

# Various Notes

## UNITED STATES

*A.A.C. and C.M.C. Joint Outing, Needle Mountains, Colorado, July 19—August 9, 1953.* The Needle Mountains form a small part of the mass of mountains in the southwest quarter of Colorado, generally called the San Juans. They are located on the east side of the Animas River, 10 to 20 miles below Silverton, and are made up of several ranges, principally a north—south range about 6 miles east of the river and 4 east—west ranges separated by streams which rise in high basins near the foot of the mountains and fall in steep cascades down to the river. The stream second from the north was so little visited that it was never named, even locally, and eventually came to be called Noname Creek. It was in the basin at the head of this creek, at an altitude of 10,700 feet, that the base camp for the 1953 joint outing of the American Alpine Club and the Colorado Mountain Club was established. The outing lasted from July 19th to August 9th, and 94 people, from age 7 to 70, attended at least part of the time. Most of the A.A.C. members were in attendance for the last two weeks.

To reach the base camp we traveled individually to Durango, and from there took the narrow gauge Durango—Silverton passenger train through spectacular Animas Canyon to the mouth of Noname Creek. Because the track was on the west side of the river and there was no bridge, we had to be carried across on a cable tram operated by manpower. From there pack horses took our packs and we hiked up the trail, which zigzagged up 2000 feet in the first few miles to reach the lower end of Noname basin. Fortunately we were spared the rain that bothered others on the trail and reached camp before dinner time, just when word came of the injury to Phyllis Anderson from a fall while descending North Thumb. It was an inauspicious beginning for

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an outing, but when she had been brought to camp that night, it was learned that her condition was not as serious as was at first feared and, except for the drafting of all competent men to carry her to the train on Wednesday, the program of the outing went ahead as scheduled. Much of the lessening of the tension was due to the cheerful optimism of Phyllis herself.

During the first week in camp it rained, at least several showers every day, and all day on other days. While Phyllis was being carried down the trail even some hail fell. Climbing trips went ahead as scheduled despite the rain, but by the end of the week, during which we had no chance to dry out our clothing, the wet weather was becoming monotonous and some who had planned to stay two weeks left at the end of one. The next day was clear and from then on we had no rain—not even on the day we hiked out—although on that morning the weather looked threatening, and the following morning in Durango it was raining.

Except for Mts. Windom, Sunlight, and Eolus, which almost everyone felt obliged to climb because they all exceeded 14,000 feet but offered no difficult climbing problems, the most popular climbs were those of Sceptre and Monitor Peaks, just southwest of the camp, and Jagged Mountain and Knife Point to the east. More interesting climbs were on the Twin Thumbs south of Camp and Pigeon Peak and the Index on opposite sides of Ruby Basin, just south of Noname basin. The latter two climbs would have been much more popular except for the long hike down Noname Basin or over the saddle into Ruby Basin before beginning the climb. These summits are all over 13,000 feet.

All of the major peaks in the Needle mountains had been previously climbed, but there are still numerous unclimbed pinnacles offering challenge to the rock climber. One of these, Gray Needle, at the west end of Jagged Mountain, was first climbed by a party from the outing. Expansion bolts were used on one 30-foot stretch of the climb. New routes were worked out for the ascents of Sunlight, the Twin Thumbs, and Animas.

Those not caring for the strenuous climbs had plenty of entertainment. There were spectacular vistas surrounding camp and other views within a short walk in almost any direction.

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Everywhere flowers grew in unbelievable profusion. One day a committee collected and labeled a display which extended the entire 45-foot length of the dining table. One exhibit was a collection of Indian Paint brush of 27 different hues. Waterfalls and glacier lakes were within less than an hour's walk of camp. Entertainment was provided by members of the party at the evening campfires, after plans for the next day had been made.

Except those who left early because of the rain during the second week, everyone agreed it was a most successful outing, and the success was largely due to careful planning and management by Bob Ellingwood for the first week and a half and by Henry Buchtel for the rest of the time. Joe Hotter and his helper, Bill, did an outstanding job of packing us in and out and rendered outstanding service above the call of duty in getting aid after the accident. Ted Lee, of Calgary, Canada, proved that his reputation as an excellent camp cook was well deserved. The other members of the advance party and the outing committees had everything ready when the group arrived and kept the schedule running smoothly thereafter. The memories of the outing with its magnificent setting and especially of the old and new friends met there will be a high spot in the minds of all of us.

HENRY L. McCLINTOCK

*New Climbs in the Cascades.* For those who tire of sea-level recreation in the Pacific Northwest there are always the ice-crested Cascades to beckon the adventurous, and to those adventurers not fully satisfied with following established routes there are still untouched summits and walls. One wall that marked the progressive quests of climbers this summer was the northern exposure of Mt. Goode, climbed from the northwest notch and over the hitherto avoided north summit by William Fix, Jim Henry, John Parrott, Don Claunch, and myself. The route, on steep fractured granite, was quite enjoyable, requiring the use of only two pitons. The nearby west tower of Goode was scaled on another trip to the area by Claunch and me. Insecure rock mitigated the usual reward expected from such a striking peak, but the ascent is quite worthwhile if one is already in the area.

Most of this year's exploratory climbing efforts were consum-