

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

ill-advised actions. It is conceivable that a reprimand or restriction could be a challenge to an obstinate nature. Evidently a few solo climbs in the Tetons, earlier in the summer, had given this boy unwarranted confidence. He had had no indoctrination whatsoever in the matter of safety.

*Appalachian Mountains, Tennessee: Cumberland Plateau Region.* On 25 May 1947 an accident occurred to a member of a rock-climbing group from Vanderbilt University. Five of the seven active participants had had previous experience in rock climbing. Dr. Glenn Millikan, to whom the accident occurred, had done a little climbing in Switzerland, England and Wales. His party was climbing on a section of sandstone and conglomerate cliff known as "Buzzard's Roost," near Fall Creek Falls State Park. The climbing is similar to that encountered in the Shawangunk region near Wallkill, New York, although it is on a rock formation somewhat less reliable. After making several quite difficult climbs, Dr. Millikan descended one of the routes and, proposing to climb one of the easier routes near by, called for the rope to be untied from his belayer at the top of the cliff, so that he could pull it down. Since the face was nearly vertical, it was presumed that the rope would fall clear; but apparently the end caught behind a free rock about twice the size of a brick, lying on a narrow ledge. An instant warning shout from the belayer above was too late. Dr. Millikan gave the rope a pull. Standing directly beneath it, he was hit on the head by the dislodged rock and killed.

*Source of information:* members of climbing party.

*Analysis.* It might be pointed out that two important precautions were neglected here. First, Dr. Millikan stood directly beneath the rope; and, second, he was not looking up. His momentary lapse may have been due to fatigue. Earlier in the day he had cautioned one of the novice climbers in this regard. Moreover, it is advisable, in casting down a rope from above, to throw it well clear of any cliff which may catch and hold a loop.

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