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mated on the far east side, in the Methow Range, north and east of Lake Chelan, amid a cluster of towering granitic spires surrounding Mt. Silver Star. One venture to the area resulted in new ascents of various towers on Snagtooth Ridge; another, the ascent of Silver Horn, by Joe Hieb, Art Maki, John Parrott, and myself. The principal quest, which after some preliminary probing, finally consumed almost three days of sustained piton climbing, was Burgundy Spire. John Parrott, Michael Hane, and I established camp on a rock outcrop of the Silver Star Glacier and in successive stages worked up the north face, leaving fixed ropes for faster renewed progress. A grim 200-foot face took almost a day to scale, and higher up, confused by various escapes from difficulty which led nowhere, we "direct-aided" up most of a 70-foot step which virtually overhangs the glacier. Late the second day we arrived at the first of several summit teeth, the highest, of course, being at the far end. Parrott, who had been coaxed into climbing to a small vantage point, announced that we should make the summit shortly on the next day. His plans for the quick conquest were not revealed, however; the next day when we returned, after further exploring we found no bypasses around the "teeth." His optimism was forgiven when he finally piloted a well-aimed rock, with a thin line attached, over the second tooth, and in time we were able to make a prusik-knot ascent to its exposed crown. From here the summit itself was reached in about an hour via a knife-thin edge and a summit-block overhang requiring the use of a bolt for aid (6 Rawl-drives were used on the climb). It had been a fascinating and stimulating problem, involving virtually every tactic of the rock climber; and to give just a little variety, Burgundy has a steep 300-foot frozen névé couloir leading into the face off the glacier.

FRED BECKEY

Tetons, 1953. The summer of 1953 saw a fever of climbing activity in the Grand Teton National Park unmatched by any previous year. Not only were the regular routes kept busy, but first ascents, new routes, and other unusual climbs were made

NORTH FACE OF THE GRAND TETON
from the summit of Teewinot.

Photo, L. Ortenburger

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by the dozen. For example, the Grand was climbed by no less than eight different routes! The weather was important to the success of these activities—there was only one day of definitely bad weather during the whole summer.

NORTH FACE OF THE GRAND TETON

The first direct ascent of this face was made in 1949 when Ray Garner and the Teton Guides Dick Pownall and Art Gilkey finally cracked the defenses of the upper bulge of the wall,* but since that year the face had sustained no determined effort. The guides of the Petzoldt-Exum School of American Mountaineering spent long hours discussing another engagement with the face, but days off were hard to match with good weather conditions; so it was not until the past summer that another attempt could be launched. Again, as in the case of the Pownall-Gilkey-Garner party of 1949, it was the unexpected arrival of Mike Brewer which gave the guiding service sufficient manpower to allow two of them the necessary time off. Consequently, on the night of July 23rd Leigh Ortenburger and Willi Unsoeld were encamped with Dick Emerson, the park's expert climbing ranger, at the head of Teton Glacier. Much probing with ice-axes preceded the pitching of the tent since it was suspected that the campsite was actually the cover for a gigantic crevasse which had apparently disappeared since the previous year. This suspicion was verified three days later when the camp was retrieved by Willi and his wife, Jolene, just as the end of the tent was slipping into the widening chasm.

The start was made at 3:30 A.M. and, with the help of a headlight, the previously reconnoitered bergschrund was quickly passed. The rock was gained at the base of the large, rotten yellow chimney which lies to the right of the route. From the bottom of this chimney a horizontal ledge provides a promenade left to the broken rock which rises towards the first prominent snow-covered ledge. It may help to note that there are four of

*A.A.J., VIII (1951), 61-70.

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these prominent ledges on the north face of the Grand. All run upwards to the right at an average angle of 45° and the route generally traverses along each before breaking upward to the start of the next. The first piton was placed at the start of the first upward lead, but the rock above, though rotten, was quite easy and progress was rapid. Unsoeld was leading here and was usually able to extend another full 120 feet while Ortenburger was belaying Emerson who carried the pack. The final black chimney giving access to the first ledge provided this section of the climb with its only real delicacy. Here the smooth black mica cleavage slabs reduced friction to an uncertain minimum and the leader was glad to snap into some of Petzoldt's old strap-iron pitons. Five of these were clustered in the chimney and still rang true to the testing hammer despite their having been placed 17 years ealier.

