

In Memoriam

JOHN ELVIS HARLIN, II

1935-1966

When John Harlin fell to his death from the Eiger on March 22, 1966, the world of mountaineering, both American and international, lost one of its brightest stars. In the not quite thirty-one years of his life he had forged a career that was unique in ambition and achievement.

The drama of his death was heightened by its locale, for he had become as identified with the Eiger as Whymper with the Matterhorn or Mallory with Everest. Bewitched since boyhood by its famous and infamous north face, he first reconnoitered it in 1954, as a college sophomore of nineteen. In 1962, after several attempts, he became the first—and still the only—American to scale it. Finally in 1966, following many more reconnaissances and attempts, he was the prime mover of the now celebrated "Eiger Direct": the first successful climb of the wall straight up from base to summit.

His partners in this were fellow-American Layton Kor and Scotsman Dougal Haston, with Englishmen Chris Bonington and Don Whillans in support. On the face at the same time was an eight-man German party, and after more than a month of struggle the two teams, joining forces, made their bid for the top. It was at this point that a fixed rope broke while John was ascending alone, to rejoin the others, and he fell four thousand feet to the foot of the mountain. Three days later, Haston and four of the Germans reached its summit and named the Eiger *direttissima* "The John Harlin Route."

Besides his Eiger ventures, John made many other notable Alpine climbs, most of them first ascents of the "direct" variety. In 1963, with Gary Hemming, Tom Frost and Stewart Fulton, he scaled the south face of the Aiguille du Fou; in 1965, with Royal Robbins, the west face of the Dru. From 1960 on, scarcely a season, summer or winter, went by in which he was not on several climbs of the greatest difficulty in various areas of the Alps. On many he was successful, and on all he was the planner, organizer and driving force.

In Europe, where he lived the last six years of his life, he was accepted as one of the inner circle of top mountaineers. In America, where few climbers knew him personally but all knew his name, he was well on his way to becoming a legend. An exponent of the ultimate

extreme in climbing, a man who, in his own words, chose to "live on the brink," he was bound to be—and was—a controversial figure. But there are none who deny that he was a mountaineer of the very first rank.

Less known, perhaps, than his climbing feats are the rich fullness and variety of the rest of his life. Graduating from Stanford (where he had been the unlikely combination of fine arts major and football player), he seriously considered a career as a dress designer, but instead veered in a totally different direction and joined the United States Air Force. For upward of five years he was a pilot of jet fighter-bombers, first in this country, then in Germany, and at the time of his death was a captain in the Air Force Reserve.

During his flying days he climbed whenever and wherever he could, and when he left active service in 1963 he settled in the town of Leysin in French Switzerland, in the very heart of his beloved Alps. Here he became director of athletics at the Leysin American School and also founded his own International School of Modern Mountaineering. On the side, he devoted much time to writing, which he hoped eventually to make his basic profession, and to planning climbing and exploratory trips to many parts of the world. Almost incredibly, in the midst of all the rest, he was also a married and family man of, by now, ten years' standing. Besides his parents, he is survived by his widow Marilyn, his son Johnny and his daughter Andrea.

In a world in which we hear much about the search for security, John Harlin's search was for an opposite pole. Bursting with strength and energy, dream and desire, he deliberately strove to expand his life to its farthest possible boundaries; and while there were few who could follow him—or wanted to—there were also few who did not recognize that here was a man touched with greatness.

"John was outsize, a little larger than life," one of his old friends has said. And so too, in its way, was his death.

JAMES RAMSEY ULLMAN

DAVID W. MEASUROLL

1905-1966

David W. Measuroll, retired vice president of the First Pennsylvania Banking and Trust Co., was born in Hightstown, New Jersey, on January 25, 1905. On September 26, 1966, while vacationing, he died suddenly at Dorset, Vermont, after a happy day of water-color painting amidst the autumn foliage.