

hundred feet of easy rock to the narrowing of the great chimney left of the buttress. Here I led two fifth-class pitches and we left ropes hanging. The next morning, leaving at daybreak, we alternated leads above our high point and hauled rucksacks with food, water and bivouac clothing. We followed the corner of the buttress, pitch after pitch. The hardest portion was a long dihedral with poor piton cracks that I had to do free, with occasional moves on direct aid. Just before dark I nailed up a vertical corner leading out of a chimney and made an exposed right traverse into another chimney. Here we placed the only bolt on the route to safeguard a terribly exposed and unprotected step across. Since it was now dark, I retreated to Rick's belay niche, where we shivered waiting for dawn. In the morning the climbing continued up the crack, which soon eased and broke into a big belay platform. It was an exposed position. The next two leads traversed the rim of the dropoff to the north and had some touchy moves in jam-cracks. Rick finally crawled through a "cannonhole" narrows and shouted that the climbing was over. Voices were heard, carried by a biting wind; we could now identify hikers on the Mount Whitney trail, just a hundred yards to the west. We hiked to Whitney's summit and descended via the trail. We judge the climb to be a hard Grade IV.

FRED BECKEY

*Clyde Minaret, South Face.* In June, Chuck Wilts, John Evans, Dick Long and I made the first ascent of this exceptional route, by far the finest in the Minaret area. The face is over 1100 feet high and involves class 5 climbing on each of eleven 150-foot leads. The face is a striking formation, consisting for the first 700 feet of a series of slabs tilted to about 70° which end at a ledge two leads below a huge 250-foot dihedral. The route followed the west edge of these slabs for six leads. Above the ledge, the wall steepened and the climbing became more difficult. At this point a pack was lost containing all our food, water and bivouac gear and it became imperative to avoid a night on the wall. The remaining 5 leads (maximum difficulty consisting of only two 5.8 moves) involved climbing of a most satisfying variety. Thanks to good weather, stimulating scenery, and general cooperative spirit of those leading (considering the difficulty of filming and belaying simultaneously, a short 8 mm. film now remains as a memorial to the trip. Contrary to popular belief, those climbing on the faces and buttresses in the Minarets will find the rock to be sound and generally reliable. (NCCS IV-8.)

ALLEN STECK