Since the party had reached the commodious first ledge at 6:00 A.M., they treated themselves to a second breakfast beside a stream of running snow water. The sun was with them by this time, but its cheering rays were balanced by the evil-looking thunderstorm which could be seen moving in over Mt. Owen. This storm proved to be the first of a succession which moved in and out of the field of view all day. Although none of them came close enough to constitute an actual threat, they did serve to keep the party moving steadily. Emerson now took the lead and easily kicked steps* up two snowfields as the rest followed the ledge to its end. The first lead above the ledge proved the the most difficult to that point, and Dick was forced to drive a second piton as well as to snap into a few pitons left by Pownall in '49. A second lead put everyone easily on the second ledge which was treacherously coated with slimy lichen and snow water; so instead of following it out to the right, as was done in 1949, Dick cut straight across it and angled up to the third ledge in one easy lead.

With Dick still leading, the party passed easily along the third ledge until they reached Pownall's "shallow chimney," which was

* Emerson was wearing bramani-soled boots, our standard footwear on all our climbs in the Tetons. We, at least, have decided that tennis shoes have very little, if any, use in mountaineering.

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still well studded with iron. This pitch, now directly above, was the crux of the climb. They were in doubt as to exactly where Pownall had been forced to pendulum around the crucial corner, but as Dick slithered out on a tiny ledge 50 feet above the rest, he became more emphatic in his assertion that this *must* be the pendulum pitch. His belayer had a startlingly clear view of three-quarters of his torso (divided longitudinally), the other one-fourth serving to hold him onto the ledge by some unseen means. The ledge narrowed towards the corner and Dick peeped around it to discover another piton! The only possible conclusion was that Pownall had led this corner direct. After snapping in to the piton, Dick knotted his toes firmly in the crack that had once been a ledge and extended his serpentine body out and around the corner until he could reach a handhold. Hanging from his hands, he then swung around the corner and disappeared. Just after he had reached some slight irregularities which could be called footholds, further complications arose. His rope jammed in a crack at the corner,* forcing him to cling to his holds while Unsoeld led up to this corner and freed the rope. Then Ortenburger, the pack, and Unsoeld, in that order, followed the rope around the corner to Dick's belay stance.

The party was now on the fourth ledge. Ortenburger led up it for 120 feet to the point from which they could easily have walked over to the north ridge, now only 40 feet away. However, in the interests of being as direct as possible, they then turned their attention to finding a route to the bottom of the "V" which cuts the middle of the final summit mass. Leigh led again up a long crack starting some 30 feet to the left of Pownall's route and angling still farther left. About 50 feet up, a good angle piton was placed and a crack was followed up the right which required two more irons for safety. From here Leigh stepped out to his left on an extremely high-angle friction slab which provided him with 20 feet of delicate work. The slab led horizontally to the "V" and the actual climbing was over.

Despite the hour which had been spent on the "pendulum" pitch, it was only 11:30 A.M. when the party reached the sum-

*It is recommended to future leaders of this pitch that they carry a couple of gloves along to stuff into this crack to prevent similar difficulty.

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mit register. It had taken only eight hours from their glacier camp. They had driven six pitons themselves and snapped into as many more, leaving by far the larger portion of the 36-piece assortment clattering merrily as they climbed. It made so much noise, however, that Mike Brewer who had been waiting with his guided party on the summit greeted the party's early arrival with the startled ejaculation: "You guys! I heard the clanking of iron, but I thought it was just some Sierra Clubbers coming up the Owen route!"

