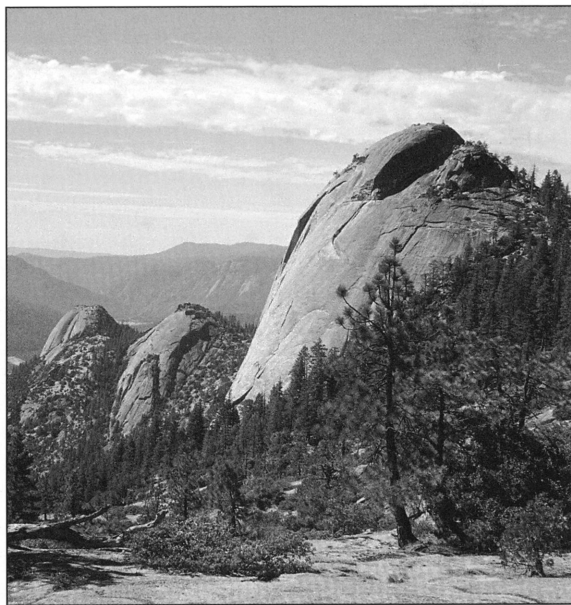


exhibiting classic signs of altitude sickness, and we urged him to rest and drink water. After he vomited several times we suggested that descent was the best medicine and offered to lead him back to a meadow at 10,000'. He assured us he could make it down, and his footing seemed strong and balanced as he walked down the talus. This was the last time we saw Keith Kramer.

We started to fix the first pitch, an overhanging crack, and Seth took a stout fall, and he too vomited. The altitude didn't seem to be affecting any of us benevolently. We bivied at the base and woke up before sunrise to attack the ridge. The first 10 pitches were high Sierra granite at a moderate grade. We saw smoke in the meadow below and could hear Keith yelling words of encouragement, so we figured he was all right. After ascending the first tower in 13 pitches, we realized that we were only a third of the way up the ridge and would not make the summit by nightfall. We retreated via two shaky rappels, tricky downclimbing, and traversing two ridges to the west. Out of food and water, we found a waterfall, then were dumped on by an afternoon storm, just as we found a comfortable cave. We arrived at the base of the ridge at sunset and quickly made our way down the talus to the meadow, where a stick in the ground assured us that Keith had been there and was surely on his way down. But upon arriving at the car at 2 a.m., it was obvious that Keith had not made it out. We searched the lower reaches of the canyon until dawn, and then called Search and Rescue. Keith was found the following day tangled in the willows of the creek. The coroner ruled the cause of death as exposure. Keith Kramer was a jovial man who was well-known in the Mammoth Lakes community for his crazy antics and light heart. He will be sorely missed. Seth Dilles, Doug Robinson, and I intend to climb the ridge in spring 2004, name it for Keith Kramer (K2), and spread his ashes from the summit.

MIKE STRASSMAN, AAC

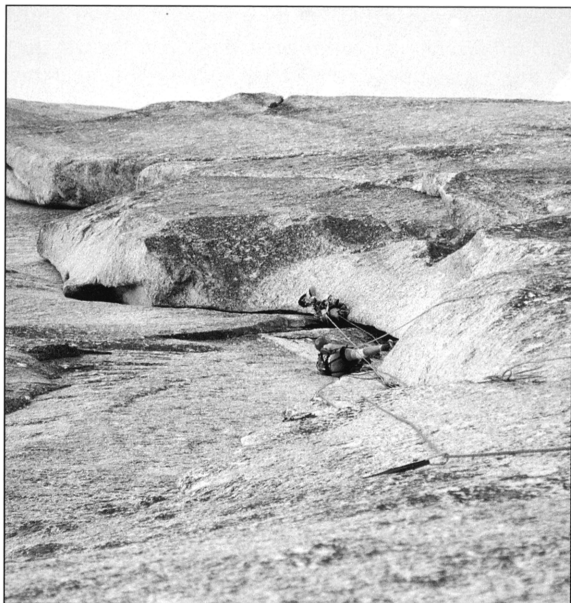
East Fuller Butte, Walking with Walt. After three false starts over 18 months, two due to 110°+ summer temperatures and one due to a "10% chance of light, scattered showers" that turned into a blizzard in September 2002, Sigrid and Lynnea Anderson, Kenny Rose, and I finally completed this route (V 5.10d C2) in mid-October 2003. This route features 11 pitches of enjoyable, clean rock in the wilderness setting of the upper San Joaquin River and has fine views of the upper San Joaquin River Gorge and the Sierra high country. It also features a one-hour downhill approach, a mostly level one-hour return, and a year-round spring at the base of the climb. Although the free-climbing is rated 5.10d, and



East Fuller Butte. The route follows the left skyline and the bottom 400 feet are hidden by the trees. Jerry Anderson

much of the route either does or will go free, there is no mandatory free-climbing over 5.5. We used three Lost Arrows on each of the first two pitches, but after a few ascents the route should go entirely clean, and all but pitch eight are C1. The route was named for the late Walt Shipley.

The climb begins several hundred feet downhill and to the left of the Fred Beckey Southeast Face Route (IV 5.8 A2), done in 1972. It starts just right of a small left-facing corner and follows a perfect, straight-in, right-arching crack leading to a large left-facing corner system. From there the route follows the only possible line. There is a poor bivy ledge for three or four people at the end of the fourth pitch, but excellent portaledge bivies at the end of pitches five and seven. Please check with the Sierra National Forest North Fork office for possible Peregrine Falcon closures lasting through midsummer. For topo and additional information, e-mail campfour_org@hotmail.com.



Let's see, where does the route go? Perfect Sierra granite on East Fuller Butte. Jerry Anderson

JERRY ANDERSON, AAC

The Obelisk, Far Out and other new routes. Lucho Rivera and I enjoyed several summer adventures in the rock-climbing wonderland that is the Sierra Nevada. First was a new route on the steep face of the East Ridge of Mt. Russell. The route offered six pitches of continuous, devious 5.10. Clouds moved in throughout the day, and we topped out 10 minutes before a downpour. Psyched by our route on Mt. Russell and our repeats of classics on The Incredible Hulk, we wanted to explore other rock formations of the Sierra. We somewhat arbitrarily settled on The Obelisk, a free-standing dome overlooking Kings Canyon. Without a topographic map or accurate directions, we were off-route from the get-go and tacked five miles onto the 12-mile approach. What we thought would be a one-day approach took two days. When we finally arrived we were disappointed to see that most of the obvious lines on The Obelisk had been done, but, after consulting the guidebook, we realized the steepest face had not been climbed. The giant roof 200 feet from the summit looked like it would require aid, but I have had enough experience to know that you never know if something is free-climbable until you're there, so the next day Lucho and I went for it. We carried a hammer and a few pins in case the upper bit required aid. Each pitch had a meant-to-be feel to it, with smooth and golden footholds and edges appearing where and when they were needed. After five classic crack and dihedral pitches, we were at the base of the roof. I cleared rocks from the stance and called for the hammer and pins so that I could get protection