

*Source:* S. C. Granger, Jr.

*Analysis:* The injured party was not wearing a hard hat, nor would a hard hat have prevented any of the injuries. However, Young should have had head injuries, so a hard hat would ordinarily have prevented damage. Vari-ous cuts above and below Young's right eye may have been caused by his sun glasses.

The accident was the second of this type that our climbing group has had this year and should serve to point out the extremely treacherous nature of scree slopes, especially on descents where the group is tired and moving fast. Both falls were severe enough to have been fatal, and except for ex-tremely good fortune, would have been. All climbers should take note and exercise greater caution during the descent.

*California, Yosemite National Park.* On 11 August, Larry Gee (15) and Mike Montgomery (15), along with three other boys and two girls, of about the same age, started at 11:00 a.m. to climb the talus slope just south and west of Le Conte Memorial. After only a short way up (100 to 150 yards) two boys and two girls turned back. The three remaining boys continued on up the talus. At a point about midway between the base of the talus, and where it makes a left turn (facing south), the third boy returned to the valley floor. He felt his parents would be mad if his brother returned to camp with-out him, the brother being one of the first two boys that returned with the girls. Larry Gee and Mike Montgomery continued on. They had with them a canteen of water and a new length of ¼" cotton clothesline rope, about 50 feet long. They were wearing tennis shoes.

Their climb extended to the point where the talus turns left (facing south) and on up, approximately 1500 to 1800 feet above the valley floor. At this point, Larry and Mike left the talus slope and started up the south cliff face. This climb took them to approximately 800 to 900 feet below the cliff crest. At this point they could go no further and turned back.

Larry and Mike spent the next one-and-a-half hours or more finding their way down to a point about 250 feet above the talus. The young men could not agree at this time on the route to take down. Larry tied the cotton rope to a tree about eight inches in diameter and tied a loose end to his waist. He then started down, holding on to some small trees or bushes. Mike could not see Larry because of some small trees. Larry called to Mike that he was coming back. Mike then heard slipping noises, Larry screaming, and a sound which he believed was Larry hitting below somewhere. Mike pos-sibly went into mild shock at this time. He stayed there a few minutes say-ing "Larry" over and over in a loud voice. Mike then started down the way he believed they had come up. About 20 feet below and west of the point where Larry had fallen from, Mike slipped on a mossy rock and went down about 10 or 12 feet, not hurting himself.

Mike found Larry on a ledge about 40 to 60 feet below the position that he had fallen from. Mike asked Larry where he hurt. He answered, "All over." Mike said, "Don't move." Larry answered, "I won't. Get help." Mike made his way down from the ledge, 175 to 200 feet to the talus. He continued down the talus yelling for help and that Larry had been hurt. About half-way down the straight section of the talus he met his older brother (17 years old) and a man he did not know. He told them what had

happened and they continued on up the talus. The brother and older man did not find Larry and went past the ledge where he was. They continued on until they reached the ledge trail and followed it up. They were benighted and stayed on a ledge until three Rangers and one fire guard came to their aid. Mike met his father about 200 feet above the valley floor. The father and son came down together from that point.

Gee apparently died in the night from his injuries shortly after Mike left. He was dead when the rescue party reached the scene about midnight.

*Source:* Fredrick Anderson, Park Ranger

*California, Inyo National Forest, Shadow Lake Area.* On 24 August a party from "Outward Bound" from Pasadena left Agnew Meadow (8,600 ft.) and camped at a small lake (8,200 ft.) about two miles from the end of the road. A 17-year-old member of the party complained of not feeling well. The next day they continued towards Shadow Lake (9,000 ft.). Here the boy became progressively worse and lapsed into a coma in the late afternoon. He had been seen by a physician who diagnosed his condition as pneumonia and gave him an injection. The victim died in the night.

*Source:* Thomas H. Jukes

*Analysis:* This is probably a case of high altitude pulmonary edema. It indicates the potential hazard of going from sea-level to only moderate altitude and doing physical exertion without adequate time allowed for proper adaptation.

*California, San Bernardino Range, Mt. San Gorgonio.* On 23 December, Michael Daugherty (26), Charles Helfer (21), and Joseph Hara (50) were descending the route of ascent and the accident occurred about 500 feet below the summit on the North side. At the time of the accident the party was cramponing down a hard snow slope of no greater than 35° which connected the summit ridge with a wooded ridge separating two somewhat steeper (about 40°) couloirs. This was the only place on the climb (about 100 yards) that had any exposure. The rest of the climb either was on lower angle or heavily wooded. The party was descending unroped using crampons and ice axes.

About 100 feet above the upper end of the wooded ridge, the party was proceeding in file when the last member of the party (Hara) fell. This occurred about 3:00 p.m. The first two members of the party turned and saw Hara sliding downward on his back, feet first, with his ice axe firmly grasped in both hands and held above him. They both shouted to him to roll over in order to execute a self arrest. Hara appeared to make no attempt to do this and slid down into the broad couloir on the East side of the ridge, gaining speed and disappearing from sight.

Daugherty and Helfer descended the wooded ridge and found Hara, severely injured (probably from hitting rock and trees on the way down), in a small tree protruding from the snow toward the bottom of the couloir, approximately 500 feet below where he fell. They cut a platform in the snow and removed Hara from the tree, placing him on the platform. Helfer then proceeded to the roadhead and summoned aid while Daugherty administered first aid. Hara died at approximately 4:00 p.m.

*Source:* Michael Daugherty, Charles Helfer, and David Harrah