

the summit block free just to the right of the bolt ladder (F8). NCCS II, F8.

EDWIN C. JOE, *unaffiliated*

Peak 12,960, South Face. In May, 1976 Jay Foster, Shari Nelson, and I spent two and a half days ascending a new route up the south face of this peak that is directly west of Lone Pine peak. Our route followed a large chimney system right of center, and finished through crack systems slightly left of the chimney's end. One bolt was placed for a bivouac anchor, otherwise the route was done clean. NCCS V, F9, A2.

ALAN KEARNEY

Day Needle, East Face. In July Ed Conner and I free-climbed this face staying, as far as we could tell, on Beckey's original route up the prow except that we started the route by third-classing about 300 feet up the couloir to a point about 30 feet below and left of a prominent roof. The route was 13 to 15 pitches, and took 8 hours. NCCS IV, F7-F8.

JOHN VAWTER, *W-town Mountaineers*

Angel Wings, South Face. A new line up an old mountain: Angel Wings. That was the proposal Fred Beckey, Dougal McCarty, and Brian Leo had up their sleeve. With little or no persuasion I accompanied them. Things didn't quite work out right that first trip. After a fifteen-mile hike in late October of 1975, the weather, food, and time were gradually destroying us. The weather was cold, foggy, and drizzly. The food, well the lack of it, did not help matters, and time, that's another problem! Three pitches in three days! Granted, the first three pitches turned out to be the hardest on the entire climb: devious, hard nailing, spiced with some F9. The fall of 1976 rolled around. This time Fred and Dougal got together with another climber. What happened this time is like a bad dream. The attempt was pretty much aborted the first night while they sat around the campfire at Hamilton Lake, below Angel Wings south face. One of the people hiking in with the climbers emptied his pockets of trash into the fire at night. The trash contained a 22-caliber bullet. If you've guessed the worst, relax; it only grazed Dougal's lip! Angel Wings: 2, Climbers: 0. In May of 1977 the final group is together; Bill Lahr and Alan Neifeld join Fred and me. The first three pitches are fixed. Fred takes the lead, the going slow and artificial. A time to think, a time to climb, a time to lead. Up I go, silently; the weather is perfect; what more could one ask for. The ground getting farther away, the trees smaller, the top closer. Changing leads, Alan traverses right under a small roof. "Delicate free climbing," he says. "The angle easing back; the way is clear to the top." The mind, tense for the past couple

