

## VARIOUS NOTES

### UNITED STATES: NEW CLIMBS

*Further Firsts in Cashmere Crags.* Data supplied by Fred Beckey complement the article by Ralph Widrig in this issue:

*Dragon Tooth* (nr. The Mole), 22 May 1948: Ralph Widrig, Fred Beckey. Five pitons for aid to climb overhanging wall; then up high-angle slab. Sitting on the summit "very precarious."

*Flake Tower* (Mt. Temple ridge), 31 May 1948: Ralph Widrig, P. Schoening. Two pitons for safety.

*Three Musketeers*, 14 August 1948: J. Schwabland, F. Melberg, F. Beckey. Crack (layback) to base of three 50-ft. granite monoliths, which are crackless but so closely spaced that climbers were able to stem the gaps—"rather spectacular."

*Comet Spire and the Meteor* (E. end of Mt. Temple ridge), 29 August 1948: F. Beckey, P. Schoening, Ralph Widrig. Meteor "very difficult": two shoulder stands, pitons, palm-pressure up high-angle slab. Entire summit overhangs.

*Yellowjacket Tower and the Hook* (above Icicle Cr.), 1 September 1948: P. Schoening, H. Staley, F. Beckey. "The hornets made us miserable on the former . . . The latter required pitons, expansion bolt and rope-throwing."

*The Sentry* (above Snow Lakes), 4 September 1948: J. Schwabland, F. Beckey. Two shoulder stands, pitons (direct aid), lasso to overcome final 15 ft.

*Gremlin Peak and Rocket Peak* (E. McClellan Peak ridge), 5 September 1948: J. Schwabland, F. Beckey. The ascent of Rocket, effected after climbs on Gremlin and some lesser towers, evidently brought the day's activities to a climax: "After a long S-face ascent they worked to an exposed niche 50 ft. below the summit. Here Beckey gained a sloping ledge after a number of attempts from a very precarious shoulder stand. On the ensuing pitch a contraction bolt had to be used for aid. The stance was not only very awkward for drilling, but very exposed . . . The lack of piton cracks on the summit block make the ascent troublesome."

*Black Pyramid* (above Nada Lake), 6 September 1948: J. Schwabland, F. Beckey. "A long, enjoyable ridge climb."

*The Comb and the Duolith*, 19 September 1948: F. Beckey, Ralph Widrig. On the latter, five pitons were used for aid.

*Enchantment Peak* (above Enchantment Lakes), 20 September 1948: F. Beckey, Ralph Widrig.

*The Boxtop* (nr. W. end of Mt. Temple ridge), 25 September 1948: F. Beckey, P. Schoening (others of a large party "admirably sacrificed their ambitions" in order to let these two reach the top). Overhangs made route-finding exceptionally difficult: the N. and E. faces were ruled out; and, after hours of climbing, nearly every semblance of a route on the S. and W. faces was found to run into a blind alley. "Deep vertical fissures, useless for pitons, and impossible to climb by any technique, were tried at numerous points on the lower walls. Finally a piton traverse led to a wall that had enough holds for 50 ft. Then a bulging overhang demanded direct aid for 12 ft.—a project undertaken by Beckey. The next lead proved more feasible, but then a 40-ft. overhang blocked progress." Now, a traverse to the E. having failed, other members of the party withdrew, to let Beckey and Schoening, "who were ahead at the moment," proceed during the time still available. "Schoening climbed a severe 20-ft. pitch to examine the horrible overhang and, to his amazement, found a 'hole' extending through the narrow peak." On the opposite N. wall there was a route leading to a ledge above the overhang. Flawless walls again seemed about to end the climb; but a traverse to the E. on a narrow, exposed ledge brought the two to a vertical 50-ft. fissure where they were able to fix a piton in an iced niche. "A freezing wind made climbing miserable—the others were now huddled about a fire far below." The crack, despite exposure, went well. "Schoening inched his way up the last severe problem and reached the very exposed and narrow summit crest. A 40-ft. straddle *à cheval*, made additionally precarious by a blasting wind, led to the summit. Rappels and a tension traverse quickly facilitated the descent."

*Castle Rock* (Tumwater Canyon), 10 October 1948: F. Beckey, J. Schwabland, W. Grande. S. face: 13 pitons for safety.

*Herronhead Tower and the Dart*, 10 April 1949: P. Schoening, D. Wilde. Class 6.

Another note from the same source reports the existence of impressive towers S. of Enchantment Lakes: "Some of them, such as the Prong, the Flagpole, the Nightmare Needles and the Knitting

Needle Spires, appear impossible. If in later seasons they prove to be climbable, even 'illegitimately,' these certainly will be spectacular ascents. North of the Mole, a 1000-ft. granite monolith with sheer sides, known as 'The Great Blockhouse,' was subjected to a cursory reconnaissance which convinced the climbers that, if the ascent was at all possible, it would take days of hardware climbing. Unquestionably it is one of the most difficult peaks in the Craggs—and the United States."

*Baker Rock, West Virginia.* On the slopes of Elkhorn Ridge, a few miles E. of Petersburg, W. Va., erosion has exposed a remarkable formation of cliffs and pinnacles, locally known as Baker Rock. This quartzite expanse for many years excited the curiosity of Washington climbers on their way to Seneca Rock, Nelson Rock and Hellhole, but these other objectives always received prior consideration. Then, on 17 May 1946, Don Hubbard and Sam Moore made the first serious investigation of Baker Rock. They climbed three of the lower spires and the S. peak. On 6 September 1948 these rocks received some further attention. Jane Showacre, Mary Neilan and Arnold Wexler attempted a route up the S. chimney, but were turned back by the difficulties of the upper section. On 13 November 1948 Don Hubbard and Dick Goldman traversed the ridge N. of the main gap. On the next day the two pioneered an elegant route up the main face just below the highest point. It took four pitons, and 40 vertical ft., for them to reach the first satisfactory belaying point. During the same afternoon Arthur Lembeck, Harold Drewes and Arnold Wexler returned to the S. chimney. Back-and-knee technique took the party up 125 ft. to a point where the walls of the chimney opened wide into two isolated peaks. Choosing the southern pinnacle, the party traversed to the sheer front face and then ascended to the summit, some 200 ft. above the base. On top there was hardly room for two people.

Baker Rock has great possibilities and certainly ranks in the class with Seneca Rock, Nelson Rock and Champe Rock.

A. W.

#### UNITED STATES: ACTIVITIES OF THE CLUBS

*Guidebook for Mountains of the Northwest.* The A.A.C. looks forward to completion in the near future of the new *Climber's*