

*Analysis.* A careful study of this accident has been made by members of the Harvard Mountaineering Club and American Alpine Club. While it cannot be stated that an error in judgment was made—the accident was avoidable—the decision to repeat an ascent already accomplished without misadventure was one which, in all probability, would have been made also by a majority of more experienced parties. If a lesson is to be learned from this accident, it must be that judgment of snow conditions is perhaps the most difficult phase of a mountaineer's training. It is not to be learned in one season and may not be acquired even after many seasons. Few mountaineers attain a working mastery of the subject of snow slope analysis. No better shortcut to an appreciation of the manifold facets of snowcraft is to be found than in the pages of *Snow Structure and Ski Fields* by Gerald Seligman (Macmillan, 1936), and this work should be considered a "must" by all who undertake ascents in terrain characterized by ice and snow.

*Teton Range, Wyoming: (1) Symmetry Spire, St. John Massif.* In mid-June 1947, a climber, Hans Breu, was attempting one of the cliffs in this district with a companion, George Senner. Breu decided to climb a more difficult pitch than his companion felt qualified to attempt, so he went up it alone. A slip occurred, and the more ambitious climber fell 100 feet into a scrub fir growing flat on the slope below, which probably saved his life but left him with a chipped ankle. After Senner had notified park authorities, a rescue party brought the injured man down in a stretcher.

*Source of information:* National Park Service and members of rescue expedition.

*Analysis.* This is another story of an unroped climber. Details are so sparse that only general conclusions can be drawn.

*Teton Range, Wyoming: (2) Mount Owen.* On 8 August 1947 Clement Ramsland, an instructor in Public Speaking at the University of Minnesota, fell during a descent *en rappel* from a position above the saddle between Mount Owen and the East Prong. As first man down in his party, he was using a rappel sling installed the

year before. Apparently the strain was too great for the sling. After bouncing down and off the out-sloping ledges for 50 feet, he landed on a platform invisible from above. He suffered a concussion, a cracked elbow, four torn ribs, cuts on his hands, a cracked left leg and a broken wrist. A rescue party, organized that night and using headlamps to travel by, reached Ramsland at 6.00 A.M. the next morning. With a basket stretcher, they were able to carry him back to camp by nightfall, but not until 22 persons and several pack animals had become involved in the rescue.

*Source of information:* National Park Service and members of rescue expedition.

*Analysis.* A cut-and-dried case against using old rappel slings. At least the first man down should have been tied into a safety rope belayed from above. Application of the most elementary principles of safe climbing could have saved a lot of people a lot of trouble.

*Teton Range, Wyoming: (3) Mount Owen.* On 24 August 1947 William McIndoe, a park employee 20 years old, fell to a ledge within 40 yards of the site of the Ramsland accident. This climber had left the valley after a dance the night before, against the advice of friends, to attempt a one-day ascent, climbing alone. Twenty-four hours later, when he had not returned, his friends organized a rescue team to search for him. Concern was great because a severe electric storm had buffeted the peaks the day of his climb. Several Rangers went up the next day, the 25th, and discovered that help was much needed. Eventually, a rescue expedition of fourteen was organized. Six climbers located the boy's body and brought it out to Amphitheater Lake, where horses had been left. Later investigation indicated that McIndoe had not reached the top. He seems to have fallen at least 100 feet from a point some distance from the normal route. Possibly he lost his way in the storm. It is known that he had previously climbed Teewinot alone and in consequence had been reprimanded by the National Park Service.

*Source of information:* National Park Service and members of rescue expedition.

*Analysis.* Another person addicted to solo climbing. Mention of the reprimand leads one to wonder whether restrictions can prevent