* At about 7:30 A.M. 29 June, E. Walton Kirk and Mickey McKinney were a little over 300 feet above the talus on Washington Column. It was their intention to climb to lunch ledge and then either return or proceed up. At the point the accident occurred they were about 40 feet to the right (north) of the

regular route and planned to negotiate a moderate to difficult fifth class pitch which would have led to ledges on the regular route. Kirk was leading with McKinney in a secure belay position from below. He used an old piton which was in place and it tested safely and snapped in two carabiners to get extension from the rock. He tested the piton and carabiners by leaning back on them. About three feet above this point his left foot slipped while making a fairly difficult but not uncomfortable move, and he peeled off the face falling 18 to 20 feet straight down the face to a ledge and then rolling an additional 10 feet. Both bones of the right leg were broken between the knee and the ankle, compression fractures apparently occurring when he hit the ledge.

They moved 8 or 10 feet farther down the ledge where he was able to straddle a Manzanita bush, and tie in; traction was rigged for the leg. McKinney went down and reported to the Park service. They arrived between 10:30 and 11:00 and the rescue was made by rappelling the stokes litter 300 feet to the talus and then carrying it out.

The piton and one carabiner were still in place but the second carabiner was gone. In discussing this with McKinney he says that it was around the climbing rope after the fall. Apparently after the slip while falling past the anchor point the rope was so twisted that one carabiner gate was opened and came out of the other carabiner.

*Source:* E. Walton Kirk, David W. Huson, Ranger Y.N.P., and W. E. Siri.

*Analysis:* Rope slipped out of carabiner during fall. Probably no injuries would have resulted if rope remained in carabiner. Possibly carabiner not properly set. Slip probably result of insufficient climbing experience.

*California, Yosemite National Park, Washington Column (2).* Unexpected fine weather prevailed on the morning of 9 November giving the prospect of a good day for climbing the piton traverse route on Washington Column in Yosemite Valley. David Coward (28), leader of the party, had been at least as far as Lunch Ledge several times before. Doug Loescher (23) followed on the first rope. At the base of the climb Marvin McEachern (28) proposed that he and George Oetzel (27) should alternate leads on the second rope, and that he should start. On the basis of conversations and observation of some third class approach climbing, it did not seem an unreasonable suggestion, so it was agreed.

At the beginning of the third pitch, Oetzel noticed that McEachern didn't seem very comfortable with the prospect of leading the pitch. McEachern agreed with the suggestion that he should back off and let Oetzel lead the pitch, but then started up the pitch. On further questioning, he assured his belayer that it had been only one move that was a bother, and he had no further difficulty with the bottom part of the pitch, consisting of about 20 feet of steep cracks leading to a prominent Y-shaped tree. Passing through the low crotch of the Y, the route continues up a short shallow gully with a choice at the end of continuing up the steep end of the gully or a slightly easier traverse around a ridge. Coward led the traverse 4th class. It appears that McEachern stayed in the gully, where he was out of sight of his belayer. He gave no indication that he