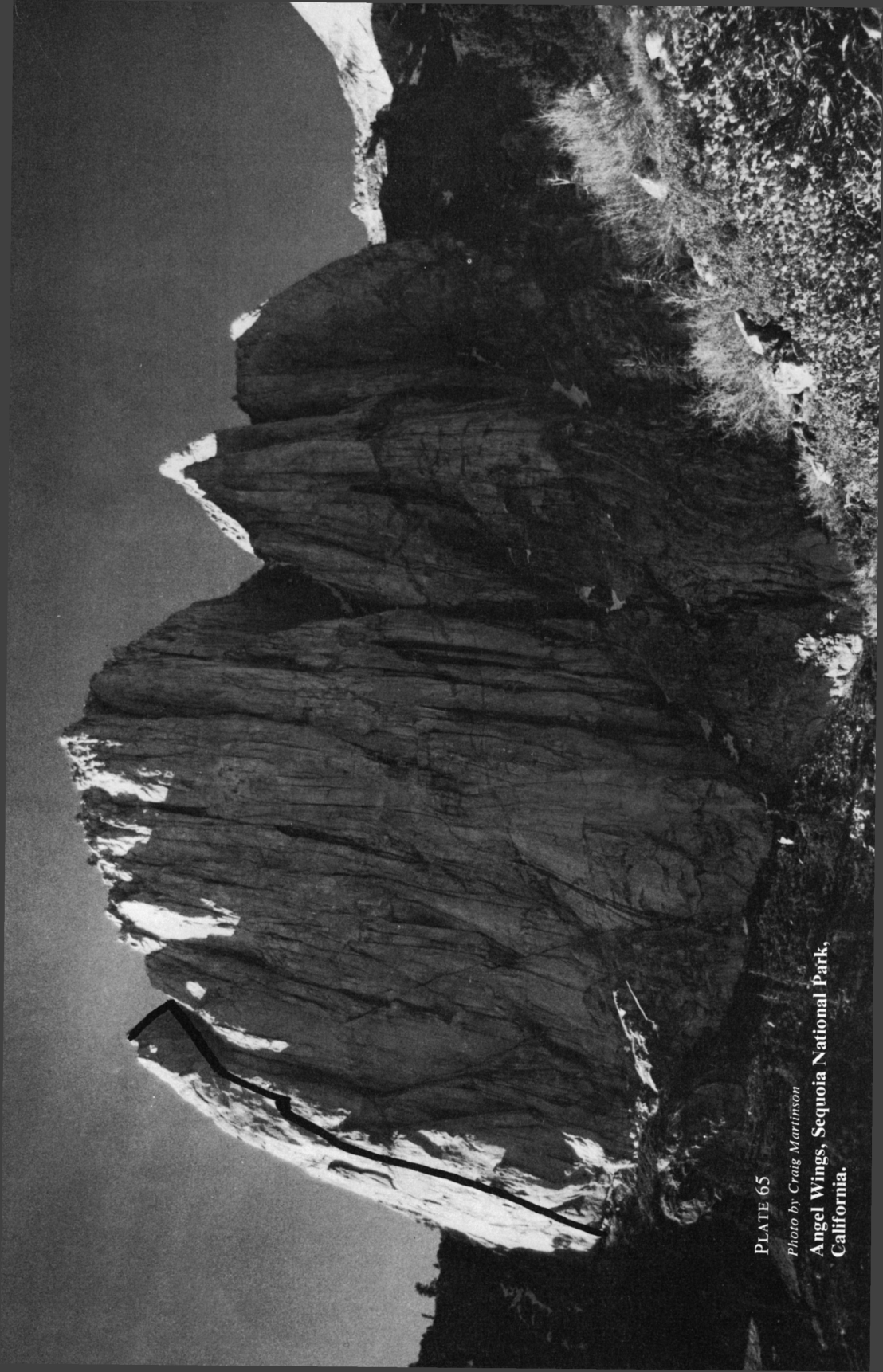


PLATE 65

Photo by Craig Martinson
Angel Wings, Sequoia National Park,
California.

of days, relaxes. Two nights in hammocks are bearable. Tonight we'll sleep on top. The end of the third day the final pitch is led in the dark, jumaring under the stars with the moon shining brightly. But alas, there are no level spots left for me to sleep. A tree is in sight, the hammock goes up, and I go in. Like a bed in a house, a hammock in the air, but here there is a difference, for my mind is free to wander in the High Sierra.

CRAIG MARTINSON

Picture Peak, Bishop Area. Rick Wheeler and I made a new route on Picture Peak above the Hungry Packer Lake basin, seven miles from Lake Sabrina. We decided to head for a hand-and-fist crack near the right center of the face. This runs parallel to a chimney for 200 feet. We hiked around the southeastern shore of the lake and third-classed several hundred feet of shattered rock to the first obstacle, a small F9 roof, which we passed on the left. This led to a short section of face climbing. From there we followed the line of least resistance upward for several pitches until we reached the top of the first ridge. The rock rib we were climbing was divided into three sections. The finest climbing was in the bottom section, which contained the hand-and fist crack. From the top of the first rib we dropped into a small notch and continued to climb two additional sections, one pitch of which was an awkward corner requiring some very wide stemming (F10).

TONY JENNINGS

Mount Williamson, North Face. The 2200-foot high north cliffs are impressive, even when viewed from far up Owens Valley. In contrast to the popular west and southeast sides, only two north-side routes are known to exist. My wife Ruth and I ascended just left of center in 1957, using a swing traverse. Tim Ryan, Fred Wing, and I climbed the right-hand portion of the face on May 30, 1976. We cramponed up a steep couloir that slants to the right, then ascended the rocks. Tim led the crux pitch on aid chocks. We tied on for the night at 13,880 feet, and reached the 14,375-foot summit early the next morning. NCCS IV, F5, A1.

JOHN D. MENDENHALL

California—Yosemite Valley

El Capitan, Mirage. In September Jim Pettigrew, Kim Schmitz and I climbed a new route on the west face of El Capitan. The route lies between the West Face route and the Lurking Fear route. The apparently blank lower face required only 33 holes, the total for the route. The