WEST FACE OF THE GRAND TETON

A week later Brewer and Ortenburger had a couple of days off from guiding. Both had talked to Henry Coulter about the West Face of the Grand. He and Jack Durrance had pioneered the climb in 1941 and it had not been repeated. At 1:30 P.M., July 31st, Brewer and Ortenburger took the boat across Jenny Lake and started up Cascade Canyon to set up a camp as high as possible in Valhalla Canyon, the starting point for their climb—a beautiful high cirque lying at the base of the west faces of the Grand and Mt. Owen. Arriving at their 11,000-foot campsite at dusk, they saw three conspicuous ledges or shelves sloping diagonally up to the left. They could see that the first problem was to get from one of these to the next higher one. It looked as if the third shelf would bring them to the base of the west face proper.

Starting before daybreak the next morning, they rapidly scrambled up an easy system of ledges leading toward the first main shelf. They roped up at the base of this shelf, where an easy route was found leading on to the second ledge. Several interesting rope lengths up, wet friction slabs on this shelf took them to the black rock at the top of the shelf. They could now look up and see the horribly rotten red chimney referred to by Coulter. They thought it the worst chimney in the entire range. It did, however, bring them to the ledge just above the steep icefield which everyone sees when looking down the north side of the upper saddle. They were now at the bottom of the west face, the great west face chimney beginning about 100 feet above their heads. This 100-foot wall separating them from the chim-

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ney was unbroken as far as they could see to their right. On the chance that there might be a break in this wall, out of sight to the right somewhere, Ortenburger began chopping steps in the ice along its top edge. He was using an ice hammer, much handier to carry on these long face climbs than an axe. After moving about 50 feet, he looked up and saw an old rusty piton in an overhanging chimney—the route! It was not an easy chimney. After placing two more pitons for safety, he squirmed to the top of it. Brewer, however, had twice the problem since he was carrying the pack. Three more rope lengths put them on the large scree- and debris-covered ledge which is about even with the upper saddle.

Here, during brunch, Brewer complained loudly that it was Ortenburger's turn to carry the pack and, after looking at the ominous rock above, the latter quickly agreed that it was Brewer's turn to lead. Two quick rope lengths up the left side of the main west-face chimney brought them to the crucial point of the climb. They knew that Durrance had turned the blank wall above by making two sensational leads out on the face to the left. Before committing themselves to that route, Ortenburger thought that the chimney itself should be investigated. At this point, there is a large chockstone and, had it not been completely covered by ice, this variation might have been possible. As it was, they gained nothing but tired fingers and lost over an hour trying to force a route there. Now that they were convinced that the only possible route was the one taken by Durrance, Brewer resigned himself to his fate and began traversing to the left. After passing a large flake on the outside, he made this difficult lead directly upwards for perhaps 40 feet on very small holds to an outsloping ledge where a piton made a belay possible. When Leigh reached the belay stance, they discussed the next move—the only chance lay in a traverse back to the right on even smaller holds in order to get back into the chimney. This traverse (and indeed their belay spot, too) was very much exposed and would require some protection for the leader. So Ortenburger climbed out to the right, trying to drive enough iron to make the next lead safe—a maneuver which consumed much time since the piton cracks left something to be desired. With the mission ac-

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complished, he returned to the belay spot to rest. Brewer was still fresh and eager and in no time had led safely across. Instead of stopping, he continued up to a corner some 30 feet above and beyond the traverse. This traverse proved to be easier than it appeared, but the 30 feet up to the corner where Brewer was belaying was difficult climbing.

And, unbelievably enough, Brewer was still not through. From this corner he climbed directly up over an extremely difficult overhang, which had Ortenburger completely baffled. He mumbled something about "unclimbable" and berated Brewer for not traversing back into the chimney as he should have done, but with a little tension on the rope Ortenburger got over this spot. Finally, they began scrambling up the now easy way to the summit.

NORTH RIDGE OF THE GRAND TETON

The north ridge is the most commonly climbed difficult route in the Park. Planning to do the climb in one day, Doc Norman Lee, Mike Brewer, and Willi Unsoeld left Jenny Lake at 12:30 A.M. on August 6th and hurried up the trail to Amphitheater Lake where Ortenburger was impatiently waiting beside a crackling bonfire. Ruthlessly limiting themselves to two hours by the fire, they finally coaxed Ortenburger away from his cocoa and at 4:30 A.M. started for the glacier. A leisurely stop for breakfast halfway up the Grandstand was abruptly brought to an end by a few rounds of rockfall from the face above. Their appetites dulled, they sprinted up to the crest of the north shoulder and the beginning of the north ridge proper. At this point the party split forces, Lee and Ortenburger choosing to swing around the initial step to the right, while Brewer and Unsoeld climbed on the left. It became clear that the right-hand route is more difficult. Two or three rope lengths later the party joined again at the base of the chimney blocked by the famous chockstone.

The climb was made shortly after a snowstorm which had formed an ice cap atop the chockstone; this would have made the route up the line of pitons to the right of the chockstone almost impossible. Fortunately Paul Petzoldt had assured the party that the pitch wasn't so bad if one simply stemmed the chimney *facing out*, with one's back to the chockstone. Amaz-

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ingly enough, this unorthodox technique was the key to the pitch, although the uninterrupted view of Valhalla Canyon below did little to steady one's nerves. Unsoeld was first pegged out on the wall to the right of the chock, from which vantage point he obtained an excellent quiver-by-quiver photographic record of Brewer's lead of the pitch. Ortenburger led the second rope, providing some interesting photographic studies as he stemmed out almost to the splitting point. However, it was Doc Lee who gave the technique the acid test. With his full 5 feet 6 inches extended to the elastic limit, he casually chimneyed up over the chockstone, finding opportunity along the way to retrieve the karabiners.

Above the chockstone is a model chimney just 100 feet high with walls machined to a precise width and holds perfectly spaced. A crack leading up from the chimney ends in an ordinarily simple friction slab, but that day it was solid verglas. Much time was used up in tinkering with this bit—tiny nicks were chipped with the piton hammer, areas were pulverized in an effort to bare the rock, and a limited area of snow-coverage was used to the full. Finally Unsoeld managed to skate up this very nasty pitch to the exposed corner at its upper end and the thin part was finished. From there, more straightforward climbing brought both ropes to the summit at about 4:00 P.M.

SYMMETRY SPIRE

No article on Teton climbing would be complete without some mention of Symmetry Spire, 10,546 feet, long the playground for one-day rock climbers. Of the ten routes up this little peak the Jensen ridge* (the ridge just east of the southeast chimney now known as Templeton's Crack) is by far the most difficult. The second partial ascent of this ridge was made on 6 August, 1952 by Doc Lee, Willi Unsoeld, Sandy Gregory, and Tony Mueller. The party climbed Templeton's Crack for about 300 feet before traversing out to the east in order to reach the crest of the ridge which was then followed to the summit. The unclimbed lower 200 feet of the ridge was examined on this occasion and a verdict in substantial agreement with Jensen was reached: "impractical . . . extremely forbidding."

*A.A.J., III (1939,) 361-362. Account of the first partial ascent.

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After some discussion they decided that it must be considered impractical only if no direct aid is used. A possible direct-aid crack seemed to lead straight up the nose of the ridge to the first large overhang which was poised some 80 feet above the gully. On 14 August, 1953, Lee and Unsoeld were back again and spent four long hours pounding their way up to a small platform 20 feet below the overhang. A half dozen pitons were used for direct aid in cracks which were generally too inadequate to insure much peace of mind. From this platform the route over the two large overhangs proved quite enjoyable with only six pitons being used for safety up to the point where the ridge had been gained the previous year. Lateness of the hour forced the climbers to retreat and they rappelled off into Templeton's Crack.

Two days later the indefatigable Unsoeld was back in his official capacity as Teton guide. With him were A.A.C. member Mary Sylvander and Steve Jervis. A closer examination of an alternative to the first unpalatable lead resulted in complete success. After traversing right from the base of the ridge, Unsoeld climbed a moderate pitch straight up, then diagonally to the left, and in a matter of perhaps 20 minutes had the entire party on the same little platform beneath the first overhang! This first obstacle is turned on the left by a vertical crack providing excellent handholds. Above it a small wall is surmounted (one piton for protection) and the route continued until one's head nearly bangs on the roof of the next overhang. A hand-traverse to the right along a flake brings one to the righthand corner of the overhang which is easily passed. This stretch takes the leader to an ample ledge a full 120 feet above his belayer.

From here the route traverses horizontally left across the crest of the ridge before turning upward again. If the groove nearest the crest is followed upwards, an extremely smooth and awkward wall is encountered at its top. Unsoeld placed two pitons for safety here and wished for more. At the top of this delicate 12-foot bit is the ledge which had previously been reached from Templeton's Crack. Above this the route becomes more nearly vertical, but the rock is splendid with excellent cracks for the utilization of cross-pressure. The final obstacle which the ridge has to offer is an 8-foot overhang with very steep slabs below it.

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On the 1952 climb it was turned on the left after an unsuccessful try at the cleft in its center. This time, on the basis of Mary's unbounded optimism, the central cleft was again essayed by Unsoeld and finally yielded, but not without requiring a good deal of uncomfortable squirming by Unsoeld.

SOUTH RIDGE OF MT. MORAN

A few years ago Phil Smith had mentioned to Leigh Ortenburger that Bert Jensen had hiked into Leigh Canyon back in the '30's, intending to attempt the unclimbed south ridge of Mt. Moran, but after he had had a good look at it, he turned around and came back without ever setting foot on the rock. In June 1953 Bill Buckingham and Ortenburger had a good look at this still unclimbed ridge as they bushwacked out of Leigh Canyon. They noticed 1) that the ridge was 5000 feet long, making it one of the longest climbs in the country; 2) that there were a minimum of eight major towers on the ridge; 3) that the first 2500 feet seemed so smooth and sheer as to offer no route which did not involve at least 500 feet of direct-aid climbing. After making these observations Ortenburger gave up the idea. The whole subject of the south ridge of Moran became the joke of the summer among the climbers at Jenny Lake. Dick Emerson, however, had twice been up Leigh Canyon with binoculars and thought there was a chance that the ridge might go. Rational argument seemed to have no effect on him. On the August 16th everyone was shocked when he announced that the next day he and Don Decker intended to do a "reconnaissance" of the ridge—it seemed as if he had gone mad. Two days later everyone listened to Dick tell how he and Don had climbed over 2000 feet of the "smooth and sheer" section without using direct aid! This was so surprising as to be nearly unbelievable. Though if true, then perhaps the whole ridge could be done in two or three days.

Finally, on the evening of August 28th, Emerson and Decker, joined by Ortenburger, were camped in Leigh Canyon preparing for the assault on the morrow. Since the ridge was clearly more than a one-day picnic, they planned to spend one night in a bivouac, and since they didn't want to carry any more food

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than necessary, they decided to eat in advance. More food was consumed that night than six men ordinarily eat. Up early the next morning, they began the first grassy ledge leading to the crest of the ridge. Here they picked up an enormous cache of iron that Dick and Don had left on their earlier trip. Roped up, by 10 A.M. they had reached the high point established by Dick and Don on their reconnaissance. In the intervening 1000 feet is to be found some of the finest rock in the Park, full of wonderful hand traverses, plus a fine chimney.

They then came to the left-hand corner of the smooth face of the ridge just 70 feet below the great overhang which caps the vertical section of the ridge. Ortenburger could easily see why the earlier party had been stopped previously. The face to their right was smooth granite, about 60 feet across and at an angle of 80°. On the far side of this face, however, they could see a perfect direct-aid crack which could take them to easy ground. But the complete absence of holds or even piton cracks between them and this crack made them look elsewhere for a route. The only other chance was to continue up the corner and try to avoid the great overhang by turning left. Dick started up, almost immediately being forced into direct aid by the nature of the rock. After a great deal of effort he succeeded in getting high enough to see that the route to the left would not go. Still not ready to tackle the face on their right, Ortenburger decided to have a look at the rock below the face via a tension pendulum from Emerson who was now 25 feet above. Dick lowered him about 50 feet, but he found nothing. He did find, however, that if they ever succeeded in traversing to the "easy ground" referred to above, there would be no retreat from it. Below it was an enormous overhang—a 120-foot rappel would leave one out in space. Emerson decided to give the face a good try before admitting defeat. The problem was to get across the 60 horizontal feet separating them from the direct-aid crack which they could plainly see. While belaying Dick, Ortenburger was back around the corner and could not see. Suffice it to say that two hours later Dick yelled "Off belay!" Ortenburger peered around the corner and saw that Dick was standing on a three-inch ledge at the base of the direct aid crack! From his position above Or-

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tenburger, he had succeeded in climbing to the right a few feet to place a piton (a wafer driven in about $\frac{3}{8}$ "") from which he made a pendulum to another hair-line crack; then he placed several more wafers up this crack until he was able to make another pendulum which took him to the ledge he was then standing on. Even with all the iron in and rope threaded through the carabiners, it was a very hard job physically to get across to Dick's position and mentally to figure out just how to snap in and out of the carabiners—so that Don also would be able to get across. After Ortenburger reached the three-inch ledge, Emerson did an expert job of nailing the direct-aid crack. Seven pitons later a shout told us that he had reached the easy ground. It was another hour before all three were reunited on a ledge a full two feet wide. By now it was 6:00 P.M.—eight hours had been spent on that one pitch! Dick had done an outstanding job of technical rock climbing.

The party thought that their troubles were over, but they were mistaken. Everyone agreed that the most likely route led straight up from their ledge. Ortenburger investigated this possibility, but when it turned into direct aid again, he retreated—all had had their fill of direct aid for a while. It was nearly dark then and something had to be done quickly if they were to avoid a bivouac on this windy two-foot ledge. Don Decker came to the rescue here and boldly tackled a fearsome hand-traverse leading out of sight around a corner to the right. After about 100 feet of rope slithered out, a tremendous whoop from Don told them that he had made it. This pitch was a real test of arm strength and Don did a beautiful job. When the others had joined him, they found that they were at last at the top of the 2500-foot buttress. The rest looked easy going, at least as compared to what they had been through. Lightning hurried them on their way across some slabs to a friendly grove of pine trees where they spent the night. With a good fire they passed a comfortable night on a mattress above pine needles.

At daybreak the next morning they were on their way. They had to reach the summit via 2500 feet of unknown ridge above them and return to Jenny Lake or else become benighted. Ortenburger led off up some easy slabs to regain the ridge. Here they

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began wrestling with an unknown number of gendarmes. They climbed up, down, over, around, across, and through gendarmes the rest of the morning. The rock was excellent. As they had suspected, their difficulties were behind them; so at 2:00 P.M. they were sitting around the summit cairn signing their names in the register. After gorging themselves on the can of plums which Dick had left on the summit earlier in the summer, they rushed down the C.M.C. route, ran down the grassy slopes, and at dusk reached their rowboat which had been left at the mouth of Leigh Creek. With real contentment they took turns rowing back across Leigh Lake, watching the south ridge in the sunset.

LEIGH ORTENBURGER

ACTIVITIES OF THE CLUBS

A. A. C., Cascade Section. In the spring, just prior to the departure of the K-2 expedition, Dee Molenaar and Pete Schoening, of our Section, gave an excellent account of the plans for the trip and had available for examination various items of equipment.

Dee, Pete, and Bob Craig were all guests of honor at the annual fall meeting of the Section. At the same meeting Vic Josendal showed an interesting set of slides taken on his ascent of Mt. Robson during the 1953 season. Ralph W. Johnson of Seattle was elected Chairman of the Section for the coming year.

Several members of the Section took an active part in local mountain rescue activities during the past year. Ome Daiber and Ralph W. Johnson are members of the board of the newly formed "Mountain Rescue Council." These men, with George McGowan, engaged in two television shows on mountain safety, presented in Seattle; and these and other Section members have given many talks to climbing organizations, the Boy Scouts, and many other groups, on the subject of safety in the mountains.

W. H. BORROW

A. A. C., Sierra Nevada Section. Under Chairman Will Siri, Vice-Chairman Allen Steck, and Secretary-Treasurer Richard